

A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF EWE METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS

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ABSTRACT

Until recently, the concept that governed our view about metaphor was that, it is a figure of speech in which there is comparison between two unlike entities characterised by the schematic form A is B. For this reason, we thought we can get along perfectly well without using it. Today, a new approach to the study of metaphors by the cognitive scientists and linguists has produced new and important results. Metaphor is now defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain, where a “concept domain is any coherent organization of experience” (Kövecses 2002:4). It has come to light that metaphor, which is a property of concept and not just mere words, helps to better understand certain concepts. This new concept about metaphor was first developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). To them, our concepts structure what we perceive; as such, metaphor is pervasive in everyday life rather than being a matter of extraordinary language. The purpose of this thesis is to use this framework to examine the conceptual metaphor of TIME, DEATH AND SENSATION in the Ghanaian language, Ewe. The study reveals from the examples of the linguistic expressions about these domains that they are metaphorically structured in everyday speech. Inevitability, experiential explanations and everyday usage, are some of the motivations for choosing these domains for study. The study presents the evidence to show that metaphors are very pervasive in everyday speech.

### DECLARATION

I declare that all of the content of this thesis is my own work and that no part of it has been presented for any degree elsewhere. All references and works cited have been duly acknowledged.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to you, Rev. S.E.M.K. Sevor, for your support, concern, patience and tolerance throughout this programme.



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## ABSTRACT

Until recently, the concept that governed our view about metaphor was that, it is a figure of speech in which there is comparison between two unlike entities characterised by the schematic form A is B. For this reason, we thought we can get along perfectly well without using it. Today, a new approach to the study of metaphors by the cognitive scientists and linguists has produced new and important results. Metaphor is now defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain, where a “concept domain is any coherent organisation of experience” (Kövecses 2002:4). It has come to light that metaphor, which is a property of concept and not just mere words, helps to better understand certain concepts. This new concept about metaphor was first developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). To them, our concepts structure what we perceive; as such, metaphor is pervasive in everyday life rather than being a matter of extraordinary language. The purpose of this thesis is to use this framework to examine the conceptual metaphor of TIME, DEATH AND SENSATION in the Ghanaian language, Ewe. The study reveals from the examples of the linguistic expressions about these domains that they are metaphorically structured in everyday speech. Inevitability, experiential explanations and everyday usage, are some of the motivations for choosing these domains for study. The study presents the evidence to show that metaphors are very pervasive in everyday speech.

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**ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>DAT</b>	-	<b>Dative Preposition</b>
<b>COMP</b>	-	<b>Complimentizer</b>
<b>CONJ</b>	-	<b>Conjunction</b>
<b>DEF</b>	-	<b>Definite</b>
<b>DEM</b>	-	<b>Demonstrative</b>
<b>FOC</b>	-	<b>Focus</b>
<b>HAB</b>	-	<b>Habitual</b>
<b>INT</b>	-	<b>Intensifier</b>
<b>LINK</b>	-	<b>Linker</b>
<b>LOG</b>	-	<b>Logoforic pronoun</b>
<b>NEG</b>	-	<b>Negative</b>
<b>PL</b>	-	<b>Plural</b>
<b>1PL</b>	-	<b>1st Plural</b>
<b>2PL</b>	-	<b>2nd Plural</b>
<b>3PL</b>	-	<b>3rd Plural</b>

<b>POSS</b>	-	<b>Possessive</b>
<b>POSTP</b>	-	<b>Postposition</b>
<b>POT</b>	-	<b>Potential</b>
<b>PRES</b>	-	<b>Present</b>
<b>PREP</b>	-	<b>Preposition</b>
<b>PROG</b>	-	<b>Progresive</b>
<b>PROSP</b>	-	<b>Prospective</b>
<b>Q</b>	-	<b>Question</b>
<b>RED</b>	-	<b>Reduplicative</b>
<b>1SG</b>	-	<b>1st person singular</b>
<b>2SG</b>	-	<b>2nd person singular</b>
<b>3SG</b>	-	<b>3rd person singular</b>
<b>SUBJV</b>	-	<b>Subjunctive</b>
<b>TOP</b>	-	<b>Topicalizer</b>

## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The use of language is to communicate what we think, observe or do to other people successfully. Every language employs the use of figurative speech in both speech and writing to appeal to the senses. The use of epithets, concrete details and imaginative language such as metaphor, simile or exaggeration is to create vivid impressions by setting up comparisons between dissimilar things to excite someone's senses. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003: 397) pointed out that "an appeal to the senses is very important because, in description, we are inviting a reader or listener to perceive with his mind's eye what he has not actually seen; his mind's ears what he has not heard and his mind's nostrils what he has not actually smelled". Traditionally, metaphor is a figure of speech which is extensively used to create this effect.

Generally, a metaphor in Ewe, like any other language, describes a first object as being equal to a second object in a number of resemblances. As such, two words are commonly used to bring the effect. These are zu 'has become' and nye 'to be'. For example:

1a. Nye-e nye nɔvi-nye-wo fe ŋku.

1SG-FOC be sibling-1SG.POSS- PL POSS eye

I am the eye of my brothers. (I am the focus of my brothers)

1b. Nye ya me-zu avalifoe

1SG TOP 1SG-become NAME

I have become a valifoe (bird). (I am lonely.)

However, recent studies by cognitive semanticists like Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Evans and Green (2006), Lee (2001), among others, have revealed that speakers actually employ metaphors quite extensively in everyday language. Details of these studies will be well illustrated under the subsequent chapters. The assertion of these semanticists has prompted me to take a closer look at Ewe metaphorical expressions in the domains of TIME, DEATH and SENSATION.

### **1.1 ETHNO-LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION**

Ewe is a single unit language (Westerman and Bryan 1952). It integrates all the different dialects of the speakers at the level of study and in written work. It is one of the most important indigenous languages in Ghana. It belongs to the Kwa family of the Niger Congo. Duthie (1996) noted that the name Ewe, used to be applied to cover all dialects spoken fairly near the coast between the Volta River in Ghana and Badagry in Nigeria, but the new label is Gbe, of which Ewe is a sub-group. In all, Gbe is divided into five clusters. The fifth which we are concerned about is the Ewe cluster. It is spoken widely in the greater part of the Volta Region of Ghana through the coastal and the inland parts of Togo.

There are various dialects of the Ewe language. In fact villages and towns that live two or more kilometres apart use distinct varieties. These dialects can be grouped into two as the southern and the northern varieties where the southern consists of Anlo, Tongu, Agave and Avenor; and the northern (Ewedome)

includes Ho, Kpando, Gbidzigbe (Hohoe), Gbinyigbe (Peki), Awudome, Vakpo and Anfoe, among others. In fact, the northern varieties are many but can easily be identified by the various speakers without any confusion. Duthie noted that Ewe “is not much used as a lingua franca except by speakers of Central Togo Languages like Avatime, Logba, Siwu (Lolobi) and slightly by speakers of Nkonya, a Guan language.”

