

# Semantic organization of space-motion mappings to action and time in Wolof

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Certain temporal metaphors are well described for a variety of languages (Dancygier & Sweetser 2014), but these metaphors account for only a small portion of temporal semantic structures. This talk discusses structures that are similar to canonical temporal metaphor (Gentner et al. 2001), but also differ in interesting ways. We intermingle well known descriptions with new findings. Basic terms of analysis include: Presence vs. absence of motion, what is moving relative to what, number of Movers, and direction of motion. Innovations are of two kinds: i) modifying current analyses, and ii) adding a different kind of structure. The data mostly come from ethnographic interviews conducted in Wolof with monolinguals in rural Saloum, Senegal, West Africa.

## • “Moving Time” within the present

The Moving Time metaphor has been defined in terms of Past-Present-Future. For example, in (1) a Future time is coming toward the Present.

- 1) *Tabaski mungi ñów.*  
Tabaski 3.PRESENTATIVE come  
'Tabaski (a holiday) **is coming.**' I.e. it is in the near future. (Canonical Moving Time) [Positive Black Soul]

However, *mungee ñów* 'it's coming' in (2) is about the current perceptual field, and so does not involve a distinction between present and future.

- 2) (*Xam nga li nga xam ne yaa ko jis tey*),  
*yaŋ koy xool.*  
you:PRESENTATIVE it:IMPERFECTIVE watch  
*Mungee ñów de, yaangi topp ci kow am.*  
it:PRSNTTV:IMPRF come CERTAINTY you:PRSNTTV follow LOCPREP top GEN  
(*Boobu de, du la réer.*) [Saloum KB 40:35]  
(‘You know that what you see today,’) “you are watching it. **It’s coming!** You’re following right on top of it. (That won’t be lost on you!)”

Example (2) instantiates the same basic structure as Moving Time in (1), but the process in (2) occurs within the present moment.

## • Mapping whole frames vs. parts of frames

In (1) Moving Time is a complete, coherent mapping of a motion frame onto a temporal frame. Another such complete mapping is found in (3), which has a verb of motion and the Path-Ground phrase *ba ci kanam* “to.the.point.of at front” that elaborates the motion.

- 3) *Buñ dem-ee ba ci kanam dinga gis*  
when:we go-COND to.the.point.of LOCPREP front you.FUTURE see  
"When we have gone until at front, you will see." 'When we get farther ahead [i.e. 'later'], you will see.' (E.g., the addressee will see that what the speaker had been saying is true.) [APS, Ba:211, constructed]

Example (4) below has the same Path-Ground phrase seen in (3) — *ba ci kanam* ‘to.the.point.of at front’. But in (4), the progression from earlier to later is expressed without a motion metaphor.

- 4) ... **buñ toog-ee** **ba** **ci** **kanam...**  
 when:we sit-COND to.the.point.of LOCPREP front  
 "...when we have sat until at front..." '...at a later time of year' [the speaker then elaborates on the topic of dawn and clock times]. [Saloum SJ 32:05]

By contrast, (5) below maps motion onto temporal progression, but the Ground of the motion event (Talmy 2000) is not recoverable from the utterance.

- 5) Bu mboq ñoree, nga **dem** tuuti xaal ñor, sunna ñor.  
 when corn ripe:COND, you go little watermelon ripe, millet ripe  
 "When corn gets ripe you go a little bit watermelon gets ripe, millet gets ripe."  
 'After the corn gets ripe, a little later the watermelon and millet get ripe.' [Saloum. MJ 8:30]

To summarize, Path-plus-Ground vs. fact of motion are separable components of a space-motion metaphor of time. This is not surprising in a theory of conceptual blending, because blending is opportunistic (Fauconnier & Turner 2002).

• *Adding action*

Example (6b) (repeated from 2) instantiates a striking contrast between canonical temporal metaphor and a metaphor of action. The speaker presents the two clauses of (6b) as depicting a single complex event in which something is coming and you are following it with your attention. But the "coming" event and the "following" event do not merge into a single consistent image, since something that is coming is moving toward you while something that you are following is moving away from you.

- 6)  
 a. yaŋ koy xool.  
 you:PRESENTATIVE it:IMPERFECTIVE watch  
 b. Mungee ñów de, **yaangi topp ci kow am.**  
 it:PRSNTTV:IMPRF come CERTAINTY you:PRSNTTV follow LOCPREP top GEN  
 a. "You are watching it. It's coming!"  
 b. "**You're following right on top of it.**"

As we have seen, the first clause of (6b), with ñów 'come', is a variant of a canonical temporal metaphor. The second clause with *topp* 'follow' adheres to different principles compared to the first clause and also compared to canonical temporal metaphor with *topp* 'follow'. This suggests contrasting principles that structure canonical temporal metaphor vs. metaphors of action.

To summarize, we have seen a modification of the Moving Time metaphor, and we have discovered that Path-plus-Ground and fact of motion are separable components of a space-motion metaphor of time. Finally, we will discuss a case in which a metaphor of action adheres to different principles than canonical temporal metaphor (Moore 2014).

## References

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