Metaphorical Extension of Kiswahili Tense: An Application of Conceptual Metaphor Theory

P. I. Iribemwangi and *Mary N. Ndung'u*
University of Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

This paper takes a metaphorical analysis of the Kiswahili tense. The metaphorical mapping processes of the past tense, the present tense and the future tense are interrogated to investigate how these tenses reflect the universal cognitive mechanism of human beings, that is, how learners acquire knowledge from known to unknown. Tense is a grammatical category of Kiswahili verb, and the verb form is used to express these time distinctions. The Kiswahili verb has three tenses; the future tense, the present tense and the past tense.

Key Words: Tense, Front-Back Orientation, Construal, Conceptualisation, Metaphorical Mapping

Introduction: Kiswahili Tense

Tense refers to the grammatical marking of time relative to the time of speaking. Language, in this case Kiswahili, is only described as having tense if it has a distinct morphological verb form that indicates past, present and future time. Kiswahili has markers for all the tenses; *-li-* (was) for past tense, *-na-/-a-* (-ing/is) for present progressive and present, and *-ta-* (will) for future tenses. All the markers are inflected on the root of the auxiliary or content verbs. For example, in:

1. a. *Alikuwa **anacheza**.* (past progressive)
    (S/he was be s/he play)
    (S/he was playing.)

    b. *Atakuwa **anakula**.* (future progressive)
    (S/he will be s/he eat.)
    (S/he will be eating.)

    c. *Anacheza.* (present progressive)
    (S/he is now playing.)
    (S/he is playing.)

    d. *Alicheza.* (past tense)
    (S/he was play.)
    (S/he played.)

e. *Atacheza*. (future tense)
(S/he will play.)
(She will play.)

f. *Aacheza.* (present now)
(S/he now play.)
(S/he plays.)

Kiswahili has no definite marker for the time here and now (time of action). Although the morph *-a-* is used as a marker for that tense, it is deleted in performance. Lexical categories especially the verb in Kiswahili is also used in a construction to indicate time: in the past, present and future as the following example demonstrates:

2. a. **Tunaelekea** *Julai.* (past in the future)
(We are heading to July.)
(We are heading July.)

b. *Kwa majuma matatu* **yanayofuata/yanayokuja**… (future/past)
(For weeks three which are which following…)
(For the coming three weeks…)

c. **Tunapotazama** *miaka ya hivi karibuni…* (future in the past)
(We are then look years of this recent…)
(As we look into the most recent years…)

Kiswahili uses the present time to gain reference to the past and future tense. As observed by Fillmore (1975) in Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 41), language has two contradictory organizations of time:

First, the future is in front and the past is behind as in the example (3a), and (3b):

3. a. *Kazi iliyo* **mbele yetu** *ni nyingi.*
(Work it that ahead us is much.)
(The work **ahead** of us is much.)

b. *Wakati* **umetupita** *sasa.*
(Time it has passed now.)
(Time has **passed** us now.)

Second, the future is behind and the past is in front as given below in example (4a) and (4b):

4. a. *Kwa siku tatu* **zijazo**…
(For days three they come…)
(For the **coming** three days…)

b. *Kwa siku tatu* **zilizotangulia**…
(For days three they preceding…)

(For three **preceding** days…)

The future time described as in front and behind can occur in a single construction as given in example (5):

5. ***Tunangoja*** *siku tatu* ***zinazokuja****…*

    (We are waiting days three they are coming…)

    (We are **waiting** for the **coming** three days…)

From example (5), it appears that *tunangoja* (we are waiting) organizes the future in front while *zinazokuja* (they are coming) organizes it behind. This gives the concept of front-back organization. For instance, consider the following illustrations:
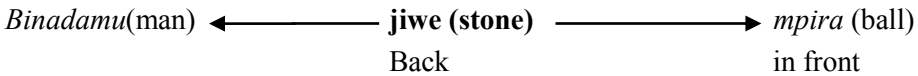
Binadamu(man) ◀──────── **jiwe (stone)** ────────▶ *mpira* (ball)

          Back   in front

Figure 1: The future in front with ball in front of the stone.

Jiwe (Stone) ────────▶ ***binadamu* (man)** ◀──────── *mpira* (ball)

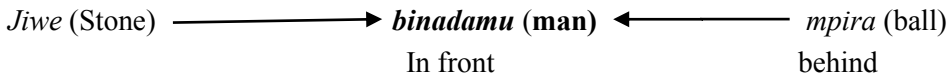   In front   behind

Figure 2: The future behind with man behind the ball.

Moving objects receive a front-back orientation so that the front is in the direction of motion. Time in Kiswahili is structured in terms of TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT, Lakoff and Johnson (1980:42) with the future moving towards us. Consider the following examples for clarification:

6. a. *Wakati **utafika** wa kuondoka.* (Moving towards the present from the future)

    (Time it will arrive of to leave.)

    (The time for leaving will come.)

    b. *Wakati mwingi tayari **umepita**.* (Moving back from the present)

     (Time much already it has passed.)

     (A lot of time has passed.)

    c.*Wakati wa kutenda **umefika**.* (Moving towards the present.)

     (Time of to do it has arrived.)

     (Time for action has come.)

From examples (6a), (6b), and (6c), time is construed as a moving object since it is making a move towards or away from the speaker which makes the time to receive a front-back orientation facing in the direction of motion, just as any moving object would.

