"I'm chasing after the time!" Temporal Meanings Encoded in the Motion Verb *Gan* in Mandarin Chinese

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Overview

1. Basic concepts in the Cognitive semantics

image schema: the PATH schema
Metaphor and metonymy

2. The conceptualisation of time

Case 1: the moving time metaphor
Case 2: the moving Ego metaphor
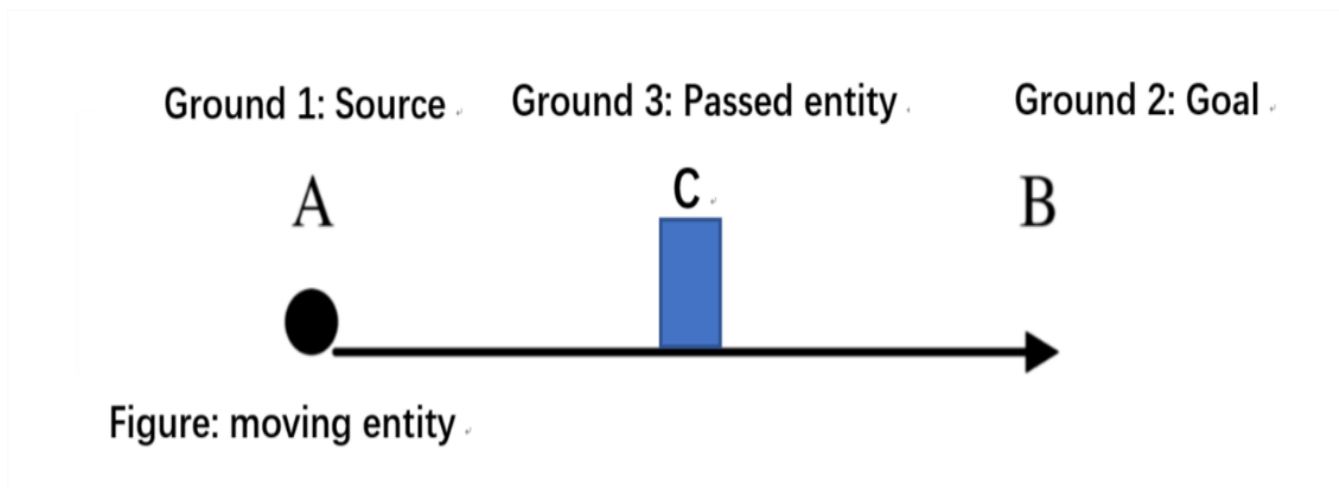Case 3: the moving time & Ego metaphor

3. Discussion

Examine the temporal meanings encoded in *gan* to find linguistic evidence supporting case 3

4. Conclusion

1. Basic concepts in the Cognitive semantics

The PATH schema

Ground 1: Source   Ground 3: Passed entity   Ground 2: Goal

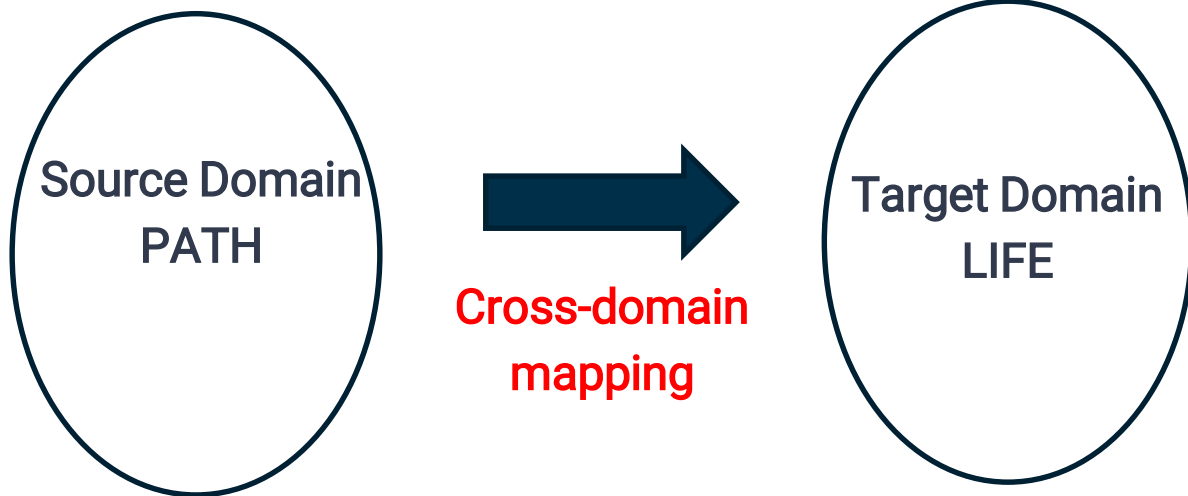A   C   B

Figure: moving entity

the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema (Evans & Green 2006: 178)