The language is studied as a subject at all levels of education in Ghana up to the tertiary level. To that effect, a lot of books consisting of novels, drama and poetry have been written in Ewe. Oral literature is so much cherished among the Ewes. For that matter folk tales, riddles, proverbs, puzzles and the likes are embraced by all the communities. These, together with the written literature, will be very useful for the thesis. At school, a standard written Ewe which was developed in the 19th century by the North German Missionary Society of Bremen (Duthie 1996: 3) is used but with a local accent.

Phonologically, Ewe is a tonal language. Westermann and Bryan (1952: 91) disclosed that Ewe is a classical and rare example of a language in which tone is almost exclusively lexical. This was confirmed by Duthie that, “every syllable must be said with its correct tone, which is either high or non-high, otherwise it is wrong, just as if the wrong vowel or consonant were used.” (1996: 21). Despite the above declaration, very few tones are marked in a written form. Some of these are the second person singular forms which are marked with a low tone and the first person plural forms with a high tone. They are shown as;

1sg forms are: è nè à, wò to mean ‘you’ or ‘your’

1pl forms are: mí, mía, míe to mean ‘we’ or ‘us’

In this study, I shall adopt the normal tone marking in a written work.

Generally, the main occupation of the people of the northern sector (Evedome) is farming, but they also engage in other economic activities such as carving, hunting, carpentry, pottery, etc. Those of the southern sector are mainly engaged in fishing, salt winning, pottery and also vegetable farming specially shallots and tomatoes. It is worth noting that due to their sense of hard work, speakers of the language can be located all over the country and all over the West African coast for their crop farming and fishing activities. For the purpose of this thesis, the occupation of the Ewe speakers will be very relevant especially in the analysis of the metaphorical expressions of TIME.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Traditionally, metaphors are seen as some kind of decorative addition to ordinary language (Finch 2000; Ofori 2004). Over the years, they are regarded as something outside normal language that requires special forms. The usage has been the same in the Ewe language. In the study of Ewe literature, what is accepted as a metaphor is only when something is described in terms of another as having the same characteristics even though they may be physically not related by saying, this ‘is’ or ‘has become’ that. To this effect, Ofori (2004: 82) defined metaphor in Ewe as “a decorative device of the Ewe language.” She therefore outlined how Fiawoo used metaphor in his books to create certain effects.

The problem is that, even though there has been quite extensive work done on various aspects of the Ewe language, the use of cognitive semantic approach in the study of the Ewe language is limited. As a result, no written work has been documented on the conceptual metaphor theory in Ewe. This is what prompted us to go into this study: A Linguistic Analysis of Ewe Metaphorical Expressions, concentrating on TIME, DEATH and SENSATIONS.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To give an in-depth analysis of metaphorical expressions in Ewe.
2. To show how Ewe speakers conceptualise lexical items.
3. To emphasise the fact that, some aspects of the everyday usage of the Ewe language can only be expressed metaphorically.

### **1.4 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

Based on the recent assertion of the cognitive semanticists that speakers actually employ metaphors quite extensively in everyday language, the study will examine the metaphorical structure of the domains of TIME, DEATH and SENSATIONAL expressions in Ewe to demonstrate that metaphor can not only be used as a decorative device in the language, but that many everyday use of the language is fundamentally metaphorical. The relevance of this study therefore is to show in detail that the strategies used for creating and processing

metaphor are also used in literal language for which the Ewe language is not an exception. Secondly it will serve as the basis for future reference for further study into this aspect of the language.

### **1.5 METHODOLOGY**

Data was gathered from both primary, through direct elicitation, and secondary sources. These include funeral announcements on certain FM radio stations, notably Volta Star and Jubilee, Hymns from the Ewe Hymn Book, conversations between and with friends. In addition, much data was gathered from novels, drama books, poems and other written texts in Ewe and from my own intuition as a native speaker.

### **1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The fundamental framework to be adopted for this study is that of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory. As the pioneers of the conceptual metaphor theory [ Kövecses (2002:viii); Goatly (1997:286); Evans and Green (2007:286) ], an important notion discussed in their model is that, "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action" Lakoff and Johnson (1980:3). This assertion is contrary to the view of many people that, metaphor is a decorative device which is strictly confined to literature, rhetoric and art.

Evans and Green (2007:286) confirmed this by stating that, "The basic premise of conceptual metaphor theory is that, metaphor is not simply a stylistic feature

of language, but that thought itself is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.” This means that most of our everyday speeches are not just ordinary statements but are metaphorically structured. In English, many speeches are metaphorically structured as the following examples depict.

2. a. INTELLIGENCE IS LIGHT (Macmillan English Dictionary 2002:747).

She is very bright in class.

He is the most brilliant boy in the family.

My mother outshines all her siblings

He is too dull in mind to be chosen for the maths quiz.

The above sentences imply that the more intelligent someone is the brighter the light.

2. b. INTELLIGENCE IS KNIFE OR BLADE (Macmillan English Dictionary 2002:747).

He is very sharp; he notices everything.

I want to cut through the waffle and get straight to the point.

They made some pointed remarks.

These statements also indicate that, the more intelligent the person is, the sharper the blade or knife. More of such examples will be illustrated in the subsequent chapters.

The notion that, “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life...” is evident in other languages too, of which the Ewe language is not an exception. Consider these examples:

3. Me-ɖu agbe kpɔ.

1SG-eat life before

I ate life before. (I have once enjoyed life)

4. E-gblẽ e-fe agbe.

3SG-destroy 3SG-POSS life.

He has destroyed his life. (He lived a wretched life.)

It is evident then, in the above sentences that, **life** can be understood in terms of *food* and also *possession*. So, even though the statements are ordinary speeches they are metaphorically structured but for which we are unaware.

It is noteworthy that, Kövecses (2002: viii), in his discussion of the pioneering work of Lakoff and Johnson identified some five guiding principles in their framework that;

“Metaphor is a property of concept and not of words.

The function of metaphor is to better understand certain concepts and not just for some artistic purpose.

Metaphor is often not based on similarity.

Metaphor is used effortlessly in everyday life by ordinary people and not just by special talented people.

Metaphor far from being a superfluous though pleasing linguistic ornament is an inevitable process of human thought and reasoning.”

Unidirectionality is a characteristic of the conceptual metaphor theory. Evans and Green (2007: 296) explained this to mean that “metaphors map structures from a source domain to a target domain but not vice versa.” This shows that mapping is mainly in one direction. So with the above Ewe examples we can say that, LIFE can be conceptualised as a POSSESSION or FOOD but not the other way round.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in their discussions, identified different types of metaphors. One of such metaphors is structural metaphors. They explained that, structural metaphors structures concepts in terms of another. In structural metaphors, our basic everyday activities are structured in a profound way. By so doing the source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target concept. So there is a conceptual mapping between elements of A and elements of B. For instance, the concept IDEA is structured in terms of FOOD, PLANT or MONEY with the following expressions:

IDEAS ARE FOOD

This paper has half-baked ideas.

I just can't swallow that idea.

IDEAS ARE PLANTS

Let me plant this idea in your mind.

His ideas never bear fruit.