In the construal of the future is moving towards us, expressions like in the following examples are used in Kiswahili:

7. *Nimeshindwa **kukabiliana** na wakati.*
   (I am defeated to face with time.)
   (I am defeated to come face to face with time.)

Since future times are facing toward us, the times following them are further in the future and all future times follow the present. Examples (6a), (6b), and (6c), and (7) above, give a consistent detailed metaphorical structure which is part of language users' literal use of language about time, so familiar that speakers would normally not notice it. These examples show that TIME PASSES US, meaning that we are a standing still and time is either passing towards us or away from us, to the front giving the future time or to the back giving the past time.

The passing of time in Kiswahili is also conceptualized as TIME IS STATIONARY AND WE MOVE THROUGH IT (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:43). For instance, in:

8. a. *Tunapitia kipindi kigumu.*
        (We are passing through period hard.)
        (We are going through a hard period.)

   b. *Tunaendelea na kipindi cha Kwaresima.*
   (We are continuing with period of Lent.)
        (We are moving on in the Lenten period.)

   c. *Kupitia miaka ya themanini na tisini…*
        (To pass through years of eighties and nineties…)
        (Through the eighties and nineties…)

Examples (8a), (8b) and (8c), show that WE PASS THROUGH TIME, meaning that we are moving and time is standing still. Time is thus understood as the relative motion with respect to us, with the future in front and the past behind. This generates the two sub-cases of the same metaphor where: Time is a moving object and moves towards us, and time is stationary and we move through it in the direction of the future. Time goes past us, from front to back as shown in the diagram:

Time is a moving object   From our point of view, time   Time
                               is stationary and we

and moves towards us.   goes past us, from front to back.   move through
                               it in the
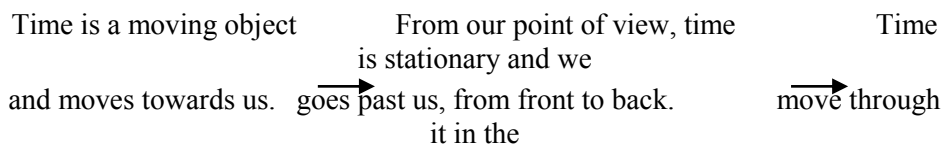
direction of the future.

The metaphor TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT and TIME IS STATIONARY AND WE MOVE THROUGH IT entail that from the speaker's point of view, time goes past from front to back and that she/he also moves through time. The metaphors are coherent because their metaphorical concepts are defined in terms of more general categories rather than concrete images. This is evident in the

metaphor TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT where there are various ways in which something can move as in:

9. *a. Wakati unakimbia.*
> (Time it is running.)
> (Time is running.)

b. *Wakati unajikokota.*
> (Time it is itself pulling.)
> (Time is pulling itself.)

c.*Wakati unayoyoma.*
> (Time it is finishing.)
> (Time is getting finished.)

Constructions in example (9) imply that time can run, can drag itself, and can get finished as in examples (9a), (9b) and (9c) respectively, which is a reflection of the metaphor TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT.

In conclusion, this section has laid a basis of the relationship between time in the present, time behind and time in front. The following sections discuss the metaphorical time in Kiswahili, in the past, present and the future.

Kiswahili Tense from a Metaphorical Perspective

The metaphorical approach used in this section provides a new perspective for the study of the Kiswahili tense. The Kiswahili verb has three tenses with it, namely the future tense/the time in front, the present tense and the past tense/the time behind. For example, in:

10. a. *Baadaye basi li**li**kombolewa kutokana na dhuluma ya udongo. Li**li**pata uhuru na kuondoka.*
    (Later bus it was saved from oppression of mud. It did get freedom and to move.)
    (Later the bus **was** rescued from the harassing mud. It **got** freedom and **moved** on.)

    b. *Ndiyo! **Yaambie (masikio) yakae, yasikilize**.*
    (Yes! Them (ears) tell they stay, they listen.)
    (Yes! **Tell** (ears) them to stay, and **listen**.)

    c. *Mishale i**ta**zaa bunduki za kawaida.*
    (Arrows they will birth guns of common.)
    (Arrows **will** give birth to common guns.)

Examples (10a), (10b) and (10c), represent the past, present and future tenses respectively in Kiswahili. The past tense is marked by the morpheme *–li-* (was) in *li**li**kombolela* (it was rescued) and *li**li**pata* (it got) in example (10a)which construes the time behind the time of speaking. The present tense is marked by the morpheme

-*a*- which is undergoes a morphophonological deletion in the verbs *ya-**a**-ambie,* (tell them), *ya-**a**-kae* (they stay), and *ya-**a**-sikilize* (they listen) which construes the time of speaking in example (10b). The future tense is marked by the morpheme –*ta*- (will) in ***itazaa*** (they will give birth) which construes the time in front of the time of speech in example (10c).

The metaphorical mapping processes of the past tense, present tense and the future tense reflect the universal cognitive mechanism of human beings, that is, learners acquire knowledge from known to unknown. This means understanding concepts from the present, the time of speaking, backwards to the past or forwards to the future. Tense is a grammatical category of the verb, it is the verb form to express time distinctions. Tense locates the designated process with reference to the time of speech event (Langacker, 1991: 250). Thus, the present tense indicates the occurrence of a full instantiation of the profiled process that precisely coincides with the time of speaking; the past tense indicates the occurrence of a full instantiation of the profiled process prior to the time of speaking and the future tense indicates the occurrence of a full instantiation of the profiled process after the time of speaking. The Kiswahili tense is mainly based on the notion of grounding, designating the process of establishing a conceptual relationship with the communicative scene.