1. Basic concepts in the Cognitive semantics

Metaphor: cross-domain mapping

Life is a journey.

- Source domain → target domain

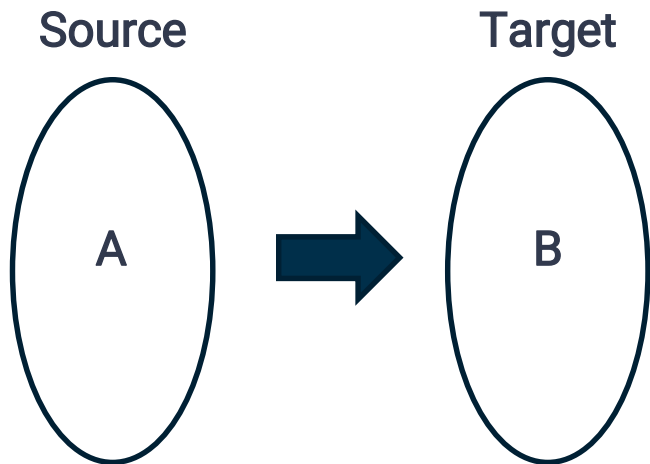# 1. Basic concepts in the Cognitive semantics

Metonymy: intra-domain

- *Buckingham Palace denied the rumours.*

- The PLACE stands for the INSTITUTION

Vehicle
concept
PLACE

↓

INSTITUTION
Target
concept

1. Basic concepts in the Cognitive semantics

Metophor:

- B has the feature of A

Source   Target
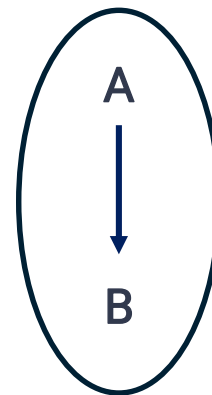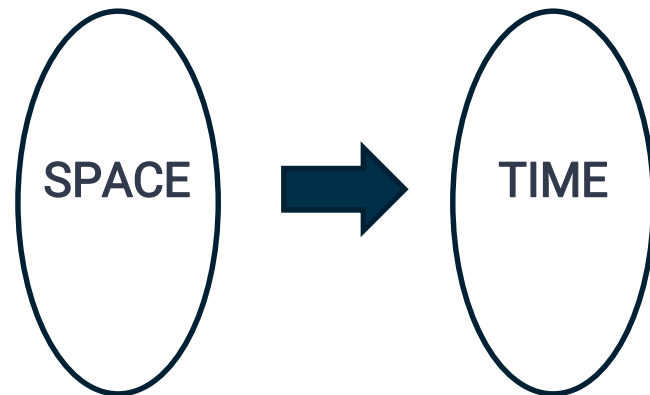
A → B

Metonymy:

