

## Conceptions of Time with the Source Domain of Space in Amharic<sup>\*</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims at analyzing conceptual metaphors of time as realized in Amharic spatial expressions. The paper is written within the framework of conceptual metaphor theory developed by Lakoff & Johnson (1980). In this theory, language is viewed as providing data that can show human beings conceive concepts (Lakoff & Johnson 2003). The study examines the fact that time concepts in Amharic are described through spatialization metaphors. The orientational, time-moving, and ego-moving types of metaphors for time are attested in the language. Orientational metaphors suggest that Amharic speakers can understand time via spatial frames of reference. Besides, the conceptual metaphors TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY, TIMES ARE LOCATIONS IN A LANDSCAPE WHERE EGO MOVES OVER, and AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME IS A BOUNDED SPACE<sup>2</sup> are found in Amharic.

**Keywords:** time, space, Amharic, conceptual metaphor, linguistic metaphor

### INTRODUCTION

Amharic is a Semitic language belonging to the transversal South Ethio-Semitic group (Hetzron, 1972). According to CSA (2008), 21, 631, 370 Ethiopian people speak it as a first language. It is spoken in many areas of Ethiopia. Also, it serves as a de facto lingua franca in the country particularly in major cities and towns (Hudson, 1997; Meyer, 2011). It was the only language of education and the most dominant and prestigious Ethiopian language at least until 1991 (Meyer, 2006). Nowadays it is the working language of the Federal State of Ethiopian government.

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<sup>2</sup> In this paper, conceptual metaphors are spelled in small capital letters to show that they underlie conceptually.

It is a thoroughly described and studied language (cf. Girma, 2009). And various grammatical aspects of the language have been discussed in many works (e.g., Anbessa & Hudson, 2007; Baye, 2016; Leslau, 1995; Taddese, 1972; Unseth, 2002; and others). However, semantics and pragmatics are relatively neglected topics in Amharic linguistics. This paper analyzes how time concepts in Amharic are described via spatialization metaphors from the perspective of cognitive semantics. It describes how Amharic speakers construe the concept of time through spatialization metaphors.

### **Theoretical Background**

This paper is guided by conceptual metaphor theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). It can be subsumed under cognitive semantics. In conceptual metaphor theory, metaphor has been found to exist in all aspects of everyday life, not only in language but in thought and action in which metaphorical expressions are used to conceptualize one mental domain through another domain. Thus, metaphorical expressions can be seen as general mappings across conceptual domains (cf. Kövecses, 2015, 2010b; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). There are two types of conceptual domains: source domain and target domain. The source domain is a conceptual domain from which metaphorical expressions are drawn to understand another conceptual domain which is called target domain (Kövecses, 2010b).

Within contemporary metaphor theory, metaphor serves to understand or experience one kind of thing in terms of another and can be seen as part of conceptual systems; it is not just a matter of language or of mere words (see Glynn, 2002; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). For instance, the metaphorical expression love is a journey is an ontological mapping between two domains, that is, we understand the target domain, love, using the source domain, journey. Therefore, metaphor is not a matter of a particular word or expression. In general, it is not purely linguistic expression but thought or reason. The mapping is primary and language is secondary (Lakoff, 1993).

The mapping, a systematic correspondence between source domain and target domain, which allows us to conceptualize one aspect of a concept in terms of another, highlights one aspect of a concept, which is consistent with metaphor and hides other aspects of a concept that are inconsistent with the metaphor. A metaphorical concept allows us to give more emphasis on one aspect of a concept but it can keep us from

focusing on other aspects, which are not related with that metaphorical expression (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

Geeraerts (2010) summarizes, conceptual metaphor theory depends on three basic fundamental ideas: first, the view that metaphor is a cognitive phenomenon; second, the view that metaphorical expressions need to be analyzed as mapping between two conceptual domains such as source domain and target domain; and third, the notion that linguistics semantics is experientially grounded.

### **The Concept of Time**

Jaszczolt (2009) and Evans (2004) stated that time can be treated in two different perspectives. One is “real-time” which is discussed in physical sciences. In this view, time exists physically, and it is objectively embedded in the world. The other is “internal time” which is also termed the concept of time (cf. Jaszczolt, 2009). According to this view, time is not tangible; humans experience it intuitively, so it is in the mind, not in the external world (Evans, 2004). This paper focuses on the latter.

In diverse languages, the more abstract concept of time can be metaphorically structured by means of the less abstract concept of space (Kövecses, 2010a). This implies that the conceptual metaphor TIME IS SPACE is found in many languages. An extremely generic-level conceptual metaphor may be near-universal. However, it can be instantiated in different ways at specific level across languages (Kövecses, 2010a).