The expressions stated above are normal ways of speaking about different situations in life, as such, are not viewed as speaking metaphorically. In spite of this, these are literal expressions that are metaphorically structured.

Another type that is noted is orientational metaphor. “Orientational metaphor organises a whole system of concepts with respect to one another” Lakoff and Johnson (1980:14). It has been explained further that, most of orientational metaphors have to do with spatial orientations such as; up-down, in-out, front-back etc.

A third is mentioned as ontological metaphors. Ontological metaphors are explained as our experiences or ways of viewing events, activities, emotions, ideas etc. as entities and substances. In chapter two, further explanations about the Conceptual Metaphor theory will be given with the different types of metaphor well exemplified.

It is not surprising that well known cognitive semanticists, some of who I mentioned earlier on, acknowledged Lakoff and Johnson as the pioneers of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory and also adopted it as the basis for their discussions. In fact, the theory provides an alternative method of analysing how we conceptualise things. As such it is relevant as the basis for this thesis. Other relevant materials will be consulted for the various chapters.

## **1.7 THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS**

The thesis is organised into six chapters.

Chapter one is the general introduction. It contains seven sub-headings and opens with the background to the study, which introduces us to the bases of the research after which comes the ethno-linguistic description. This gives us general information about the speakers of the Ewe language and its linguistic status. Also contained in this introduction is the statement of the problem under which is stated what actually prompted us to go into this study. The objectives and how relevant the study is, are also included in chapter one. Furthermore, we have also included the theoretical framework which is the bedrock upon which this thesis rests. It gives us the basis for which the thesis is developed.

The second chapter reviews literature relevant to the study under the topic ‘The review of literature.’ In it we reviewed how metaphor is used as a literary device in both oral and written literature of the language under study to create certain effects. Secondly, there is also detailed explanation of key aspects and tenets of the conceptual metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), backed by examples in both Ewe and English.

Time is cherished so much in life. In fact, it is the guide for every human activity under the sun. The use of time is therefore inevitable in the life of everybody. We often talk about time and its use as something normal not realising the metaphorical entailments that are involved. This is discussed in chapter three. With the idea of conceptual mapping in cognitive semantics, we looked at the different conceptual domains of time in Ewe.

Chapter four provides the conceptual metaphor theory about ‘death.’ Just like time, death is inevitable. Death is spoken of both in the scholarly circle and in the common mind as just a normal speech. It will be surprising to note that

death, which is the target domain, can be mapped onto different source domains. This is mostly analyzed from names of people among the Ewes which were attributed to death.

It is very interesting to note that, most of our Ewe sensational expressions can only be expressed metaphorically and that there are no literal parallels expressing them. Chapter five, gives us the metaphorical expressions of sensation.

In conclusion chapter six, the last chapter, is devoted for the summary, key findings and some recommendations for future research



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter has been set aside for review of literature relevant to the study. In this section I shall discuss how metaphor is commonly used as a figure of speech and a decorative device in both English and Ewe literature. Furthermore discussions about conceptual metaphor shall also be presented.

#### **2.1. 0. METAPHOR IN THE LITERARY SENSE**

Metaphor has been thought of over the years as a figure of speech and so is most often used to compare one thing to the other by saying that one is the other. In the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advance Learners, metaphor is explained as “the use of a word or phrase that means one thing and is used for referring to another thing in order to emphasize their similar qualities” Macmillan (2002:895). So, if a statement is made about someone as, ‘Kofi is a bulldozer’, he is being likened to that construction vehicle, with track or large wheels and a wide blade used for moving earth or debris. This vehicle is used to perform a variety of jobs on farms and construction sites in industry. The statement above therefore implies that Kofi can work in several ways as that vehicle does, and will never get tired; which is unusual of humans. Kövecses (2002:vii) emphasized this and stated that, “for most of us, metaphor is a figure

of speech in which one thing is compared to another by saying that one is the other. He continued to point out that the widely shared view of the traditional concept about metaphor is characterised by five commonly accepted features.

These are:

First, that “metaphor is a property of words, a linguistic phenomenon.” This is to mean that it is implicitly based on the comparison of two categories.

Secondly he indicated that, “metaphor is used for some artistic and rhetorical purpose.” That is to say that, metaphor is mostly used by people who have the skill of using language effectively and persuasively either in speech or in writing. Obianim (1990:19) exercised this in his book, *Agbezuge*, as follows:

1. Ame-nye-wo            zu    dzi-nake.

person-1SG POSS-PL become top-firewood

My people have become firewood that is far at the top of a tree. (My kinsmen are out of reach.)

2. Nye            hiã-wo            zu    ha didi

1SG.POSS need-PL become song long

My needs have become long song. (My needs are out of reach.)

In the above examples amenyewo ‘kinsmen’ is likened to dzinake ‘treetop firewood’ to mean that it will be very difficult to get into contact with. The same way hiãwo ‘needs’ is likened to ha didi ‘long song’ which is meant to be sang for a long time or without an end. This is to say that the needs will be mentioned over and over again but can never be met. In both examples the writer used the expressions to make an effective description as well as persuasively making the reader to follow the narration.

The third feature that is mentioned is that, metaphor is based on a resemblance between the two entities that are compared and identified. So in one of the above examples where Kofi is likened to a bulldozer cannot hold if he were to be a lazy fellow; otherwise the statement would be taken to be an irony.

Metaphor, just like the other wide range of literary devices, is also said to be characterised by a conscious and deliberate use of words, and you must have a special talent to be able to do it and do it well. That is why in the African community, especially in Ghana, an eloquent speaker, who has control over words and can use them rightly, is chosen as the chief's 'linguist'. The same way great poets and writers, like Shakespeare, with such talents are much honoured.

The fifth feature that is said to characterise metaphor is that, it is a figure of speech that we can do without; so we use it for special effects, and it is not an inevitable part of everyday human communication, let alone everyday human thought and reasoning. This feature has characterised the use of metaphor in the Ewe language over the years. It is only in literature that metaphor is mentioned, and is always referred to as a decorative device. Ofori (2004:82), in her study of the works of Rev. Dr. Fiawoo, stated that "Metaphor is a figure of speech which is used as a decorative device to the language." She therefore outlined how this art has been displayed by Fiawoo in his various drama books to create certain effects. Refer to appendix for these details. Adam (2008:53), having the same opinion, that metaphor is a literary device, emphasized the use of metaphor as a literary device by stating that "Metaphor is probably the most useful linguistic tool in creative and imaginative literature."

To illustrate the use of metaphor as seen just before, I shall discuss in the next section, some areas that metaphor, as a figure of speech, is used in the Ewe language.

