

Creative and conventional  
metaphors of time  
in contemporary English prose

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What is time?

# Social time and its implications

- Human organs of perception don't detect the flow of time
- Time is a “silent language” (E. T. Hall, 1983) underlining all social interactions
- Juxtaposition of natural and social time (V. Yakovlev, 1980)

# Historical context

- “Time-monopoly” of the Catholic Church
- Time was viewed as a God-given power
- Technology and secularization of time
- New temporal relationship in capitalistic society (J. Urry, 2000)
- Time – monetary resource

# Intercultural categories of time

- Polychronic or Monochronic time
- Time orientation
- Linear or cyclic time models
- Clock-time and event-time

# Time in modern Western culture

- Instantaneous time (J. Urry, 2002) – synchronized temporal space of constant connection
- Demassification of time (T. A. Alexina, 2013)
- Temporal mentality – complex of time perception ways inherent to a culture that shapes the attitudes towards time
- Linear view of time -> emergence of the “cult of productivity”

# Slow-movements

- Appeared in Scandinavian countries (W. Parkins, G. Craig, 2006)
- Key values – mindfulness and sustainability ( C. Honoré, 2005)
- Reclaim time and liberate the individual from the “tyranny of the moment” (P. Cilliers, 2006)

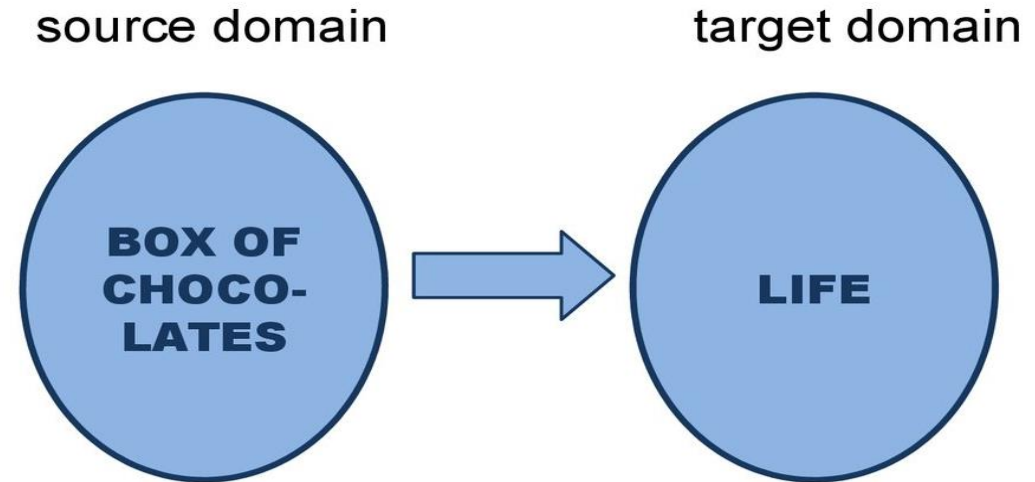
# Verbalizing temporal experience

- Psychological clock (R. Levine, 1997)
- Expressive means of language are the key to speaking about time
- Metaphor in linguistic discourse – from trickery to crucial cognitive device
- Cognitive Metaphor Theory (G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, 1980)
- **A is B/A is like B** structure



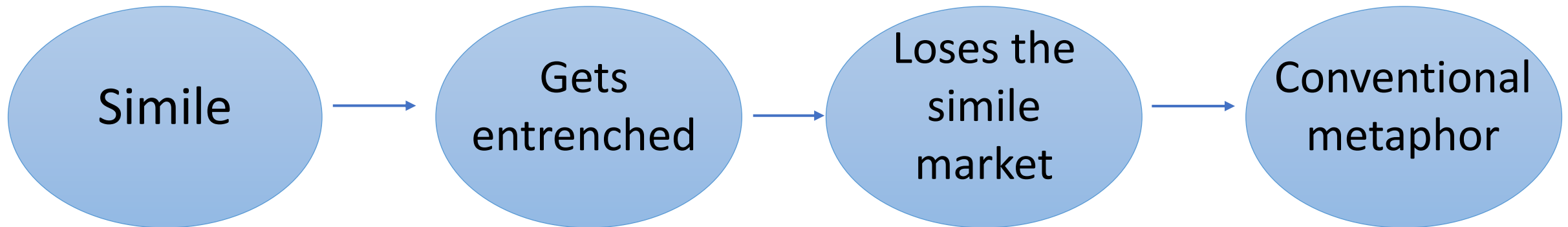
# Conceptual metaphor (Z. Kövecses, 2002)

- **Source domain** – the concept from which the characteristics are derived
- Most popular source domains – food, buildings, war, and journey
- **Target domain** – the less-known concept which is understood in terms of the source domain
- Most popular target domains – love, life, ideas



# Career of Metaphor Theory (B.Bowdle, D. Gentner, 2005)

- Evolutionary view of metaphor



A) **Time is like a creditor**, who allows ample space to make up accounts, but is inexorable at last (Scientific American: N.S. 6. 1862)