- A and B are associated so that A stands for B.
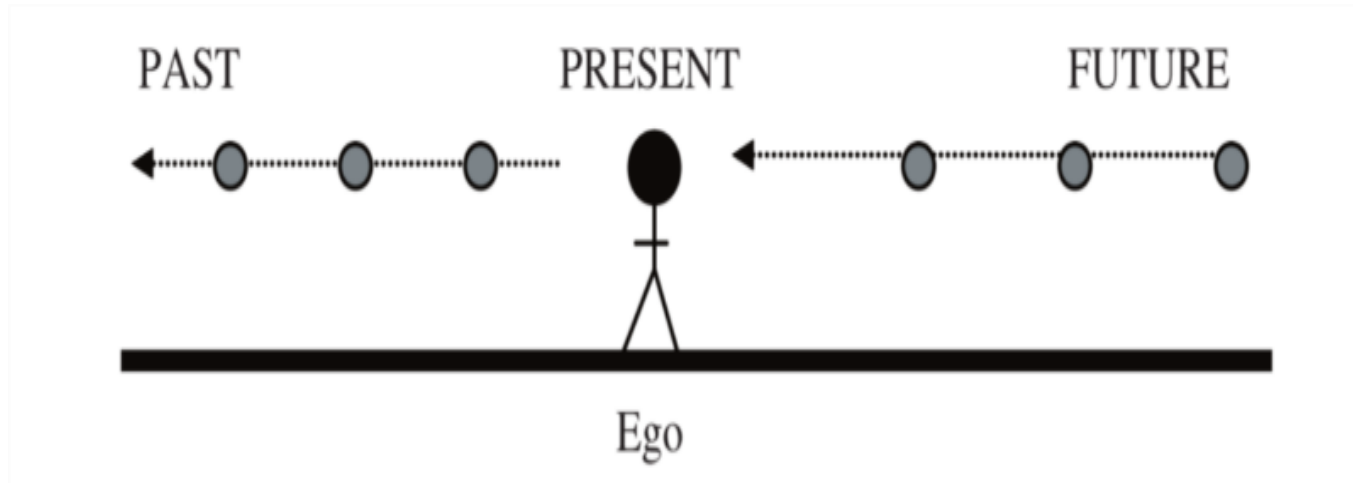
A
↓
B

2. The conceptualisation of time

- Time is not a physical entity.

- Metaphor: Cross-linguistically, the spacial concept is used <u>metaphorically</u> to express the concept of time

SPACE → TIME

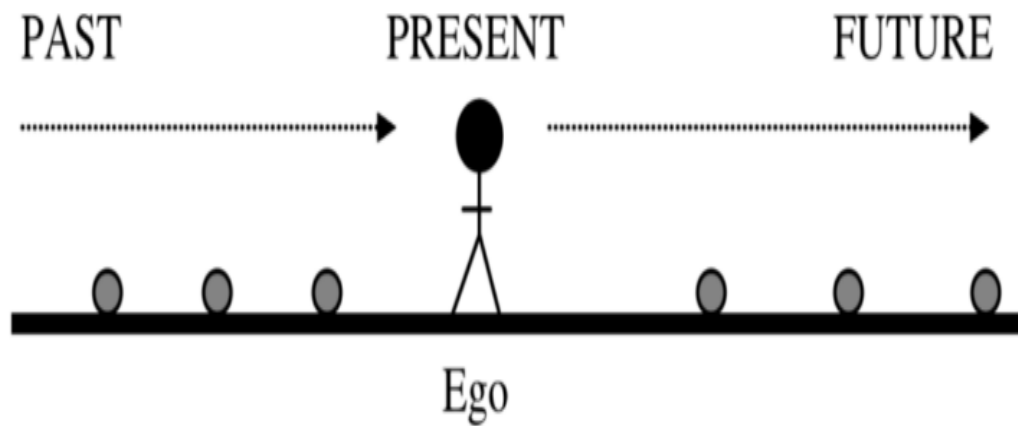# 2. The conceptualisation of time

Case 1: The moving time metaphor

(1) The deadline **is approaching.**

PAST   PRESENT   FUTURE
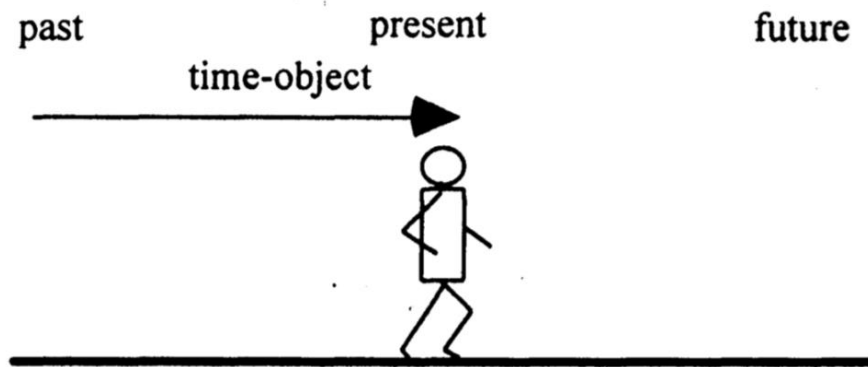
Ego

2. The conceptualisation of time

Case 2: The moving ego metaphor

(2) She's **passed** the deadline.