Kiswahili Past Tense from a Metaphorical Perspective
The past tense is used to locate an event or state at some point or period in time prior to the moment of speaking or writing, and that polysemy or meaning extension is not a property of words alone, Taylor (2001), in Linying (2012). The past tense also exhibits a cluster of related meanings, that is, the past time, the counter factuality and the pragmatic softening, which can be counted as an instance of polysemy. The enlargement of the meanings of the past tense is a process of cross-domain mapping, in other words, metaphorical mapping. In the analysis of Kiswahili past tense, the metaphorical approach to the study of the past tense is adapted. In the following, the specific process of the metaphorical extensions of the past tense is represented, including the extensions to the reality domain or the prototypical meaning and the psychology domain or the unreality of an event or state.

In Taylor's opinion, the past time use, first, is the prototypical and the usual meaning of the past tense as illustrated in example (10a). The second use of the past tense is to indicate the unreality (or counterfactuality) of an event or state, which is restricted to a small number of environments, including, if-conditionals, like in:

11. *Ningekuwa na mabawa ningeruka hadi mbinguni.* (If-conditionals)
    (I if be with wings I would jump until heaven.)
    (If I had wings I would jump up to heaven.)

Use of expressions of wishes and desires, like in:

12. *Ningeenda kumtembelea.*(wishes and desires)
    (I would go to him/her visit.)
    (I would have visited him/her.)

and use of suppositions and suggestions, like in:

13. *Kama tungeenda mtoni.* (Suppositions and suggestions)
    (If we went river to.)
    (If/suppose we went to the river.)

The third use is the use of the past tense as pragmatic softener, as in instances of:

14. a. *Ungeweza kunipikia chai?*
    (You be could to me cook for tea?)
    (Could you cook for me tea?)

    b. *Angeweza kuwa na habari hizo.*
    (She/he might to have with news those.)
    (She/he might be having those news.)

    c.*Wewe ungeweza kusema naye.*
    (You you be can able to speak to her.)
    (You should speak to her.)

From example (41a)*,* (41b), and (41c), the use of the verb *–ngeweza* (could/might/should) makes the statements to have a polite tone. The speaker uses the past time to make a statement in the present tense to show the possibility of actions happening without the recipient feeling obliged to take action.

The past tense is has a polysemic characteristic, Taylor (2001), in Kovecses (2010:260). The past time use of the past tense, that is, the temporal location prior to the speech moment, is more typical and salient, which is the central sense or the prototype. The basic sense of the past tense is extended by means of a double metaphorization INVOLVEMENT IS CLOSENESS and LACK OF INVOLVEMENT IS DISTANCE. To be polite and tactful implies lack of involvement. For example, in saying:

15. **Nilikuwa** *nauliza kama utakuwa ofisini kesho.*
    (I was be asking if you will be office in tomorrow.)
    (I **was** asking if you will be in office tomorrow.)

In Kiswahili the use of the past tense *nilikuwa* (I was) in example (15),distances the speaker from the direct force of the utterance. This gives this metaphorical construction the pragmatic softener function and that it construes the

domain in terms of psychological space. The conceptual potential of 'politeness is space and distance' (Zhang 2010) is realized through metaphorical constructions in which the past tense plays the role of pragmatic softener when an utterance is used in the present time. In Kiswahili past tense reality domain, language users' tend to use the past tense to talk about things whose reality they are not sure of. For example, in:

16. a. *Kama wangeondoka mapema **wangefika** kabla ya saa nane.*

(If they had left early they would be they have arrived before time eight.)

(If they had left earlier they would have arrived before two.)

b. *Na kama mtu **alikuwa** anatufuata.*

(And if someone he/she was be he/she us following.)

(Suppose someone **was** following us.)

The past tense verbs *wangefika* (they would have arrived) in example (16a) and *alikuwa* (was) in example (16b) are described as unconventional because they refer to either the event/state at the present moment or that in the future. The past tense verbs in examples (16a) and (16b)express the HYPOTHETICAL meaning, Leech (1978: 10). The hypothetical past is mainly used in certain subordinate clauses, especially in if-clauses like in *na kama* (and if) in example (16b), and expresses what is contrary to the belief or expectation of the speaker or denotes remoteness in time and reality.