### **2.1.1 METAPHOR AS A FIGURE OF SPEECH IN EWE.**

In description it is the job of the writer or speaker to bring what is being described alive in the reader's mind. Description will therefore be more interesting if you bring in words that suggest as many of the five senses as possible. This type of description is what is mostly employed in most literary works. For this reason metaphor and the like has become the handy tool for such illustrations. Anane (1979) asserts that the Akan poet, writer or song composer, to a very large extent, makes use of his imagination in the course of his literary work, and by so doing employs various forms of non-literal expressions. This statement is true about all poets, writers and song composers all over the globe, of which the Ewe writer is not an exception. In speech, the Ewe speaker, who has the ability to use language effectively to persuade or influence people, wins applause from the audience. He does this by extensively employing figurative language such as metaphor and simile. This is normally observed at the chief's palace, among the elders and also at the durbar grounds. For this reason, before a 'linguist' is chosen, one of the essential qualities that is critically sought for is, whether the person has control over the Ewe language. Obianim (1990:59) explained that since the linguist is the mouthpiece of the chief and therefore does most of the talking in his stead, (he made this statement below):



7. *Ɖevi-a kɔ abe fofo-a ene.*

child-DEF tall as father-DEF as

The child is as tall as the father.

8. *Agbeko fo nu sesĩe abe dzi-ɖe-gbe ene.*

NAME beat mouth hard as thunder like.

“Agbeko talked loudly as the thunder.” (Agbeko roared like thunder.)

9. *Tsɔ mía-fe vodada-wo ke mí sigbe ale si míe-tso-na*

take 1PL-POSS sin-PL forgive 1PL just such as 1PL-take-HAB

ke-a...

forgive-HAB

“Forgive us our sins just as we forgive...” (Biblia 1996:8)

In the different illustrations it will be noted that it is only some characteristics of the entities that are being likened to each other as the case is in a simile. So whenever the statement is in these forms it should not be mistaken for a metaphor.

Metaphor in Ewe involves the use of the words *nye* ‘is and *zu* ‘become’. This can be seen in examples (1) and (2) above. To avoid the confusion of taking simile to be a metaphor in Ewe, Ofori (2004:82) has decided to adopt the English word as ‘metafo’.

Metaphor as a figure of speech has been used extensively in both oral and written literature in the Ewe language. As said earlier, both speakers and writers will want to make an effective descriptions as well as narrations to invite a listener or reader for which reason metaphor cannot be left out.

I shall discuss the use of metaphor in oral and written literature in the next sections.

### **2.2.1.1 METAPHOR IN EWE ORAL LITERATURE**

Oral literature is very much valued among the Ewes because it is their great source of entertainment after a hard day's work. Before these modern times, members of a household sit around a burning fire with high expectations to listen to folk tales from the old folks of the community to refresh their minds. This is sometimes interrupted with puzzles, myths and legends, riddles, songs and drumming and dancing. The young normally give the chance to the old to entertain them since they believe they have the ability of portraying their rich culture which is normally enriched by the use of a variety of figures of speech. These old folks also use these figures of speech extensively to create vivid word pictures to make their presentations emotionally intense and concentrated, and to state their ideas in new and unusual ways. I shall give some of the examples of its usage in the different areas.

First metaphors are used in folk tales. In a story telling, apart from where the teller may use metaphor to liken a character to something else to create an effect, there is one other area for which its use as a figurative feature is essential. This is after one of the audiences interrupted the story by singing a song, to keep people awake, draw the people's attention to the teller or to emphasise what has been said. The story teller promotes the singer by likening her to one of the major characters of the story by saying she is this or that. For example:

10a. Wò-e nye yiyi.

2SG-Foc be spider

“You are spider.”

Or

b. Wò-e nye nyagã adze-tɔ la.

2SG-FOC be old lady witch-owner DEF

“You are the witch old lady.”

This is normally done to create fun and no one seems to be offended.

Secondly, metaphors are used in the singing of dirges, to enhance them because they are highly adored among the Ewes. Normally, the use of metaphors in dirges shows how important the dead, about whom it is being sung, is to the family or the community. Not only that, but to depict also the condition in which the dead’s family or close relative is. An example of such dirges is extracted from Akpalu in Obianim (1999:112). Part of it reads:

11. “Ame-nye-wo zu aḍa-dzo me-do.”

person-1SG.POSS-PL become reed-fire 1SG-set

“My people have become a fire that I have set with reed.”

(I have lost all my kinsmen.)

The part of the song where the singer is likening his kinsmen to fire, shows that they die one after another and cannot even be traced; just as when fire is set unto the reed, it burns quickly and as it burns the wind blows its ashes away and cannot be traced.

In one of the popular dirges among the Ewedomes, the bereaved loneliness is likened to a bird that flies alone without a companion. It states that:

12. Nye ya me-zu avalifoe.

1SG TOP 1SG-become NAME

“As for me I have become avalifoe.” ( I am lonely.)

The bird mentioned here is a nocturnal bird that flies alone and is often seen by the road side. This metaphorical comparison creates the effect that, because of death, there is no single companion left for the singer.

Third, proverbs in Ewe are very much enriched with metaphors. It is so because, it has been noted that elders use them to make a very long statement very short (Kovey 1998:146). In Dzobo (1997: iv), it has been noted that the traditional moral truths are enshrined in proverbs. For this reason they are used to teach moral values such as, the importance of money, arrogance, appreciation, bravery, and good behaviour. Metaphors are used figuratively to create that vivid description of different aspects of life. Some examples of the use of metaphors in proverbs include:

13. Ga la xeve-e wò-nye.

money TOP bird-FOC 3SG-be

“As for money it is a bird.” (Money used is like bird flying away.)

Money has been likened to a bird for so many reasons. One of such reasons is that, if you catch a bird and want to keep it, then you must keep it in a cage to secure it from flying away. The same way money must be kept under strong security away from thieves. In another sense, a bird that has a nest to stay in, will fly away but will come back to stay in it. In the same way if money is used sensibly and profitably, it is possessed throughout one's lifetime.

14. Nunya            adido-e    asi    me-tu-nɛ            o  
thing-know    baobab-FOC hand NEG-reach-3SG NEG  
“Wisdom is a baobab tree; a hand does not get around it.”

Wisdom is likened to a baobab tree to show how huge it is perceived. This is to say that one person cannot put one's arm around it. The comparison is made to teach people that, a person cannot grasp all the wisdom of the world. Its acquisition is a lifelong matter.

The illustrations presented above are just a few examples of how metaphor is used as a figurative speech or a decorative device in Ewe oral literature. It is evident that, more can be identified in the other aspects that have not been mentioned. The next section gives us the idea about the figurative use of metaphor in written literature.

#### **2.2.1.2 METAPHOR IN EWE WRITTEN LITERATURE**

Written literature in Ewe, is commonly divided into three genres. It includes Drama, Prose and Poetry. While some writers rely on their imagination to create their work, others base their work on actual events and people to which they add invented characters, dialogues and plot situations. In both situations, writers often use the art of figurative language to create vivid impressions by setting up comparisons between dissimilar things. One of the frequently used, as noted earlier is the metaphor.

First I will review the use of metaphor in plays. The art of Drama in Ewe started since 1932 by F.K. Fiawoo. Ofori (2004:1) stated that F.K. Fiawoo is

the first Ewe dramatist and has three drama books to his credit. These books are titled Tɔkɔ At-lia (Fiawoo 1962) ‘The fifth landing stage’, Tuinese (Fiawoo 1973). ‘Complain to God’ and Fia yi Dziehe (Fiawoo 1973) ‘The chief is gone to the South’.