Time as space metaphors can be time-moving and ego-moving metaphors. Ego-moving metaphors refer to those spatialization metaphors for the time where the ego (i.e., observer) moves along a timeline. Here times are conceived as locations in a landscape where the ego moves over (cf. Boroditsky, 2000; Evans, 2004; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). On the other hand, time-moving metaphors are spatialization metaphors for a time which show that the concept of TIME is conceived as a moving object or entity and the ego or observer is considered as a stationary entity (cf. Boroditsky, 2000; Evans, 2004).

### **Previous Studies**

Cognitive semantics study in Amharic linguistics is a very recent phenomenon. To the best of my knowledge, only Derib's (2016, 2007) works on time and love metaphors, respectively, have approached the

issue from the perspective of conceptual metaphor theory subsumed under cognitive semantics. Derib (2016) has explored that the concept of time in Amharic can be structured in terms of an opponent, an authority, a container, a garment, a load, a wealthy person, and a resource. Also, it deals with the conceptual metaphor time as space, which is also the focus of the present study.

However, the present study differs from Derib's (2016) work in three respects: (1) scope, (2) depth, and (3) findings. First, this study covers the semantic extensions of motion verbs that encode speed of movement in temporal expressions and address conceptions of time in Amharic. Second, this article describes the use of temporal anchors (i.e., reference event, speech event, and speech participant) in Amharic in more detail. Furthermore, the present study argues against some of the findings that Derib (2016) identified, particularly the findings of the direction of time movement and the dimension of time.

### Methods for Collecting Data

All the linguistic data used in this paper are from the Amharic dialect of Godzdzam. The data were mainly collected from written and oral texts, elicitation, and introspection (as a supporting method). In the selection of written texts, firstly, I consulted experts of literature at Addis Ababa University to get information about **fictions** written in the Amharic variety of Godzdzam. Fortunately, it has been suggested that Getaneh's (2017) book and Meseret's (2017) short story are written in the Godzdzam variety. Then, I read the **fictions** thoroughly and evaluated the language of such texts on the basis of peculiarities of the variety that have been identified by Abdurahman (2014), Zelealem (2007), and Getachew and Seifu (1973). Finally, I found out that the languages of the characters, specifically protagonists and antagonists of such fictions can represent the Amharic variety spoken in Godzdzam.

The oral texts come from six rural dwellers, whose age ranges from 62 to 70. The reason why elders were selected was that they are supposed to know more stories and **recitations than that of youths**. The oral texts include three stories and recitations. Such texts take twenty four minutes record. From such texts, I pick up spatialization metaphors that are used to describe the concept of time.

For the elicitation, fifteen **consultants** from different Godzdzam areas such as Mot'a, Dəbrəwork', Dəbrə Mark'os, K'warit, and Yismala have

participated. I select the participants through snowball sampling and their locations randomly.

In the transcription, I consistently use IPA symbols. Also, I gloss the linguistic data based on Leipzig Glossing Rules updated by Comrie, Haspelmath & Bickel (2015). The examples are transcribed in three-line glossing. The first line is the phonemic transcription, the second is the linear morphological analysis and the third is the free translation. However, when there is a phonological or morphophonemic process, the phonetic form of the word is given in square brackets following its phonemic form.<sup>3</sup>

### Metaphorical Conceptualization of Time in Amharic

The mapping of the spatial domain to a temporal domain is a ubiquitous phenomenon (cf. Evans, 2004). However, a generic-level conceptual metaphor can be expressed in culture-specific ways at a specific-level (Kövecses, 2010b). In Amharic, it is common to elaborate on the concept of TIME in terms of linguistic expressions of the spatial domain, e.g., *k'ənu jiroṭ'all* 'the time is running', and *addis amət gəbba* 'the new year entered.' Before proceeding to describe the ascription of spatial expressions to time concepts, we need to discuss human's conception of time.

#### The Human Conception of Time in Amharic

In Amharic, the concept of TIME is divided into various domains (i.e., units) like *k'ən* 'day', *sammint* 'week', *sənbət* 'weekend', *wər* 'month', *wərat* 'season', *mənḥək* 'half a year', and *amət* 'year' (Getatchew, 2000). Within the domains, there are also sets of time concepts, for example, the time unit *k'ən* 'day' has two subunits: *k'ən* 'day' which itself comprises *at't'əbab* 'dawn', *nigat* 'dawn', *maləda* > [*malda*] 'early morning', *rəffad* 'late morning', etc. and *mata* 'night' which in turn includes *amməḥaṣ* 'dusk', *miḥḥit* 'early night', *ikkulələl* 'midnight', etc. (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Terms of Temporal Units**

<sup>3</sup> While glossing the data, the abbreviation SBJ has not been used. This is because Amharic verbs almost always appear with subject agreement markers. So when I give information such as number, person and gender, the reference is to the subject of the verb. In addition, for perfective verb form, I do not include the abbreviation PFV.