2. The conceptualisation of time

Case 3: The moving time and moving ego metaphor

- We ourselves are in time moving with it. <u>When we say it is 10.30, it is no longer 10.30; time has moved on and we along with it.</u>" (Keshavmurti 1991: 47)

2. The conceptualisation of time

Case 3: The moving time and moving ego metaphor

胡鹏因为跟不上时代而落伍。
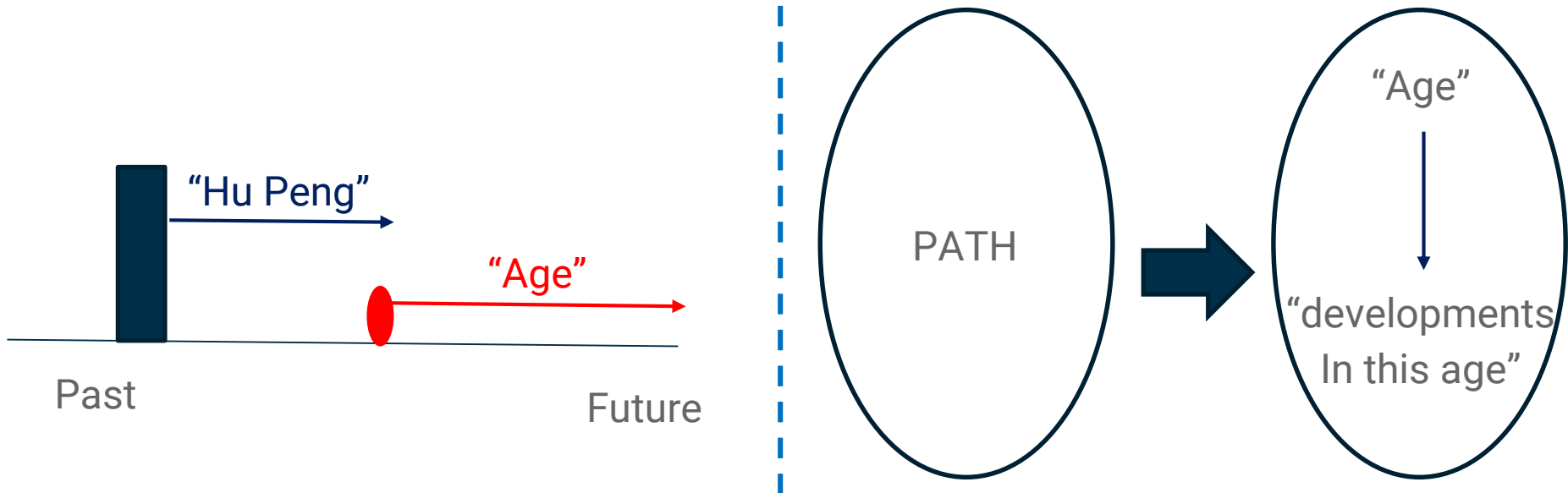*Hu Peng   yinwei   gen   bu shang shidai er luo-wu.*
Hu Peng   because follow not up   age   so fall-behind
"Hu Peng has fallen behind because he cannot follow up the age."

(Yu 1998: 128)

2. The conceptualisation of time

"Hu Peng has fallen behind because he cannot follow up the age."

2. The conceptualisation of time

English: Time waits for no man.

'time waits for no man' and that goes for woman too — bombarded as she is with ever new vogues, **ever changing fads and fashions** — constantly confronted with remonstrations to be 'with it' and keep up to date. [BNC]

Time waits for no woman. → Fashion waits for no woman.

The research questions

- Can we truly find linguistic evidence to support the case 3 metaphor?