Since metaphor, like the other figures of speech is used as a decorative device to the language in Ewe, Fiawoo did not hesitate to display its use extensively in his three books. This has been outlined artistically by Ofori (2004:120). One of such examples is:

15. Xexe sia me nye agama-gbalẽ.

world DEM POSTP be chameleon-book.

“This world is a chameleon skin.” (The world changes).

The world is likened to the skin of the chameleon, which changes its colour to that of the nearest object, to create the impression that, no condition in life is permanent. More of such examples from Ofori (2004:137-139) can be referred to under appendix.

Ewe prose writers also use metaphors. Artistically this has enriched their writing. One of such men is Obianim (1990). In his book *Agbezuge*, the use of imaginative language such as metaphor has made the book to be one of the best selling Ewe novels since that time to date. The first example is the title of the book, which turned to become the name of the hero in it. That is ‘*Agbezuge*’.

16. Agbe-zu-ge

life-become-offence

Living has become an offence.

This and a lot more examples have created a very clear picture of the exact message that the writer wanted to convey to the numerous readers, and a lot more examples can be traced in other novels as well.

Despite the above illustrations of the use of metaphor in the traditional way, “a new view of metaphor that challenged this traditional theory in a coherent and systematic way was first developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980...” (Kövecses 2002:viii). This challenging theory and other relevant materials shall be reviewed in the next section.

## **2.2 THE CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY**

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are of the view that metaphor is not only characterised by the features that it is a property of words used for some artistic and rhetorical purpose or based on a resemblance between two entities that are compared and identified. On the contrary, they claim that, “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action.” They further explained that, our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people.

Kövecses (2002: viii) has emphasized and summarized the characteristics of the cognitive linguistic view of metaphor as follows:

“Metaphor is property of concept and not of words.

The function of metaphor is to better understand certain concepts and not just for some artistic purpose.

Metaphor is often not based on similarity

Metaphor is used effortlessly in everyday life by ordinary people not just by special talented people.

Metaphor far from being a superfluous though pleasing linguistic ornament, is an inevitable process of human thought and reasoning.

By all these, they mean to say that, many ordinary familiar words and phrases have metaphorical meanings, although we do not usually realise this when we use them. It is also meant to say that, it is almost impossible to talk about particular topics in English as well as other languages without using words that are metaphorical. So, in most of the little things we do every day, we simply think and act more or less automatically along certain lines.”

Metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain (Kövecses 2002:4). So, there is a mapping between a target domain and a source domain. That is to think of one thing in terms of another. So elements of the source domain are mapped onto elements of the target domain. It has been observed also that conceptual mappings are unidirectional. That is to say mappings are irreversible (Evans and Green 2007:296; Kövecses 2002:6). For that matter, the concept LOVE can be talked about in terms of the concept JOURNEY, but not journey in terms of love.

Another thing noted about source and target mappings is that, the source domains are typically more concrete than the target domains which are fairly abstract and less delineated. Some common source domains given include the human body, plants, health and illness, machines and tools etc. So looking at the human body as the source domain, the typical parts that are utilised involve, head, face, heart, legs, shoulders etc., giving the following examples

as; the heart of the problem, to shoulder a responsibility and the head of the department.

A typical metaphorical concept that is used by Lakoff and Johnson is the conceptual metaphor 'Argument is war' to illustrate how everyday activities are structured. Below are the linguistic representations of this conceptual metaphor.

#### ARGUMENT IS WAR

Your claims are indefensible.

His criticisms were right on target.

I demolished his arguments

He shot down all my arguments

In the above statements, it will be noticed that the words and phrases, *indefensible*, *attacked*, *shot down*, are the evidence that ARGUMENT IS WAR.

Lee (2001) who also agrees with Lakoff and Johnson that metaphor is used effortlessly in everyday life by ordinary people, and is an inevitable process of human thought and reasoning presented the concept 'Argument' in the conceptual metaphor as ARGUMENT IS A BUILDING. This was supported with the following metaphorical linguistic expressions:

Your argument has *crumbled*

That *supports* what I am saying

You need something to *buttress* that claim

So, *crumbled*, *buttress* and *support* are the key words that confirmed the conceptual metaphor that ARGUMENT IS A BUILDING.

By analysing the above examples, what one needs to capture is that every metaphorical word or phrase contains a key idea. This key idea is expressed in several different words and phrases.

Lee (2001) gives another conceptual metaphor of the concept ARGUMENT- as ARGUMENT is a JOURNEY with the following statements:

What are you *driving at*?

That *leads* me to the following conclusions...

This part takes us a little *further*.

The above illustrations of the source domains war, journey and building mapped onto the target domain argument are the evidences of the explanation given earlier on that conceptual metaphor is understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain.

### 2.2.1. TYPES OF METAPHORS

Cognitive semanticists have observed that metaphor can be categorised. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) identified some of these categories as structural, orientational and ontological metaphors. Kovecses(2002) referred to them as well. They are discussed below.

### 2.2.1.1 STRUCTURAL METAPHORS

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980:15), “Structural metaphors are cases where one concept, is metaphorically structured in terms of one another.” This kind of metaphor, as explained by Kövecses (2002:33), is where the source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target concept. Cognitively, he explained that, structural metaphors is to enable speakers to understand target A by means of the the structure of source B. That is why, as noted earlier, the concept ARGUMENT, is understood in English in terms of war, journey and building. Looking at the concept argument, it is well grounded in our concept that both parties are getting the other partner to accept a certain viewpoint on some issue or at least to act according to that view point, so they use whatever verbal means such as intimidation, threat, invoking authority, insult and belittling act at their disposal to show that you have an opponent whose position you attack and try to destroy and to win if you are completely successful.

With the above explanation, we can say that any metaphor that has a strong cultural basis is a structural metaphor. This is so as a result of it emerging naturally in the culture of the society. They are grounded in our physical and cultural experience and also influence our experiences.

Since the advent of the pervasiveness of metaphor in everyday language, there have not been any detailed written illustrations of it in the language under study. This notwithstanding, a lot of structural metaphors as explained above can be identified as exemplified below:

A. ARGUMENTS ARE BUILDING. With examples such as:

17. *Ɖo kpe wò nya la dzi.*

put stone 2SG word DEF POSTP

Put stone on your word. (Support your claims.)

18. *E-fe nya-wo gbã̃m fu anyi*

3SG-POSS word-PL break strike down

“His words have crumbled me.” (His words demoralised me.)

B. TIME IS A CONTAINER

19. *Míe-ge ɔe fe yeye me.*

1PL-drop PREP year new POSTP

“We have dropped into a new year.” (We have entered a new year.)

20. *Ama le e-fe fe gbã̃to me le suku*

NAME be at.PRES 3SG-POSS year 1st POSTP be at.PRES school

“Ama is in her first year at school”

Further illustrations will be exemplified in the subsequent chapters.