The hypothetical past is a metaphorical extension of the common or prototypical use of the past tense. Examples (16a) and (16b) express hypothetical meaning and can be analyzed in the reality domain. Image schemas are meaningful at the conceptual level precisely because they derive from the level of bodily experience, which is meaningful. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) both claim that image schema could serve as source domains for metaphorical mapping to structure more abstract concepts or domains. The mapping from the time domain to the reality domain is as explained below:

Time Domain → **Reality Domain**

(Concrete Domain) **(Direction of mapping)(Abstract Domain)**
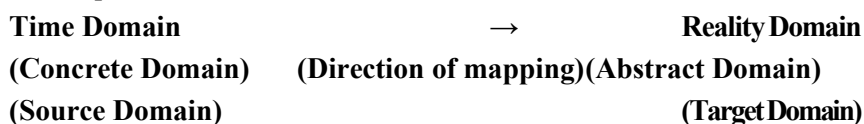
(Source Domain) **(Target Domain)**

Figure 3: The mapping of the distance image schema from the time domain onto reality domain

In this process, the potential similarities of the source domain (the time domain) and the target domain (the reality domain) are found during the mapping process. Language users' metaphorical thinking makes them to see the relationship between concepts and then produce the mapping from the concrete domain to the abstract domain. This explains why people use the past tense when talking about something unreal, as in the following examples:

17. a. *Kama wangeondoka mapema **wangefika** kabla ya saa nane.*
(If they had left early they would be they have arrived before time eight.)
(If they had left earlier they would have arrived before two.)

b. *Ningekuwa na mabawa ningeruka hadi mbinguni.*
(I wish be with wings I would jump up to heaven.)
(If I had wings I would jump up to heaven.)

c. *Kama ningemsikiliza mwalimu wangu ningekuwa mbali maishani.*
(If I had listened to teacher my I would be far life in.)
(If I had listened to my teacher I would have advanced in life.)

The past tense form *wangefika* (they would have arrived) in example (17a) which is initially used to indicate a temporal distance, is now mapped onto the reality domain through cross-domain mapping. There is a distance between the event/state, of having left early, and reality, of arriving before two in the afternoon. In example (17a), *wangefika* (they would have arrived) suggests that the wish is unreal, that is they never made it before two because they had not left early. Therefore, when hearers are confronted with this unconventional uses of the past tense, they realize that the speaker is actually expressing a counterfactual wish that if the referents had left earlier they would arrive at a specific place before two. The use of the past tense in the conditional metaphorical constructions reminds the recipient of the utterance that the condition described in the subordinate clause *kama wangeondoka mapema* (If they had left earlier) is a wish and might not be true. Thus, the past tense in these cases marks a disassociation from the truth of the proposition.

The past tense form in the hypothetical past is used to give some suggestion, advice, and sometimes there are implications in the sentences. For example in example (17c), the implication is that the speaker never listened to the teacher and the implication of not listening would be having bad life later in his/her life. From example (17a) there is the indication that "they did not leave early", example (17b) suggests that "The speaker does not have wings", and example (17c) implies that "The speaker did not listen to his/her teacher". This leads to the interpretation that the so-called "hypothetical past" is a metaphorical extension of the prototypical use of the past tense. Based on the distance image schema, we can map the distance in the time domain onto the reality domain.

The image schema of the past tense can be mapped onto the psychology domain, Yi (1999) and Taylor (2001), in Linying (2012:31). In Kiswahili this claim is adapted through the analysis of the attitudinal past where in daily conversation speakers often use another type of the past tense, which refers neither to the past time nor to unreality. For example, in:

18. A: *Ulinihitaji*?
    (You did need me?)
    (**Did** you need me?)

   B: *Naam, **nilidhani ungenisaidia** kupaka rangi.*
    (Yes, I did think you would me help to apply paint.)
    (Yes, I **thought you would** help me with painting.)

19. *Tafadhali, **nilitaka** kukuuliza jambo.*
    (Excuse, I did want to you ask something.)
    (Excuse me I **wanted** to ask you something.)

It is clear from example (18) that the verb past tense form *–li-* (did) in *u-**li**-ni-hitaji* (you **did** need me) has nothing to do with past time, because we can infer from the example that the subject of this exchange is most probably the present wishes of speaker B. Speaker B does want a hand from A. The use of the past tense in example (18) refers to the present feelings or thoughts of the speaker A or hearer B. The use of the past tense in example (18b) is a pragmatic softener, which involves double metaphorization: the first is the TIME-AS-SPACE mapping, and the second mapping applies the schema of distance and proximity to the domain of involvement. The same case applies in example (19)through the use of the past tense from *–li-* in *ni-**li**-tak-a* (I want**ed**).

Like the hypothetical past, the Kiswahili attitudinal past is also a metaphorical extension of the prototypical use of the past tense. The metaphorical mapping doesn't come from the similarities of objects themselves but from the encyclopedia knowledge of the objective world and man's thinking. It is people's metaphorical thinking that makes people see the relationship between concepts and produces the mapping from the time domain to the psychology domain. The attitudinal past underlies many everyday expressions. In example (18b)the present tense and the past tense, in this context, are actually interchangeable; but there is an important difference of tone between them. The present tense *ni**na**dhani* (I think) marked by the form *–na-* from the past tense *ni**li**dhani* (I thought) in example (18)would seem rather outright and demanding, which would make the request difficult to refuse without impoliteness. And the present tense in *ni**na**taka* (I want) from the past tense *ni**li**taka* (I wanted) in example (19)might contain commanding overtones, and would make the recipient have a negative attitude towards the speaker. The present tense makes requests direct and therefore leaves little room for the hearer to choose as he wishes. However, the use of the past tense in *nilitaka* (I wanted) conversation can keep the distance between participants, thus offering options for the hearer. The past tense can avoid a confrontation of wills and make the request indirect and therefore more polite. The same is true with example (19). Thus, the use of the past tense softens the request and leaves a bigger room of choice for the hearer.