Methodology

赶*gan:* "rush to; catch up with."

gan   shi-jian
GAN   time
"in a hurry"

Gan   shang hao shihou
GAN   onto   good time
"catch up with the good time"

3. The motion verb 赶 *gan*
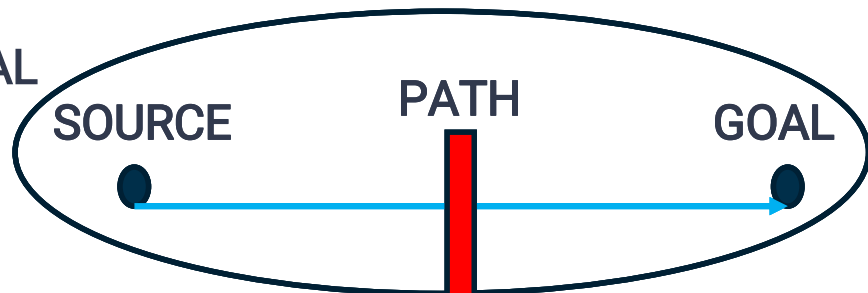
Rush

赶路
Gan lu
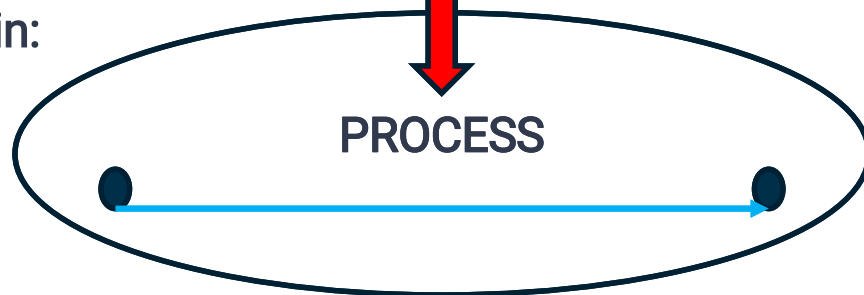*Rush path*
"rush on the way"

赶论文
Gan lunwen
Rush essay
lit."rush on the path of writing an essay"

Source domain:
SOURCE-PATH-GOAL

SOURCE   PATH   GOAL

Target domain:
TASK

PROCESS

3. The motion verb 赶 *gan*

Rush

gan   shi-jian
GAN   time
"in a hurry"

Metonymy; not time
conceptualisation

SOURCE   PATH   GOAL
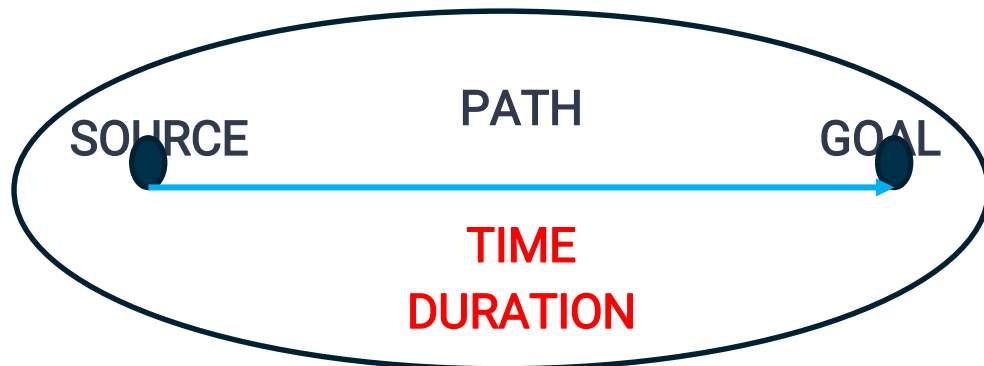
TIME
DURATION

*Mei dao gao-feng shi-ke,   you-xie ren   wei-le   **gan shi-jian***

Every at high-peak moment, some   people in.order.to **rush time**

bu-duan   chao   che

continuously surpass   car

"Every time when the traffic is busy, to RUSH TIME, some people continuously surpass the other cars. " [CCL]

3. The motion verb 赶 *gan*

<u>Rush</u>

gan   *shi-jian*
GAN   time
"in a hurry"