### 2.2.1.2 ORIENTATIONAL METAPHORS

Another group of metaphors identified by Lakoff and Johnson (1980:14) is ORIENTATIONAL metaphor. They explained this to be the type that organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another in the sense that, a concept is given a spatial orientation. This simply means that the concepts are spatially related to each other. These spatial orientations are: up-down; in-out; front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral. It therefore

implies that, orientational metaphor expresses a concept as if it is a physical object occupying space.

Some up-down examples were given as follows;

HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN. This is understood to mean that, when somebody is happy or is in a joyous mood then his spirit or feeling rises up; but the opposite happens in an unpleasant or sad situation. Statements such as the following are used to illustrate this metaphor.

I' m *feeling up*.

That *boosted my feeling*.

My *spirit is down*.

He *is really low* these days.

So 'feeling up' and 'boosted feeling' show the up oriented concept, while 'spirit is down' and 'he is low' gives the opposite of it. Other examples include CONSCIOUS IS UP and UNCONSCIOUS IS DOWN.

He lives up to expectation. He fell asleep.

GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN.

He does high-quality work. Things are at an all-time low.

VIRTUE IS UP and LACK OF VIRTUE IS DOWN

She is an upstanding citizen. He couldn't rise above his emotions.

This up-down spatialization metaphor can be identified in the Ewe language as well. For example,

A. HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP. Consider the statements below;

21. Me-fɔ nyuie.

1SG-rise well

“I rose well.” (I am fine)

22. E-fɔ tso dɔ-léle sesẽ la me.

3SG-rise from disease-catch.RED hard DEF POSTP

“He rose from a hard sickness.” (He has recovered from the serious sickness.)

The opposite spatial metaphor which is:

SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN is presented as follows;

23. Dɔ-léle la fu-i anyi.

disease-catch RED. DEF strike-3SG down.

“The sickness has dropped him down.” (He is down with the sickness.)

24. E-ku mlɔ anyi.

3SG-die lay down

“He died lie down.” (He laid dead.)

B. HIGH STATUS IS UP as in:

25. E-fe ame-gã do-e de dzi.

3SG-POSS person-big raise-3SG PREP POSTP

“His big person raised him up.” (He was promoted by his boss.)

26. Ðo-fe kɔkɔ le e-si le du la

reach-place tall.RED be. at:PRES 3SG-hand be at:PRES town DEF

me.

POSTP.

“He has a tall place in the town.” (He is highly honoured in the town.)

The opposite is:

LOW STATUS IS DOWN.

27. Nyɔnuwo gbã-e fu anyi

Woman-PL break-3SG strike down.

“He was broken down by women.” (Women demoralised him.)

One thing that was noted by these cognitive semanticists is that, “though the polar oppositions up-down, in-out etc. are physical in nature, the orientational metaphors based on them can vary from culture to culture” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:14). For example, where it said of a person to be swollen headed in English means to feel important, it is the opposite in Ewe; for us, it means to feel ashamed.

Kövecses(2002:36) in his analysis of orientational metaphors suggested that a more appropriate name could be given them as “coherence metaphor”. He explained this by showing the uniformed manner that the target concepts seemed to be conceptualized. This was illustrated by some concepts which are characterized by an *upward* orientation while their opposites receive a *downward* orientation. For example:

MORE IS UP; LESS IS DOWN: Double up your steps. Slow down a little.

HEALTHY IS UP; SICKNESS IS DOWN: The baby is up and doing. He is down with fever.

SUCCESS IS UP; FAILURE IS DOWN: She is an up-and-coming young lawyer. He is coming down in his business of late.

What must be noted is that, the positive-negative evaluation is not limited to the up-down spatial orientation. The other spatial orientations mentioned earlier are relevant as well. A lot more will be illustrated in the subsequent chapters.

### **2.2.1.3 ONTOLOGICAL METAPHORS**

Ontological metaphors are identified through three different ways. These were presented under three different sub-sections. They are entity and substance metaphors, container metaphors and personification.

Lakoff and Johnson explained that understanding our experiences in terms of objects and substances allows us to pick out parts of our experiences and treat them as discrete entities or substances of a uniform kind. This is what is called entity and substance metaphor (1980:25). This is one way that ontological metaphors are identified. With the explanation given, entity and substance metaphors therefore have physical objects as source domains and nonphysical objects as the target domain. Some examples that are captured are presented below.

## A. INFLATION IS AN ENTITY

Inflation is lowering our standard of living.

If there is much more inflation we will not survive.

Inflation makes me sick (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:27) These examples show that inflation was referred to as an entity that is why the concepts, *is lowering*; *more inflation* and *makes me sick* were used to see it as a cause of something, quantify and refer to it. Other examples will be given in the next chapter.

Another example of ontological metaphor is the container metaphor.

Things such as bottles, boxes or bowls are used physically for holding things. So we put in things and pick out things from them. Lakoff and Johnson (1980:29) gave a clear explanation that, as physical beings we are bounded and set apart from the rest of the world. Just as we view the physical objects around us as containers, so we project our in-out orientations onto them. So, concepts are understood in terms of moving in and out of them even when there is no natural physical bounding that can be viewed as. The container metaphor will be used to a large extent in this work. Until then, here are some English examples:

THE MIND IS A CONTAINER:

I have *kept that in my mind*.

Can't you *get it into your mind* that I am not interested?

Her *mind is closed to* any new ideas.

## LOVE IS A CONTAINER

I have fallen in love.

He helped them out of Love

The third form of ontological metaphor is personification.

Personification involves giving human qualities to nonhuman entities. Despite the fact that personification is very common in literature, we can understand a wide variety of our experiences with nonhuman entities in terms of human characteristics and activities. Kövecses (2002:35) explains it further to mean that it “permits us to use knowledge of ourselves to comprehend other aspects of the world.” Personification abounds in everyday activities. Examples such as the following can be considered:

*Necessity* is the *mother* of invention.

*Poverty* *drove them* to the street.

Lean famine staked the town

In the above illustrations, the abstract concepts, *necessity*, *poverty*, and *famine* were attributed with human qualities.

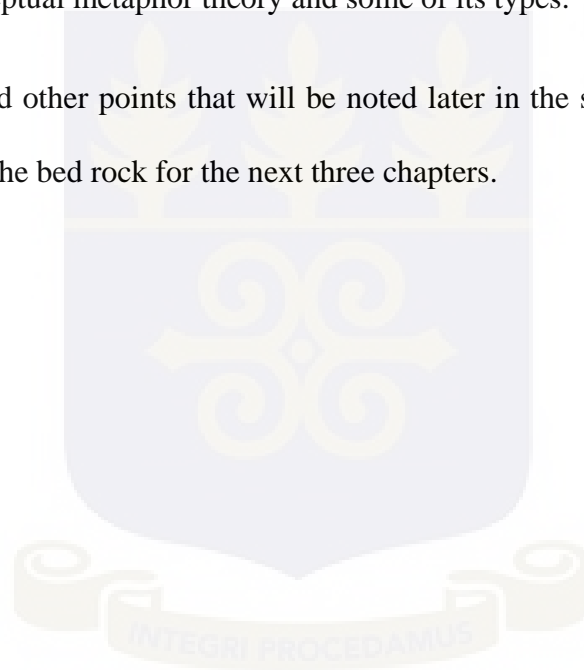
### 2.3 SUMMARY

The discussions made so far are to illustrate the fact that, metaphor is not only set aside as a figure of speech but also to reveal that speakers employ metaphors quite extensively in their everyday language. This has been presented in two sections.