B) **Clock time is our bank manager**, tax collector, police inspector (J. B. Priestley, Man and Time)

## Conventional metaphors of time (G. Lakoff, M. Turner (1989))

- **Space metaphors.** TIME IS A LANDSCAPE WE MOVE THROUGH; TIME IS A MOVING ENTITY (*to move ahead of time, to look into the future, the end of time*)
- **Object metaphors.** TIME IS MONEY; TIME IS A RESOURCE (*to budget time, to waste time, time is up*)
- **Person metaphors.** TIME IS A CHANGER; TIME IS A PURSUER; TIME IS A THIEF (*time heals, time will catch you, the time has stolen his youth*)

# Metaphorical creativity

- Linguistic creativity is the most frequent form of creativity
- Everyday creativity (R. Carter, 2016)
- Creative competence (K. Negus, M. J. Pickering, 2004)
- Creativity is a special capacity of all people (R. Carter, 2016)
- Metaphorical creativity (in both parts of the metaphor)

# TIME IS A PERSON

- Clock time is our bank manager, tax collector, police inspector; this time is our wife  
(J. B. Priestley, Man and Time)
- Time is like some balked monster, waiting outside the valley, to pounce on the slackers who have managed to evade him longer than they should  
(James Hilton, Lost Horizon)
- Time is the almost invisible servant, not the master, of this drama  
(J. B. Priestly, Man and time)
- Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine  
(Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451)

# TIME IS A NATURAL PHENOMENON

- Time is like fire: first it dashes forward in an impetuous flare, then it lurks hidden in the slow carbonization of the epochs, and then it twists and darts away in lightninglike and unpredictable zigzags (Joseph Francese, Narrating Postmodern Time and Space)
- Time is a snowball with the past in the center while ever new presents accrete around in, as it rolls down the hill of history (Paul Nahin, Time machines : time travel in physics, metaphysics, and science fiction)

# TIME IS A SUBSTANCE

- Aside from velcro, time is the most mysterious substance in the universe. You can't see it or touch it, yet a plumber can charge you upwards of seventy-five dollars per hour for it, without necessarily fixing anything (Dave Burry)
- And if you wondered what Time sounded like it sounded like water running in a dark cave and voices crying and dirt dropping down upon hollow box lids, and rain. (Ray Bradbury, The Martian Chronicles)
- He imagined time as something that pooled and puddled, wondered if there were places where time hung heavy, places where it was heaped and held – cities, he thought, must be filled with time: all the places where people congregated, where they came and brought time with them (Neil Gaiman, The Monarch of The Glen)

# TIME IS A MECHANISM

- Time is like a crushing machine ruining our structured high quality work (Richard Fox, Creating a purposeful life)
- Time is like standing on a railway platform when a non-stop express train rushes past – it is gone in a flash (Richard Fox, Creating a purposeful life)
- Time is like the dial on a radio. Most people like to settle on a station with a clear signal and no interference... (Marcelo Figueras, Kamchatka)
- Because time is like a marry-go-round within a marry-go-round, it moves but it is somehow the same even if you're riding on an iron tiger (Ralph Ellison, Juneteenth: A Novel)



# TIME IS A RESOURCE

- Time is like a talent that we all have been given to invest and trade with in order to make profits in life (Noah I. Mushet, Speed up your success in times of crisis)
- Maybe time is like money, having no meaning on its own, but acting as a convenient means of exchange (George Musser, The Complete Idiot's Guide to String Theory: Take Your Understanding of Physics into a Whole New Dimension!)
- So far as the gunslinger could see, time was something they had a lot of (Stephen King, The Dark Tower)

# TIME IS AN OBJECT

- The passage of time is like the unrolling of a rug whose pattern has long been established (Thomas V. Morris, *Our idea of God: an introduction to philosophical theology*)
- Time is like a palette of colors, and the whole society is focused on one narrow range of those colors, represented by the clock (Bill Viola's Video Art Display, New York City's Whitney Museum)
- Time is like a huge balloon, when it is deflated, it need lots of energy to fill it up again (Richard Fox, *Creating a purposeful life*)
- I deemed that the time was ripe, and that the Stone had come to me for just such a purpose (J.R.R.Tolkien, *Lord of The Rings, The Return of The King*)

# TIME IS A PLACE

- Time is the worst place, so to speak, to get lost in, as Arthur Dent could testify, having been lost in both time and space a good deal. At least being lost in space kept you busy (Douglas Adams, The hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy)
- Time is like a vast, shimmering Shangri-la that is accessed when we leave the manufactured, regimented world behind (Marie Sherlock, Living simply with children)
- In the Land of Memory, the time is always Now (Stephen King, The Dark Tower VI, Song of Susannah)

# Key ideas

- Temporal experience is one of the key parts of human existence
- Creative metaphors of time are based on one of few conventional conceptual metaphors which get broader or gain a new dimension
- Temporal metaphor studies are a new linguistic field of immense potential
- The findings of this research can be further applied in many disciplines within the scope of humanities

Thank you for your attention!  
Feel free to ask questions!