To conclude, the essence of metaphor is to use one thing to understand and experience another thing. We can understand the attitudinal past by using the knowledge about the past time use of the past tense. In daily life, if two participants in a conversation are not familiar with each other, then it can be argued that there is a special distance between them. Through the mapping from the time domain to the psychology domain, the temporal distance turns into the psychological distance between the speaker and hearer. This derives the interpretation that the "attitudinal past" is a metaphorical extension from the prototypical use of the past tense.

Kiswahili Present Tense from a Metaphorical Perspective

In Kiswahili the prototypical use of the present time is understood to mean any period of time that includes the present moment. It includes, 'all time' as in the following examples:

20. *Jua **hu**chomoza asubuhi.*
    (Sun does rise morning.)
    (The sun rises in the morning.)

21. *Matumbo yetu yatakuwa ya**na**tabasamu.*
    (Intestines our they will be they smile.)
    (Our stomachs will be smiling.)

22. *Nali, **na**uawa na maradhi ya mapenzi.*
    (Nali, I killed get by ailment of love.)
    (Nali, your love kills me.)

The present time in these Kiswahili constructions is marked by the morphemes *hu,* in example (20) which is a habitual present time marker and –*na*- in example (21)and (22)which is a continuous present time marker. The present moment is seen as a mathematical point that has no dimension, no length at all, a moment where an action takes place at the time of speech. Leech (1978:1) equals the present moment of time to the moment of speech. From these descriptions on the present tense, the present tense referring to the present moment is divided into three types: the unrestrictive use, the instantaneous use and the habitual use. This discussion takes the present time in Kiswahili to be the present moment of speech, that is, the time of speaking. It is the reference point for the present tense, future tense, and the past tense in the time domain. Consider the following example:

23. *Mtu pweke ni uvundo.*
    (Person lonely is stench.)
    (A lonely person is a stench.

Example (23)has the unrestrictive use of the present tense, because it places no limitation on the extension of the state of *mtu pweke ni uvundo* (a lonely person is a stench.) into past and future time, Leech (1978: 1). The metaphorical construction *mtu pweke ni uvundo* (A lonely person is a stench) does not specify when the state

expressed by the construction; of being a stench as a result of being lonely, starts and when it ends. This construction makes the statement valid any time, meaning the present time. This is the prototypical use of the present time which has a metaphorical interpretation that the present time can be construed to mean any time and the participants in a conversation will understand this as a result of their encyclopaedia entries on time. Consider another example:

24. *Lakini wazo hili usilitupe. Libebe ulipeleke nyumbani. Lipige darubini. Huenda ukagundua kwamba lina thamani kama dhahabu.*
    (But idea this you don't throw. It carry you it take home. It beat stethoscope. May be you realize that it has value like gold.)
    (But don't discard this idea. Carry it home. Think about it. May be you will discover that it is worth gold.)

Example (24) is an instantaneous use of the present tense because it signifies an event simultaneous with the present moment (Leech, 1978:2). The speaker expresses a series of events through the use of the present tense verbs *libebe* (carry it), *lipige* (ponder it), and *lina* (it has). Consider another example:

25. *Sauti ya wema inaponyamaza, **uovu hunawiri**.*
    (Voice of good it now silence, evil thrives.)
    (When the voice of reason goes quite, that of evil thrives.)

From example (25), the clause *uovu hunawiri* (evil thrives) with the verb **hu**nawiri (thrives) which has the habitual marker *–hu-*, is the habitual use of the present tense in that it represents a series of individual events which as a whole make up a state stretching back into the past and forward into the future.

Kiswahili also has the use of the historic present and the simple present that may refer to future time exclusive of the present. Kiswahili considers example (24) *Lakini wazo hili **usilitupe**. Libebe **ulipeleke** nyumbani. **Lipige** darubini. Huenda ukagundua kwamba **lina** thamani kama dhahabu* (But don't discard this idea. Carry it home. Think about it. May be you will discover that it is worth gold.) as the prototypical use of the present tense. The verbs *usilitupe* (do not discard it), *ulipeleke* (carry it), *lipige darubini* (think about it), and *lina* (it has) explain the events or states that happen at the moment of speaking and serves as a starting point for all the other understanding. These verbs have the deletion of the Kiswahili present time marker *–a-* which a speaker decides to use at the time of speech. The speaker's actions, such as *usilitupe* (do not discard it), *ulipeleke* (carry it), *lipige darubini* (think about it), and *lina* (it has), are simultaneous with the moment of speaking. Present time indicates the occurrence of a full instantiation of the profiled process that precisely coincides with speech time, that is, the present moment, Langacker (2004:259). The present tense indicates a kind of proximity between the event or state and the reference point, and the proximity exists in different domains. Thus, the proximity image schema is seen in the time domain through TIME IS

SPACE metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The proximity image schema in Kiswahili is based on human's cognition of spatial relation assumed as the original cognitive image schema. The Kiswahili proximity image is analyzed through the habitual use, the unrestrictive use, the historical present and the future present in examples (20, (21), (22), and (23) respectively.

Kiswahili present tense has metaphorical extensions when discussed within the reality domain and in the psychology domain. Within the reality domain, when talking about things that are true or real, no matter whether they are eternally true or temporarily true, people tend to use the present tense. For example, in:

26. *Na heshima yao ni imara kabisa; hailegei hata ikiraiwaraiwa kwa asali au kugongwa kwa nyundo.*
    (And respect there is strong very; does not it shake even it coaxed with honey or to hit with hummer.)
    (And their respect is firm; it cannot be shaken even if coaxed with honey or knocked with a hummer.)