In the first section, details about metaphor, as a figure of speech, were illustrated. The different examples from both the oral and written literature provided the evidence to the proposal made by Adam (2008:53) that metaphor is probably the most useful linguistic tool in creative and imaginative writing.

Section two of this chapter was used to highlight the basic ideas that govern the new view of metaphor that challenged how scholars used to perceive it. It includes what a conceptual metaphor is; the two domains that are involved in the conceptual metaphor theory and some of its types.

These and other points that will be noted later in the subsequent chapters will serve as the bed rock for the next three chapters.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS OF TIME IN EWE

#### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, we have noted among other things that, metaphor is not just used by special talented people, but that many ordinary familiar words and phrases have metaphorical meanings and are used effortlessly in everyday life by the ordinary person although we do not usually realise this when we use them.

Time is part and parcel of both the scholarly and the ordinary person. As such, it is the guide for all human activities under the sun. The use of time is basic to human nature. As a result it is culturally grounded in our physical and cultural experience. For this reason it has been unconsciously expressed metaphorically over the years. In this chapter I will attempt to describe these metaphorical expressions in Ewe in relation to the different types of metaphor that have been mentioned in chapter one.

For us to see the relevance of the metaphorical expressions of time, we need to understand what exactly time is and know its importance in the life of the individual as well as the world at large. So I shall first review what time is, the different types of measurement that we have before proceeding to the different metaphorical representations.

### 3.1 WHAT IS TIME?

Time is an indispensable asset in life. It cannot be avoided. It is an external event which occurs independently from human beings (Kövecses 2002); and yet controls every activity of theirs. It is the limited period during which an action, process or condition exists or takes place. Kövecses explained further that, time is understood nonmetaphorically as a changer, an entity that can affect people and things especially in adverse ways. It is also the moment which something takes place. Pickover (2007) says that “time is said to be the conscious experience of duration, the period during which an action or event occurs. It is one of the fundamental quantities of the physical world similar to length and mass.”

Basically, the quantity that is measured using the clock is referred to as time (Macmillan English Dictionary: 1505). So a particular moment in a day is measured on the clock. Time is also read by the count of the days of the week and the months of the year. The different seasons that we experience throughout the year are also evidences of time calculation. Nevertheless, before the advent of the use of the clock, mankind, due to a basic need to pause at regular intervals to mark the passage of time and to ponder over the larger meaning of our lives, in his own wisdom, has a way of determining time. Obianim (1999: 40) identified the different ways that the Ewes used to calculate time. He noted that the day is divided into four parts (this still exists) and for each division to be noticed, they associated it with the movement of the sun. These divisions are known as; ndi ‘morning’ ndo ‘afternoon’ yetro or wole



used to calculate time. According to him the ancients of both Europe and Africa, having watched the moon carefully, noticed that phases of the moon occurred in a steady predictable fashion and these were scratched on to stones, rocks and bones and that, this was the beginning of calendars. These helped predict the appearance of the silvery light for hunting or raiding rival clans and also, in predicting the number of full moons that will appear, before winter gave way to spring. He added that flocks of migrating birds also helped in the predicting of time such as the coming of winter and, the appearance of certain stars signalled the approach of spring.

In addition to this basic knowledge, Pickover, (2008) noted that, time can be measured in five different ways. These are solar, sidereal, dynamic, atomic and standard times. Out of these five, only the solar and standard time measurements are relevant for this study.

The apparent motion of the sun across the sky has long been used as a basis for measuring time. So when the sun reaches the highest point in the sky, at any given locality, then it is noon or midday, a time measured as twelve o'clock in the day. This is under solar time measurement. The standard time measurement is the familiar clock time that most people use in everyday life. It is based on the earth's sphere into 24 equal time zones. This measurement of time on the clock is in terms of seconds, minutes and hours (Pickover, 2008). Time is also measured in terms of a particular period of days, weeks, months and years. In Ewe, time measured with the clock is read as aqabafofo 'minutes'; and gafofo 'hours'. The other measurements are nkeke 'day', kwasiɖa 'week', yleti 'month' and fe 'year'. Daily calculation can also be read as egbe 'today', etsɔ

‘tomorrow’ or ‘yesterday’ and nyitsɔ ‘before yesterday’ or ‘any time after tomorrow’ Basically, the representations of time measurement are stated in different ways as illustrated below:

2. E-fo     ηdi     ga     eve  
 3SG-beat morning metal two  
 “It is two o’clock in the morning”

3. E-fo     ηdɔ     ga     eve     kple     afã.  
 3SG-beat sun metal two and half  
 “It is 2:30 pm.”

4. Mía-yi     Gẽ     le     kwasiɔa     eve     megbe.  
 1PL-go Accra be.at:PRES week two POSTP.  
 “We shall go to Accra after two weeks.” (We shall go to Accra in two weeks time.)

5. Wo-de     fiafitɔ     la     xɔ     yleti     ene.  
 3PL-put thief DEF room month four.  
 “The thief is imprisoned for four months.”

All the above statements give specific measurements of time in minutes, hours, weeks or months. It can also be in years. These measurements can be analysed to explain the fact that they are metaphorically structured.

### 3.2.0 EWE TIME METAPHOR EXPRESSIONS

We have just explored what time is and how important it is in our everyday life. In the subsequent sections I shall discuss the various ways that the expression of time is metaphorically structured in the Ewe language. The major expressions to be discussed shall be considered as structural metaphor. Time expression is not a new phenomenon. It has begun with man. Any metaphor that has a strong cultural basis is a structural metaphor since it emerges naturally in the culture of the society. Structural metaphors are grounded in systematic correlations within our experience (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

In Ewe some of the time metaphors that can be identified are; TIME IS A POSSESSION, TIME IS A GIFT, TIME IS MOTION among others. All of them shall be explained into details.

#### 3.2.1 TIME IS A POSSESSION

Time can be conceptualised as a possession. A possession is something that someone owns. For us to understand how time is metaphorically structured as a possession it will be good to illustrate how the possession of a thing is indicated in the Ewe language.

In English, there are possessive pronouns whereas in Ewe we have a possessive marker. The possessive marker, fe 's', is used with nouns and pronouns for showing the possessor of something. The first and the second person singular pronouns do not take on the marker but all the other pronouns do (Obianim 1999: 87; Duthie 1996:46). Here are some examples:

6. Nye agbalẽ bu

1SG book lost.

“My book is missing.”

7. Mía-fe agbalẽ bu.

1PL-POSS book lost

“Our book is missing.”

8. Wò agbalẽ bu

2SG book lost.

“Your book is missing.”

9. Mia-fe agbalẽ bu.

2PL-POSS book lost.

