

Time passing is relative motion: Conceptualization of time in Chinese
[時間的經過是一種相對運動：中文裡時間的概念化]

Hui-Ju Hsiung [熊慧如]^a and Chao-Jan Chen[陳超然]^b

^a **National University of Tainan [國立臺南大學]**

^b **National Chi Nan University [國立暨南國際大學]**

Abstract

This paper reexamines the conceptual metaphor TIME PASSING IS MOTION and deals with the problem of mapping inconsistency between the “moving ego” and “moving time” models in this conceptual metaphor. We argue that time is conceptualized as a system consisting of a dynamic component and a static component, which we call time-flow and time-landscape respectively. Adopting the notion of relative motion, we propose that the “moving ego” and “moving time” viewpoints are actually due to a shift in perspective within the same frame of relative motion. We then propose a unified metaphor about time passing, namely TIME PASSING IS RELATIVE MOTION. In this metaphor, the ego is carried by the time-flow to move past time-landmarks over the time-landscape. We also propose that time is specifically conceptualized as a river in Chinese under this conceptual metaphor.

Keywords: time, space, conceptual metaphor, relative motion, frame, perspective

關鍵詞：時間、空間、概念隱喻、相對運動、框架、視角

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