| Categories                  | Subcategories                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>k'an (ilət)</i> 'day'    | <i>k'an</i> 'day'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <i>nigat</i> 'dawn', <i>maləda (t'əwat)</i> 'morning', <i>rəfad</i> 'late morning', <i>gizzediraff</i> 'midday', <i>k'ətir</i> '12-3 pm', <i>t'ihaj bərədd sijl</i> '3-5 pm' |
|                             | <i>mata</i> 'night'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <i>amməʃaf</i> 'early evening', <i>miffit</i> 'evening', <i>ikulələlit</i> 'midnight', <i>widdik't</i> 'midnight', <i>dəro sit'oh</i> 'early morning'                        |
| <i>sammint</i> 'week'       | <i>sənyño</i> Monday, <i>makisənyño</i> 'Tuesday', <i>rəbu</i> 'Wednesday', <i>hamus &gt;[amus]</i> 'Thursday', <i>arib</i> 'Friday', <i>k'idame</i> 'Saturday' and <i>ihud</i> 'Sunday'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>sənbət</i> 'Weekend'     | <i>k'idame</i> 'Saturday' and <i>ihud</i> 'Sunday'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>wər</i> 'month'          | Having thirty days except <i>k'wagme (p'agume)</i> (13 <sup>th</sup> Month) that has only five days                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>amət</i> 'year'          | Consisting of months such as <i>məskəram</i> 'September', <i>t'ik'imt</i> 'October', <i>hidar</i> 'November', <i>tahisas &gt; [tisas]</i> 'December', <i>t'ir</i> 'January', <i>jikatit</i> 'February', <i>məggabit</i> 'March', <i>mijazija</i> 'April', <i>ginbot</i> 'May', <i>səne</i> 'June', <i>hamle</i> 'July', <i>nihase</i> 'August' and <i>k'wag'wme zəndiro</i> 'this year', <i>amna</i> 'last year', <i>kəmo</i> 'next year' |                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>wərat</i> 'seasons'      | <i>s'ədəj</i> 'spring', <i>məs'əw</i> 'autumn' <i>kirəmt</i> 'winter', and <i>bəga</i> 'summer' <sup>4</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>mənʃək</i> 'half a year' |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                              |

In the Ethiopian calendar, a year has thirteen months. All months have thirty days each except for the thirteenth month, *k'wagme (p'agume)* which has only five days and six days in the leap year (see Getatchew, 2000). The non-literate Amharic speakers, particularly speakers of the Godzdzam variety, name many of the days of a month as days of Saints. For example, the first day of a month is termed as *lidəta* 'birthday of St. Mary' or *məbat/a* 'first day of a month', the third day as *bata* 'day of St. Mary's entrance into the Temple', the fifth day as *abbo* 'day of St. Abune Gebre Menfes k'idus', the seventh day as *sillase* 'day of the Trinity', the twelfth day as *mikaʔel > [mikjal]* 'day of St. Michael', the sixteenth day as *kidanə\_mihṛət > [tʃidanmirət]* 'day of promise (of God to St. Mary)', the nineteenth day as *gəbirʔel > [gəβirel]* 'day of St. Gabriel', the twenty-first day as *marjam* 'day of St. Mary', the **twenty**-third day as *dʒiwərgis* 'day of St. Jorge', the twenty-seventh day as *mədanijaləm* 'day of savior of the world' and so on. The concept of TIME can be

<sup>4</sup> Non-literate speakers of the Amharic variety of Godzdzam construe four seasons: *məhər* 'spring', *bəlg* 'autumn', *kirəmt* 'winter', and *bəga* 'summer.'

## Types of Metaphors for TIME

## Orientational Metaphors

(1) a. *tə=məwəssən-h*                      *bə=fit*      *dəna*      *adɪrg-əh* >[*argəh*]  
          from=to.decide-POSS2SG.M            at=front      well      do.CVB-2SG.M  
          *assib-ibb-ət*  
          think.IMP.2SGM-APPL.INS-OBJ3SG.M

6 Recall that the term fit ‘face’ grammaticalizes into spatial concept ‘front’ which in turn grammaticalizes into temporal concepts such as ‘before.’

**Think over it** before you decide.’ (lit. ‘Think about it carefully in front of your decision.’)

- b. *gəna fit nə-u > [nəw] si=al-ji-taməm > [sajittaməm]*  
 still front COP-3SG.M when=NEG-3SG.M-sick.IPFV  
 ‘It is the time before he gets sick.’ (lit. ‘It is the time in front of he gets sick.’) (Getaneh, 2017, p. 57)
- c. *mijfit tə=agəbba > [tagəbba] bə=h<sup>w</sup>ala wəffər-ə*  
 wife from=marry.3SG.M at=back get.fat-3SG.M  
 ‘He got fat after marrying a woman.’ (lit. ‘He got fat at the back of marrying a wife.’) (spoken text)

In example (1a), the moment of thinking (i.e., narrated event) is described with respect to the moment of decision (i.e., the reference event). Here, the moment of thinking is prior to the moment of deciding, so it is described as front orientation. Similarly, the moment of getting sick in (1b) serves as a reference event with respect to which prior moment is considered as front orientation. In (1c), the event of marrying is a reference event against which getting fat (narrated event) is located. Since the moment of getting fat is subsequent to the moment of getting married, the narrated moment is elaborated as back orientation.