27. *Dunia sasa mseto wa vitendawili.*
    (World now mixer of proverbs.)
    (The world today is a composition of proverbs.)

28. *Jua huchomoza asubuhi.*
    (Sun does rise morning.)
    (The sun rises in the morning.)

29. *Mwacha mila ni mtumwa.*
    (Leaver culture is slave.)
    (He who abandons his culture is a slave.)

Examples (26), (27), (28), and (29) are understood in the time level. The present tense in example (27) suggests that the actions happen in "all time" because of the use of the construction *sasa* (now). The habitual aspectual meaning construed by the verb *huchomoza* (rises) in example (28) refer not to a sequence of situations recurring at intervals, but rather to a habit, a characteristic situation that holds at all times. That observation about the present time does not give a coherent and systematic explanation of the present tense. The use of the present tense in examples (26), (27), (28), and (29) are simply metaphorical extensions of the prototypical use of the present tense. Thus, we map the proximity image schema in the time domain onto the objective reality domain. In this process, the potential similarities of the time domain and the reality domain are found during the mapping process, which is the result of language users' metaphorical thinking.

Habits often exist in the past, at the present, and in the future. So in Kiswahili, the habitual use and unrestrictive use of the present tense are not to express the actual time of happenings, but to highlight the truthfulness and believability of

proverbs, scientific facts and habits. The present tense indicates proximal to reality, either objectively or imaginarily. Consider the following examples:

30. *Sauti ya wema inaponyamaza **uovu hunawri**.*
    (Voice of good it silence evil thrives.)
    (When the voice of good silences that of evil thrives.) (factual certainty)

31. ***Gharama za maisha zikiotamabawa** zitapaa angani.*
    (Cost of live they develop wings they will ascend sky into.)
    (If the cost of living develops wings it will skyrocket.)

32. *Mima atawaita majina **jinsi wanavyoingia**.*
    (Mima she will them call names as they enter.)
    (Mima will call their names as they enter.)

In examples (30), (31), and (32), thereare dependent clauses *uovu hunawiri* (evil thrives), *gharama za maisha zikiota mabawa* (if the cost of living develops wings)*,* and *jinsi wanavyoingia* (as they enter) respectively. The happenings referred to in those clauses are not a prediction, but a fact that is taken as given. A conditional sentence has the structure: If X is a fact, then I predict Y. Thus, in the *if* clause in example (31), the present tense suggests factual certainty with *gharama za maisha zikiota mabawa* (if the cost of living develops wings) having the present tense to express the event/state which happens in the future, either in statements or conditionals, and is the result of metaphorical extension through mapping that is based on the image schema of proximity. Another meaning of the present tense that is indicating the event/state being real or true in imagination, is constructed through the mapping from the time domain onto the imaginary reality domain. The inflectional morphemes of the present tense, *hu-,* in ***hu**nawiri* (thrives) in example (30)*, -na-* in *wa**na**vyoingia,* (as they enter) in example (32)*,* and *–ki-* in *zi**ki**ota* (they develop) in example (31), originally markers of temporal proximity in the time domain and later markers of proximity in the reality domain, are now mapped from the time domain onto the imaginary reality domain. Therefore, the temporal proximity is changed into the proximity in the imaginary domain indicating reality or truthfulness in imagination that when the voice of good silences that of evil thrives, if the cost of living develops wings it will skyrocket, and Mima will call their names as they enter.

In Kiswahili, the present tense is a metaphorical extension of the prototypical use of the present tense to the psychology domain. Under certain circumstances, the present tense is used to refer to the event or states that happen in the past, as in the following examples:

33. *Tuliketi pale kwa uchovu **huku tunalitazama basilikiokolewa kutokana na mikono ya udongo**.*

    (We did sit there with tire while we are looking bus it being saved from the hands of mud.)

    (We sat there tired while looking at the bus getting rescued from the hands of mud.)

34. ***Watafiti walisema** kuwabaridi inaendelea hadi Agosti.*

    (Researchers they said that cold it is continuing until August.)

    (**Researchers said** that it is going to be cold until August.)

35. *Wangari Maathai **ndiye** mtetezi mkuu wa mwisho katika uhifadhi wa mazingira.*

    (Wangari Maatahi she is advocate great of last in conservation of environment.)

    (Wangari Maathai **is** the last great advocate of environmental conservation.)

The present tense in examples (33), (34), and (35)represent the historical present, Leech (1978:6-8) because the event or states happened in the past and it is the present tense which is used to make the events or states more closer. There are three kinds of historical present, Quirk, et al. (1985:181). The first kind in example (33) describes the past events as if they were going on at the present moment: it conveys a series of events as witnessed by the speaker. It is the historic present which has a narrative style. The second kind is found with verbs of perception such as understand, hear and learn, which refer to the receptive end of the communication process, as in *walisema* (they said) in example (34).The implication of the present tense seems to be that although the communication event took place in the past, the result of the information communicated is still operative. This is as construed by the verb *inaendelea* (is going on) in example (34). The third kind refers to advocates, writers, composers, artists, etc. and their works, which suggests that people are still alive through their works. The present tense can be even used without respect to any particular work, like example (35) where a general characterization of the advocacy of *Wangari Maathai* is used.