Metonymy; not time conceptualisation

zuo de *shi-hou* *bu*   *yao* **gan** **shi-jian,** *yong* *zhong-deng* *su-du* *wan-cheng*
shang-shu Do MOD interval NEG want **rush time**, use middle-level speed finish   up-mention *dong-zuo jiu xing le.*
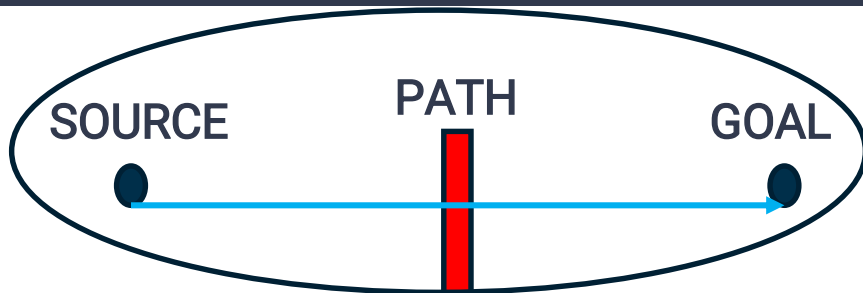Motion   just fine PRT.
"Do not RUSH TIME, it is fine to use middle-level speed to finish the mentioned motions." [CCL]
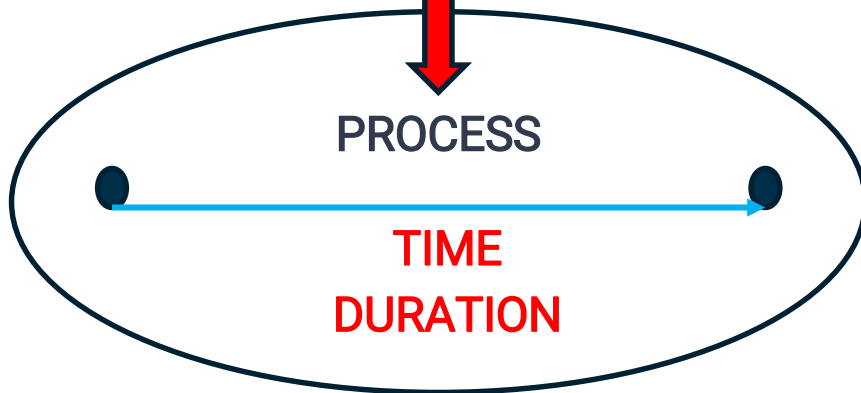
3. The motion verb 赶 *gan*

Rush

Source domain:
SOURCE-PATH-GOAL

Target domain:
TASK

PATH

SOURCE   GOAL

PROCESS

TIME
DURATION

3. The motion verb 赶 *gan*

Catch up with

SOURCE — PATH — MOVING GOAL
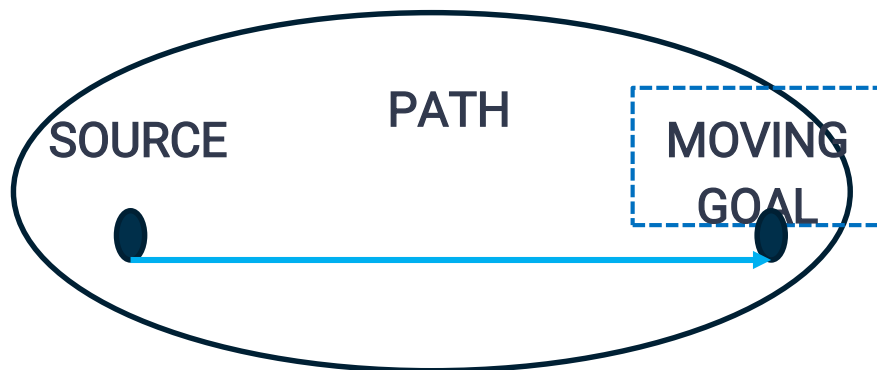
Physically:

Ni	*neng*	***gan***	***shang***	*ta.*
1s	can	**GAN**	**onto**	3s.

"You can catch up with her."

Metaphorically:

Ni	*neng*	***gan***	***shang***	*ta.*
1s	can	**GAN**	onto	3s.

"You can be as good as her (although currently you are not)."

3. The motion verb 赶 *gan*

<u>Catch up with</u>

Gan shang xinqing buhao de   shihou, mama   ti-bu-qi   xingzhi
GAN onto   mood   bad   MOD time,   mom   raise.not interest
gei wo nian xiaoer-shu
give 1s read story-book
"(lit. If mom reaches the bad-mood time) When Mom happens to be in a bad mood, she won't have any interest in reading the story book for me." [BCC]

Conclusion

- Three metaphors in time conceptualisation
- Case 1: the moving time metaphor
- Case 2: the moving Ego metaphor
- Case 3: moving time & Ego metaphor

- Two expressions:
  - *Gan shijian* "(lit. rush time) in a hurry"
[Metonymic, not time conceptualisation]

  - *Gan shang* "catch up with"
[case 3 metaphor]

References

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