In contexts where the speaker describes a certain moment from the perspective of the speech event, both *fit* ‘front’ and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘back’, may show future and past times.<sup>7</sup> In this case, the extended meanings of the orientational terms *fit* ‘front’ and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘back’, depend on particular prepositions preceding them. For example, if the preposition is *bə* ‘at’, the prepositional phrase *bəfit* ‘at the front’ is being ascribed to past times as in (2a) while the prepositional phrase *bəh<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘at the back’ is used to show future times as in (2b) below.

- (2) a. *tə=ahun > bə=fit mann- wədə izzih al-mət’t’a-mm*  
*[tahun] imm*  
 from=now at=front who-FOC to here NEG-come.3SG.M-NCM  
 ‘Nobody yet came here.’ (lit. ‘Nobody came to here in front of now.’)
- b. *tə=ahun bə=h<sup>w</sup>ala mann- zimm al-ji-l-imm > [ajilimm]*  
*imm*  
 from=now at=back who- silent NEG-3SG.M-say.IPFV-NCM  
 FOC  
 ‘Hereafter, nobody will keep silent.’ (lit. ‘Nobody will keep silent in the back of now.’)

<sup>7</sup> This is also attested in the standard Amharic variety (cf. Derib 2016:114).

If the preposition which precedes orientational terms such as *fit* ‘front’ and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘back’ is *wadə* ‘to’, the prepositional phrase *wadə fit* ‘to front’ shows unspecified future times as in (3a) below. The prepositional phrase *wadə h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘to back’ connotes near future times as in (3b) and past times in situations where it occurs in non-actual movements like ego-moving time metaphors as in (3c) below.

- ‘She has not fallen and will not fall in love with anybody else but you.’ (lit. She has never fallen in love with anybody but you; she will not fall in love to the front...)’ (Getaneh, 2017, p. 544)

- b. *wədə hʷala i-t-təkka-ll-ih-all-əhu*  
to back 1SG-PASS-substitute.IPFV-APPL.BEN-OBJ2SG.M-AUX-1SG.M  
‘I will substitute you later.’ (lit. ‘I will be substituted for you  
to the back.’)
- c. *wədə hʷala hid-ən ...*  
to back go.CVB-1PL ...  
‘We having gone to the past...’ (lit ‘We having gone to the  
back...’) (spoken text)

Amharic speakers may use the speech participants (that is, speakers and listeners) as a temporal anchor to describe certain moments. In such a case, the orientational term *fit* 'front' is preceded by the morpheme *jə-* 'of' and is followed by the first person plural number possessive marker -

*at/t/în* ‘our.’ The inflected term *jəfitat/t/în* ‘our front’ is being ascribed to future times, more precisely near future times as in (4) below. It points out a particular near future time from many other future times with the same name.

- (4) a. *jə-fit-at/t/în* *ihud* *iht-e*  
 GEN-front-POSS1PL Sunday sister-POSS1SG  
*tī-t-dar-all-ət/t/* > [tiddaralləj]  
 3SG.F-PASS-give.in.marriage.IPFV-AUX-3SG.F  
 ‘My sister will marry next Sunday.’ (lit. ‘My sister will be given in marriage our front Sunday.’)
- b. *jə-fit-at/t/în* *məskərəm* *abbo* *sost* *n-əu* > [nəw]  
 GEN-front-POSS1PL September fifth.day three COP-3SGM  
 ‘In the coming September 5, she will be three years old.’ (lit. ‘Our front September 5 is her 3rd birthday.’)

In these examples, the term *jəfitat/t/în* ‘of our front’, singles out the near future time units *ihud* ‘Sunday’ (4a) and *məskərəm abbo* ‘September 5’ (4b) from many other future times to be called by these names. This implies that near-future times are conceived as entities located as front orientation.

Although Derib (2016) states that the concept of TIME in Amharic can be conceived as two-dimensional entity by using the directional terms *fit* ‘front’ and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘back’ as linguistic evidence, the present study argues that these terms are one-dimensional terms (cf. Boroditsky, 2000; Gentner, Imai & Boroditsky, 2002), and they demonstrate that time can be comprehended as one-dimensional entity in the language. This is because the use of such dimensional terms in temporal expression shows a sequence of times (time-framed events) in a linear order. A linear line is one-dimensional not two- or three-dimensional (cf. Evans, 2013). I buttress the argument with the following example.