The proximity in the time domain is now mapped onto the psychology domain. When the speaker or writer wants to make the happenings sound more real or vivid, the present tense is used. Or rather, when the present tense is used to describe past happenings, it achieves the effect that the past happenings are portrayed as if they were taking place at the present moment. From the above examples, example (33) seems to be a scene in a movie that is running on; example (34) suggests that the researchers speak at the present time; and example (35) makes people think of *Wangari Maathai* as an advocate still living through her efforts in environmental conservation. All the verbs in examples (33), (34), and (35), that is, *tunalitazama ... likiokolewa* (we are looking as the bus gets rescued), *walisema* (they said), and

ndiye (is) respectively, can be replaced by the past tense forms, but the effect would be different.

Kiswahili Future Tense from a Metaphorical Perspective

The function of the Kiswahili future tense marker is to indicate future time reference. It may also carry the meaning of intentionality and prediction. The future tense is used to make a prediction on the part of the speaker that the situation in the proposition which refers to the event taking place after the moment of speech will hold (in the future). Future tense indicates desire, willingness, intention and prediction of acts expected to happen sometime after it has been linguistically expressed. The Kiswahili future tense is marked by the morpheme –*ta*- (will) both in the positive verbs and in negation as in the following examples in:

36. *Nitakula.* (Intention)
    (I will to eat.)
    (I will eat.)

37. *Mti utakauka*. (Prediction)
    (Tree it will dry.)
    (The tree will dry up.)

38. *Nitakutembelea.*(Willingness)
    (I will you visit.)
    (I will visit you.)

39. *Nitatamani mayai*. (Desire)
    (I will desire eggs.)
    (I will desire eggs.)

From examples (36), (37), (38) and (39)*,* the verbs *nitakula* (I will aet)*, utakauka* (it will dry)*, nitakutembelea* (nitakutembelea)*,* and *nitatamani* (I will desire) indicate intention by the speaker to eat, a prediction that the tree will dry up, willingness by the speaker that s/he will make a visit to the listener, and a desire by the speaker that he wishes to have eggs, respectively. In Kiswahili, the future tense marker –*ta*- (will) is used to refer to the time an action will be performed by a referent after the moment of speech or several days, weeks, or months after the time of speech.

In specific instances, the future tense morpheme –*ta*- is a metaphorical extension of the meaning of temporal adverbs like *kesho* (tomorrow), *baadaye* (later), *mwakani* (later in the year), and *siku zote* (all the days). By metaphorical extension, Kiswahili speakers conceptualize the abstractness of an indefinite future in terms of a less abstract concept through the use of the future tense marker –*ta*- (will). The temporal adverbs are less abstract and definite and they therefore are the source concepts. They are known to speakers because they form part of their experiential basis of the world. The speakers experience with the temporal adverbs

is embodied in their cognition and they are able to relate this experience to the general concept of future time. This explains that the inference of the future notion of the future tense marker –*ta*- is derived metaphorically from the inherent semantic substance in the temporal adverbs although the two; the Kiswahili future tense marker –*ta*- (will) and the temporal adverbs, are not morphologically related. For example, in:

40. *Ng'ombe wa**ta**uzwa **kesho**.*
    (Cows they will sell for tomorrow.)
    (Cows will be sold tomorrow.)

   The future tense marker –*ta*- (will) in example (40)is a metaphorical extension of the temporal verb *kesho* (tomorrow). Since the temporal adverbs come after the verb in a Kiswahili verb phrase, the future tense marker will precede the temporal adverb as a prefix in the verb stem.

   Kiswahili future tense can as well be described to have metaphorical extensions through the use of temporal concepts that appear to involve a relation between an individual and a future event. Temporal concepts are not directly structured in terms of locations in space and/or motion through space. Instead, the positioning of reified events (events which are abstract being made real or concrete) in space is used to describe the degree of epistemic detachment holding between the individual and the event. This brings metaphorical means of conveying the future into 'moving ego' that is, the ego moving towards time in the future and 'moving time', that is, time moving towards ego from the front, Clark (1973:50) in Alan (2012:250). 'Moving ego' is where language users' are moving along time with the future time ahead of them and 'moving time' is described as the route consisting of discrete events moving past the speaker from front to back. This distinguishes between the moving of time towards ego and the moving of the ego towards time. The reference point against which movement is construed is either the ego or the time. Ego is understood as the point of view of the person who is having an experience of the past, present or future. A future-in front and a past-behind schema are used in Kiswahili and also in other languages where an ego-reference point is assumed as in the following examples:

41. *Pasaka imepita.* (Past-behind schema)
    (Easter it has passed.)
    (Easter has passed.)

42. *Pasaka inakuja.* (Future-in front schema)
    (Easter it is coming.)
    (Easter is coming.)

   In example (41)*,* the verb *imepita* (it has passed) shows that time has passed the ego from front to the back, that is the time for Easter season has come towards the ego and has passed it and it is now an event in the past. From example (42), the

verb *inakuja* (it is coming) construes that the season of Easter has not arrived and it is still an event in the present that is ahead of the ego. In the time-reference point, there are instances when the future-in front and past-behind schemas do not apply since this applies to sequences of events, as in the following examples:

43. *Januari hufuata Desemba.*
    (January follows December.)
    (January follows December.)