- (5) *sik’lät* *tə=fasiga* *bə=fit* *nə-u* > [nəu]  
 Good\_Friday from=Easter at=front COP-3SG.M  
*irgät* *dəgmo* > [dəmmo] *tə=fasiga* *bə=h<sup>w</sup>ala*  
 Ascension but from=Easter at=back  
 ‘Good Friday is before Easter, and Ascension is after it.’ (lit. Good Friday is at the front of Easter but Ascension at the back of it.)

In this utterance, the terms *fit* ‘front’ and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘back’, show that the times (i.e., time-framed concepts) *sik’lät* ‘Good Friday’, *fasiga* ‘Easter’ and *irgät* ‘Ascension’ are in sequence on the sagittal axis. This means that they express a sequential relationship between events. Here, *fasiga* ‘Good

Friday’ is a reference event against which *sik’lat* ‘Good Friday’ and *irgāt* ‘Ascension’ are described. These events are temporally ordered with respect to each other. The term *fit* ‘front’ indicates that *sik’lat* ‘Good Friday’, which functions as a temporal figure, happens ahead of *fasiga* ‘Easter’ that serves as temporal ground, while *h<sup>w</sup>ala* ‘back’ shows that *irgāt* ‘Ascension’ happens after *fasiga* ‘Easter.’ Thus, such dimensional terms instantiate the conceptual metaphor SEQUENCE IS POSITION. Time is usually construed as one-dimensional cross-linguistically (cf. Evans, 2013; Moore, 2014; Tenbrink 2007:23).

Moreover, Derib (2016) mentions that time in Amharic can move from left to right or in the reverse direction. He considers earlier times as left, while later times as right. However, the present study does not find single linguistic evidence that shows time in Amharic moves from left to right or in the reverse direction. The directions of movement can be earlier-to-later and later-to-earlier. This does not show that the movement is from left to right direction or in the reverse direction. According to Santiago et al. (2007), no language uses linguistic expressions of the left-right axis to elaborate time.

#### Ego-moving Metaphors

In Amharic, ego-moving of metaphor is explored. The abstract concept of TIME can be structured in terms of our physical experience of motion where time units are understood as path (locations) and the ego moves along them.

- (6) a. *i=liɜnnət-e*                      *zəmən*    *dəriss-e* >[*dəriffə*]    *mət’t’a-hu*  
 at=childhood-POSS1SG    time    arrive.CVB-1SG    come-1SG  
 ‘I remembered my childhood.’ (lit. ‘I having arrived at my childhood time and came back.’) (Meseret, 2017, p. 5)
- b.    *wədə*    *k’ətir*    *gidim*    *i-mət’a-all-əhu* >[*imət’alləhu*]  
       to        midday    near    1SG-come.IPFV-AUX-1SG  
       ‘I will come around midday.’ (Getaneh 2017:46)
- c.    *wədə*    *mata*    *gidim...*  
       to        night    around  
       ‘In the evening’ (lit. ‘Around the evening’) (Getaneh, 2017, p. 260)
- d.    *mi/t-u*                      *səne*    *laj*    *nə-u* >[*nəw*]    *jə-həd-ət/tif* > [jəhədəj]  
       wife-POSS3SG.M    June    on    COP-3SG.M    REL-go-3SG.F  
       ‘It is on June that his wife left him.’ (lit. ‘It is June that his wife went.’)

In the linguistic metaphor<sup>8</sup> (6a), the preposition *i-* ‘at’ shows that the time concept *liḡnət zəmən* ‘time of childhood’ serves as a goal of the movement. The motion verbs *dəriss->[dəriff-]* ‘having arrived’ and *mət’t’a-* ‘came’ are used metaphorically to mean the speaker remembers the past time by moving (at cognitive level) from the temporal source (that is, moment of utterance’) to the temporal goal (that is, *liḡnnət zəmən* ‘time of childhood’) and came back from his temporal source (that is, *liḡnnət zəmən* ‘time of childhood’) to his temporal goal (that is, moment of utterance’). Notice that the time *liḡnət zəmən* ‘time of childhood’ functions as a goal of precedent metaphorical movement and a source of the subsequent movement which is expressed by the *mət’t’a-* ‘came.’ The expression in (6a) suggests that two-way directions of metaphorical movement: the earlier-to-later and the later-to-earlier are attested. Earlier-to-latter direction of motion is the direction of ego-moving metaphors, while later-to-earlier direction of motion is the direction of time-moving metaphors except for the time to be expressed is imaginative earlier times. If the time to be elaborated is an imaginative past time as in (6a), both directions of motion can be found in time-moving and ego-moving metaphors. The spatial term *gīdim* ‘around’ in (6b) and (6c) demonstrates that the time units *k’ətir* ‘midday’ in (6b) and *mata* ‘night’ in (143c) are conceived as temporal locations. Similarly, the spatial term *laj* ‘on’ in (6d) indicates that the month *səne* ‘June’ is understood as a location.

From the above utterances, we can draw the following mappings between space and time. The one who is moving corresponds to the one who is experiencing time; different locations map onto different times; co-location is associated with simultaneity. The linguistic metaphors in (6) are, therefore, the manifestations of the conceptual metaphor **TIMES ARE LOCATIONS**.

A period of time can be conceived as a bounded space where the ego moves into, out of, and locates in. Consider the examples in (7) below.

(7) a. *hulətt fiḥ                      asir?and    amətə\_mihṛət > [amətə\_mirət]    gəbba-n*

<sup>8</sup> Note that the terms “linguistic metaphor” and “conceptual metaphor” are used frequently in the analysis. For a better understanding, they need to be distinguished. Kövecses (2010b:4) states that the former refers to “words or other linguistic expressions that came from the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain,” while the latter refers to a mapping of two domains (that is, from source domain onto target domain). Thus, conceptual metaphors are the underlying form of linguistic metaphors. This means that linguistic metaphors are specific expressions, the surface manifestations of conceptual metaphors.

two thousand eleven year.of.mercy enter-1PL  
 ‘The year 2011 E.C has begun.’ (lit. ‘We entered into 2011 E.C’)

- b. *niḥase-n tə=wət’t’an-əw...*  
 August-PER if=exit-1PL-OBJ3SG.M  
 ‘If we pass August ...’ (lit. ‘If we exit from August ...’) (spoken text)

The path oriented motion verbs *gəbba-* ‘enter’ in (7a) and *wət’t’a-* ‘exit’ in (7b) literally denote movement into and out of a bounded space respectively. In the linguistic metaphors, the motion verbs *gəbba-* ‘enter’ in (7a) and *wət’t’a-* ‘exit’ (7b) are used to elaborate the beginning and end of a certain periods respectively. In (7a), the verb *gəbba-* ‘enter’ implies that the time unit *hulət ji- asirand amətə mirət* ‘2011 E.C’ is understood as a location, specifically as a bounded space. Here, movement into a bounded space maps onto the situation of starting to experience that period. The verb *wət’t’a-* ‘exit’ in (7b) demonstrates that the time unit *niḥase* ‘August’ is understood as a bounded space, and the end of a certain period is considered as moving out of that bounded space.

The ascription of a bounded region in space to a period is also explored in non-ego moving time metaphors as in (8) below.

- (8) a. *bə=hulət amət wist’ jə-imm-ji-t-kəfəl > [immikkəfəl]...*  
 at=two year in REL-IMP-3SG.M-PASS-pay.IPFV  
 ‘...That to be paid within two years’ (spoken text)

- b. *antə bə=hulət sammint wist’ jih-n sira t’ərris*  
 you at=two week in this-ACC task finish.IMP.2SG.M  
 ‘Complete this task within two weeks!’ (introspection)

The spatial term *wist’* ‘in’ in these linguistic metaphors reveals that the time units such as *amət* ‘year’ in (8a) and *sammint* ‘week’ in (8b) are organized as bounded regions. The linguistic metaphors in (7) and (8) yield the conceptual metaphor AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME IS A BOUNDED SPACE.

Furthermore, in Amharic, the NEAR-FAR image schema is relevant for the conceptualization of time. In other words, the abstract concept of TIME can be perceived in terms of spatial proximity. In such a case, the moment of utterance or the reference event is conceptualized as a deictic center; short times from the moment of utterance are viewed as near locations; long times from moment of utterance are conceived as far locations.

- (9) a. *bə=k'irb gize ti-mət'a-all-əh >[timət'alləh] wəj*  
 at=near time 2SG.M-come.IPFV-AUX-2SG.M INTER  
 'Will you come soon?' (lit. 'Will you come at a near time?') (spoken text)
- b. *k'an-u-n bə=k'it'-u al-i-awik'-əw-imm > [alawik'əwimm]*  
 time-DEF-ACC with=proper-DEF NEG-1SG-know.IPFV-OBJ3SG.M-NCM  
*indzi k'irb gize nə-u >[nəw] jə-mot-ə*  
 but near time COP-3SG.M REL-die-3SG.M  
 'Even though I do not know the exact day, he died not long ago.'  
 (spoken text)
- c. *ajin-u-n tə=ajj-əhu-t >[ ruk' gize nə-u >*  
*tajjəhut]* *[nəw]*  
 eye-POSS3SG.M-ACC since=see-1SG-OBJ3SG.M far time COP-3SG.M  
 'It is long time ago since I met him.' (lit. 'It is a far time that I saw his eye.')
- d. *t'imk'ət indzi fasiga ink<sup>w</sup>an gəna ruk' nə-u > [nəw]*  
 Epiphany not Easter INT still far COP-3SG.M  
 'Easter is still remote, but not Epiphany.'