44. **Januari iko mbele ya Desemba*
    (*January it is ahead of December.)
    (*January is ahead of December.)

It is correct to use example (43)and not correct to use example (44)since *iko mbele* (is ahead) does not construe sequences of events as does *hufuata* (follows) in example (43). In example (44)*,* the use of the construction *iko mbele* (it is ahead) cannot apply because January is a time-reference point that cannot move away or move towards another time-reference point. Encyclopaedia knowledge is the one that underlies our conceptualization of future events. It is the degree to which the speakers have full or direct knowledge or awareness of an event. The Kiswahili future tense morpheme *–ta-* (will) explicitly conveys a particular type of modal relation that holds between ego and the events the ego has not experienced. When using temporal concepts, and in particular those that presuppose an ego at a deictic centre or the time 'now', one may or may not be restricted solely to metaphor but to metaphorical constructions which evoke metaphor. Consider the following examples:

45. *Pasaka iko mbele yetu.*
    Easter it is in front us.)
    (Easter is ahead of us.)

46. *Pasaka inakaribia.*
    (Easter it is approaching.)
    (Easter is approaching.)

47. *Tunaelekea Pasaka.*
    (We are going Easter.)
    (We're coming up to Easter.)

48. *Itakuwa Pasaka hivi karibuni.*
    (It will be Easter this soon.)
    (It will be Easter soon.)

Examples (45), (46), and (47) employ metaphorical constructions to discuss the event of Easter. However example (48)uses the modal verb *itakuwa* (it **will** be) and the temporal adverb *hivi karibuni (*soon) to describe an event in the future. The way in which time is represented in semantically will then have to directly reflect to the

conclusion on how humans represent time in thought: semantic representation will always follow mental representation, Alan (2012:251).

This section has largely concentrated on how events that have not yet happened are conceptualized. In this case space is not used directly to represent time, but rather that objects in a space around ego can be used to convey issues of certainty and uncertainty and of planning.

The nature of the future tense is that knowledge of what shall be done in the future is still somewhat uncertain, although a speaker has partial knowledge of it. In metaphor, we have seen that events too like *wakati* (time) are often reified as physical objects. For example, in:

49. *Tumepitwa na wakati.*
    (We have passed by time.)
    (We have been passed by time.)

Indeed, in the case of events construed as objects there seems to be much conceptual structuring that is shared. *Wakati* (time) in example (49) is conceptualized as an object which is passing the ego from behind towards front.

Conclusion

This paper has developed an interactive discussion on time and its implication on metaphorical interpretation in Kiswahili. The interrogation has realized that the metaphorical perspective of tense in Kiswahili is dependent on the language users encyclopedic knowledge of the referents referred to in the past, present and future time. Time is construed as behind when language users refer to things which have taken place in the past and time as in front when they refer to things which are anticipated to happen in the future time. The present tense or time in Kiswahili is construed as the reference point for future tense and the past tense in the time domain.

References

Alan, W. (2012). 'Metaphorical Futures'. In *Selected Papers from UK-CLA Meetings* Vol. 1: 249 – 261

Bybee, Joan. (2003). "Cognitive Process in Grammaticalization." In *The New Psychology of Language: Cognitive and Functional Approaches to Language Structure*, Michael Tomasello, ed, Vol. 2, 145–167. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Bybee, Joan, Revere Perkins, and William Pagliuca. (1994). *The Evolution of Grammar: Tense, Aspect and Modality in the Languages of the World.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Chalker, S. and E. Weiner (Eds) (1988). *The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Endley, M. J. (2010). *Linguistic Perspectives on English Grammar: A Guide For EFL Teachers.* Hanyang: Information Age Publishing.

Halliday, M.A. K (2004). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (3rd Edition). Revised Mathiessen, C. London: Edward Anorld.

Iribemwangi, P. I. (2010). *The Structure of Kiswahili: Sounds, Sound Changes and Words*, Saarbrucken: VDM Verlag.

Kovecses, Z. (2002/2010). *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought* (2nd ed., pp. 202–251). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson (1980) (new edn. 2002). *Metaphors We Live By.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. and M. Johnson (1999). *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought.* New York: Basic Books.

Langacker, R. W. (1991). *Foundations of cognitive grammar*, vol. 2. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Langacker, R. W. (2004). *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Theoretical Prerequisites.* Beijing: Peking University Press.

Leech, G. N. (1978). *Meaning and the English Verb.* London: Longman Group Limited

Linying, Cao1 (2012). 'A Tentative Study of the English Tense from a Metaphorical

Perspective'. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, Vol. 2, No. 5 Canadian Center of Science and Education.

Ndung'u, M. N. (2017). 'The Metaphorical Extension of Kiswahili Mood' *International Journal of Education and Research*; Vol. 5, No. 7 Pp 1- 8.

Quirk, R., S. Greenbaum, G. Leech, & J. Svartvik. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language.* London: Longman Group Limited.

wa Mberia, K. (2004). *Maua Kwenye Jua la Asubuhi.* Nairobi: Marimba Publications.

Zhang, F. (2011). 'Prototype Theory and the Categorization of the English Tense System.' In The Linguistics Journal pg 45-70

Zhang, F. J. (2010). Conceptual Pattern and Cognitive Mechanism in the Grammaticalization of Future Tense Markers. *Journal of Tianjin Foreign Studies University,* (5),7-13.