The spatial term *k'irb* 'near' in (9a) shows that the time of *coming* is going to happen soon. In (9b), it depicts a time of death as near past. This implies that the spatial term *k'irb* 'near' can be used to talk about times close to the moment of utterance irrespective of past and future. The use of the spatial term *ruk'* 'far' in (9c) depicts a time of meeting as a remote past. In (9d), it shows *fasiga* 'Easter' as a remote future. Thus, the spatial term *ruk'* 'far' connotes remote past and future.

#### Time-moving Metaphors

In Amharic, time-moving metaphors are common. The ego can be understood as a deictic center and moments can be comprehended as moving entities that move toward or away from the deictic center. Future times undergo a venitive movement (that is, they move toward the ego) as in (10) below, whereas past times undergo an andative movement (that is, they move away from the ego) as in (11) below. Notice that the direction of the metaphorical motions below is later-to-earlier. This implies that later time is a temporal source, and an earlier time is a temporal goal.

- (10) a. *ikulələlit si=ji-t-k'arəb > [sik'k'arəb]*  
 midnight when=3SG.M-MID-get.approach.IPFV  
 'When midnight approaches ...' (Getaneh, 2017, p. 69)
- b. *awidamət jə-mət't'u indəhu tə=sələsa bələj hon-*

at/i/hu

festive.period REL- if from=thirty above be-2PL  
 come.3SG.M  
*ti-t-səbəsəb-u* > [*tissəbəsəbu*] *nəbbər*  
 3-MID-gather.IPFV-PL COP.PST.3SG.M  
 ‘When a festive period came, more than thirty of you gathered together.’ (Getaneh, 2017, p. 334)

C *kifu k’ən ji-mət’a-all* > [*jimət’all*]  
 hard time 3SG.M-come.IPFV-AUX  
 ‘Hard times will come.’

d. *t’om-u tə-t’əgga*  
 fast-DEF MID-approach.3SG.M  
 ‘The fasting period approached. (introspection)’

In these examples, the motion verbs in boldface are venitive. And the concept of TIME, which is manifested as *ikulələlīt* ‘midnight’ in (10a), *awidamət* ‘the festive period’ in (10b), *kifu k’ən* ‘hard times’ in (10c), and *t’om* ‘fasting period’ in (10d) is understood as a spatial figure in the linguistic metaphors. The motion verbs show that these time concepts, which are future moments, move toward the ego (that is, the deictic center).

- (11) a. *amətbāl-u alləf-ə*  
 holiday-DEF pass-3SG.M  
 ‘The holiday passed.’
- b. *ja dəgg k’ən əlf-o*  
 that good time pass.CVB-3SG.M  
 ‘That good time having passed ...’ (spoken text)
- c. *tə=tə-gənəqən-ən sost amət alləf-ə*  
 from=MID-meet-1PL three year pass-3SG.M  
 ‘Three years passed since we met.’

The motion verb *alləf-* ‘pass’ in (11) is an andative verb. It indicates that temporal concepts such as *amətbāl* ‘holiday’ in (11a), *dəgg k’ən* ‘good times’ in (11b) and *sost amət* ‘three years’ in (11c), which are past times, move away from the deictic center, that is, the observer. Here, the deictic center (i.e., observer) is viewed as static.

In time moving metaphors, a period can also be comprehended as the movement of an entity into and out of a bounded region in space. In such a case, a period is simultaneously conceived as a moving entity and as a bounded space.

- Moreover, in time moving metaphors, spatialization metaphors suggest that happy times and busy times can be conceived as fast movements (see examples in (13) below), and bad times and idle times can be understood as slow movements (see examples in (14) below). This means that Amharic manner verbs expressing the speed of movement can be metaphorically used to describe the subjective experience of duration that deviates from the normal experience of time.<sup>9</sup> Evans (2004:115) mentions two concepts in relation to subjective temporal experience such as “temporal compression” and “protracted duration.” The former refers to

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“the phenomenon in which temporal experience is felt to be proceeding more quickly than usual.” The latter implies the situation in which experience of duration is felt to be moving more slowly than normal temporal experience.

- (13) a. *k'an-u { wər-u }* *indet ji-rot'-all*  
           time-DEF { month-DEF } how 3SG.M-run.IPFV-AUX  
           ‘How the time runs!’
- b. *siʔat-u > [sihatu]* *ji-kənf-all*  
           time-DEF 3SG.M-fly.IPFV-AUX  
           ‘The time flies.’
- c. *k'an-u bərrər-ə*  
           time-DEF fly-3SG.M  
           ‘The time flew.’

In these examples, the concept of TIME, which is manifested as *k'an* ‘time’, *wər* ‘month’ and *siʔat* ‘time’, is viewed as a temporal figure. The motion verbs *-rot* ‘run’ in (13a), *-kənf* ‘fly, wing’ in (13b) and *bərrər-* ‘fly’ in (13c) connote fast speed of movement of time. Such types of spatialization metaphors can be used to talk about times in which one is having fun or one is busy. This implies that utterances in (13) elaborate experience of “temporal compression.” That is, the speaker (in the role of conceptualizer) uses such type of expressions to refer to the experience of duration that appears to be moving more quickly than the normal experience of time. The preference of the motion verbs *-rot* ‘run’ in (13a), *-kənf* ‘fly, wing’ in (13b) and *bərrər-* ‘fly’ in (13c) depends on the conceptualizer’s subjective experience of duration. For instance, in situations when one feels that time past more rapidly than usual, he may use the verb *-rot* ‘run’ as in (13a); when he feels that time past very fast than usual, he may prefer the verb *bərrər-* ‘fly’ as in (13c); and if he perceives that time past in extremely fast speed than usual, he may employ the verb *kənf-* ‘fly’ as in (13bc). Thus, the linguistic metaphors in (13) substantiate the claim that “temporal compression” is elaborated in terms of the fast speed of movement.

- (14) a. *k'an-u tə-nk'əraffəf-ə-bb-ij*  
           time-DEF MID-move.sluggishly.IPFV-3SG.M-APPL.MAL-OBJ1SG  
           ‘The time moved sluggishly against me.’
- b. *jə-zare-u k'an təlo təlo al-ji-həd-imm >*  
           >[jəzarew] time quickly quickly [ajihədim] >  
           GEN-today-DEF time quickly quickly NEG-3SG.M-go.IPFV-NCM  
           ‘Today does not move fast.’

The time concept in (14) is also considered as a moving entity. The linguistic expressions in (14) show that time is moving at slow speed. Such types of expressions are preferably used when someone is experiencing bad times or when he is idle. In other words, the utterances in (14) elaborate abnormal experiences of durations. Specifically, they refer to temporal experiences that appear to be moving more slowly than usual. Notice that the use of such types of expressions does not reflect the speed of time's movement that can be measured by a clock. Instead, the speed of time's movement is determined by the conceptualizer's subjective experience of duration.

## 1. Summary

This paper **describes** how the abstract concept of TIME is conceptualized in terms of the concrete concept of SPACE in Amharic, in particular the variety spoken in Godzdzam. The analysis shows that orientational, time-moving, and ego-moving metaphors are found in the language. In orientational metaphors, the spatial terms *fit* 'front' and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* 'back' denote future and past times depending on the temporal anchor that a speaker uses. When a speaker describes a narrated event from the perspective of a reference event, *fit* 'front' represents prior moments, whereas *h<sup>w</sup>ala* 'back' refers to subsequent events. On the other hand, in situations when a speaker describes a narrated event from the perspective of the speech event, both *fit* 'front' and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* 'back' can express future and past times depending on the prepositions preceding them. If the preceding preposition is *bə* 'at', *fit* 'front' and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* 'back' denote past and future times, respectively. But if the preposition is *wədə* 'to, toward', *fit* 'front' and *h<sup>w</sup>ala* 'back' designate future and past times, respectively.

It is also found out that the direction of motion of Amharic ego-moving metaphors is earlier-to-later but later-to-earlier for time-moving metaphors. Moreover, the study **explores** that the Amharic speech community use the following conceptual metaphors in the description of time such as TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT, TIMES ARE LOCATIONS, TIME PASSING IS MOTION OVER A LANDSCAPE, SEQUENCE IS POSITION, and AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME IS A BOUNDED REGION IN SPACE.

Finally, verbs encoding slow speed of movement (e.g., *tənk'əraffəf*- 'move sluggishly') and lack of movement (e.g., *k'<sup>w</sup>əm*- 'stand') metaphorically express "protracted duration." On the other hand, manner verbs denoting fast speed of movement (e.g., *fət't'an*- 'speed', *rot*- 'run', *bərrər*- 'fly', *kənnəf*- 'fly', etc.) describe "temporal compression."

This means that when one feels that time past more rapidly than usual, he may use motion verbs denoting fast speed of movement to refer to such temporal experience.

## Abbreviations

|         |                             |       |                        |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| 1, 2, 3 | first, second, third person | INTER | Interrogative          |
| ACC     | accusative                  | IPFV  | Imperfective           |
| APPL    | applicative                 | M     | masculine              |
| AUX     | auxiliary                   | MAL   | malefactive            |
| BEN     | benefactive                 | MID   | middle voice           |
| CNT     | contingent aspect           | NCM   | negative clause marker |
| CSA     | central statistical agency  | NEG   | negation               |
| COP     | copula                      | OBJ   | object                 |
| CVB     | converb                     | PASS  | passive                |
| DEF     | definite                    | PER   | perlative              |
| F       | feminine                    | PL    | plural                 |
| FOC     | focus                       | POSS  | possessive             |
| GEN     | genitive                    | PST   | past                   |
| IMP     | imperative                  | REL   | relative               |
| INS     | instrumental                | SG    | singular               |
| INT     | interjection                |       |                        |

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