“Your book is missing.”

10. Efe agbalẽ bu.

3SG book lost

“His/her book is missing.”

11. Wo-fe agbalẽ bu

3PL-POSS book lost

“Their book is missing.”

Nevertheless, kinship nouns do not take *fe* before them after a possessive noun phrase (Duthie 1996:55). The following examples illustrate this explanation:

12. Fofò-nye va.

father-1SG.POSS come.

“My father has come.”

13. Mía fofo va.

1PL.POSS father come.

“Our father has come”

14. Fofò-wò va.

father-2SG.POSS come

“Your father has come”

15. Mia fofo va.

2PL.POSS father come

“Your father has come.”

16. E-fofo-a va.

3SG.POSS-father come.

“His father has come.”

17. Wo fofo va.

3PL.POSS father come.

“Their father has come.”

It will be noticed in the above illustrations that, the singular pronouns are attached to the kinship nouns but the plurals and the kinship nouns are written separately. With this insight into how the possession is determined in Ewe we can now proceed to show time is metaphorically possessed.

In the first place, time is metaphorically expressed as a thing that one owns.

Consider the following examples:

18. Nye    yeyiyi    e-nye    esia.

1SG.    time        1SG-be    DEM

“My time is this” (This is my time).

19. E-xɔ                mia-fe        yeyiyi

3SG-receive    1PL-POSS    time

“It received our time.” (It took our time).

20. E-fe                yeyiyi    nyo    ne

3SG-POSS    time    good for-3SG

“His time is good for him.”

Based on the explanation given earlier, it is evident in the above sentences that the possessive marker *fe*, has given us the comprehension of time belonging to somebody.

In the second place, just as part or, a whole of what someone owns can be given out to some other person, Time as a possession, can be expressed as being given out to somebody. For example:

21. Me-na wò ga-fofo eve be na-wu dɔ la nu.  
 1SG-give 2SG metal-beat.RED two COMP 2SG-complete work DEF end  
 “I give you two hours to complete the work.”

22. Míawo-e a-na yeyiyi wo.  
 1PL-FOC POT-give time 3PL  
 “It is we that will give them time.”

In addition, just as possessions are valuable, so is time expressed as valuable to the owner in the sentences below

23. Lé be na wò agbe-nɔ-fe-wo  
 hold care for 2SG life-live-year-PL  
 “Take care of your life years.” (Value your life.)

24. Ìkeke sia xɔ asi na-m  
 day DEM receive price PREP-1SG  
 “This day is expensive for me.” (This day is important for me.)

A further point is that, possessions can either be used profitably or destroyed. Time is metaphorically expressed as being used profitably or destroyed. For example:

25. Amuzu zã e-fe game la nyuie.  
 NAME use 3SG-POSS time DEF well  
 “Amuzu used his time well.” (Amuzu used his time profitably)

26. Míe-gblẽ mía-fe agbe-nɔ-fe-wo katã.

1PL-spoil 1PL-POSS life-stay-year-PL INT

“We have destroyed all our life years.” (We have misused our lives.)

The various illustrations given are a proof to the fact that, time is metaphorically conceptualized as a possession in the everyday conversation of the Ewe speaker.

### 3.2.2 TIME IS A GIFT

A gift is either something given to someone as a present or something good that you are grateful to have (Macmillan English Dictionary 2002:597). The different times of the day are expressed in our greetings among most nations in the world, most especially in Ghana and for that matter Africa. In Ghana, the way we greet is so much adored to the extent that anyone who does not conform to this norm is considered a social outcast. Among the Ewes, greeting is done as if it is being presented to the other party who has to show its acceptance gratefully. The southern Ewes exhibit this very clearly as can be observed in the following examples:

27. Mi- xɔ ŋdi.

2PL- receive morning

“You receive morning.” (Good morning to you.)

28. Me- na fiẽ wò

1SG- give evening 2SG

“I give evening to you.” (Good evening.)

Among the northern Ewes, even though it is not stated explicitly, the statement implies the same as above. Let's consider the following:

29. Ɔdɔ na wò.

sun give 2SG

“Sun for you.” (Good afternoon)

The above illustrations show evidence that greeting times in Ewe are metaphorically structured as gifts. Consequently, when a greeting is not responded to, the gift is therefore not accepted as exemplified here:

30. Wo-me-xɔ gbe na mí o.

3PL-NEG-receive voice for 1PL NEG

“They did not receive voice for us.” (They did not respond to our greetings.)

### 3.2.3 TIME IS EDIBLE

From the cognitive perspective, Lakoff (1987) sees metaphors as conceptual rather than linguistic. To him, metaphors are means by which the meanings of concrete and familiar lexical items (source domain) are extended to abstract or less well structured entities (target domains). He notes further that, in metaphorical extension of lexical items, there is a one-to-one mapping in which the source is linked to its target. The verb du ‘eat’ is a concrete and prototypical action verb that involves the consumption of an edible object through the mouth. The expression of time wasted on something in Ewe is presented as though that entity has eaten up one’s time. Such examples include those presented below.

31. Nuɖaɖa la ɖu game na mí.

thing DEF eat time PREP 1PL

“The cooking has eaten up our time.” (The cooking has taken our time.)

32. Wò megbe-tsitsi la ɖu dada fe yeyiɣi katã.

2SG POSTP-remain.RED TOP eat mother POSS time INT

“Your lateness has eaten up mother’s time.” (Your lateness has wasted mother’s time.)

In the examples above nuɖaɖa ‘cooking’ and megbetsitsi ‘lateness’ have been metaphorically extended to be animates that have eaten up the time of the possessors.

### 3.2.4 TIME PASSING IS MOTION OF OBJECTS

Motion is the act or process of moving. In this case it is the movement that somebody or something makes. Time can be expressed by Ewe speakers as an object or somebody that can move about by running, walking, or even turning around.

33. Mía-fe fe-wo le yiyi-m

1PL-POSS year-PL be.at:PRES go.RED-PROG.

“Our years are going.” (Our years are passing away.)

34. Mía-fe agbe-nɔ-fe-wo le du dzi.

1PL-POSS life-stay-year-PL be.at:PRES race POSTP

“Our life years are running.” (Our years are passing swiftly.)

35. Ʋeyiyi-wo va yi.

time-PL come go

“Times have passed.”

36. Nenem ga-fofo ma gbɔna.

INT metal-beat.RED DEM arrive

“That time is coming.”

All the above statements explain the concept of time, as structured in our everyday conversation, as moving object or person.

### **3.2.5 TIME IS A CONTAINER**

A container is an object such as a box, jar, or bottle that is used to hold something for storing or transportation. Evans and Green (2007:183) explained that, prepositions like; in, into, out, out of and out from are lexical items that relate to CONTAINER schema. They stated that, the CONTAINER schema consist of the structural elements interior, boundary and exterior as the minimum requirements for a container.

In Ewe postpositions are the lexical items, which are normally used to give the concept of in and out that explain the interior, boundary and exterior structural elements. These are most times accompanied by prepositions. Consider these examples:

37. Kofi ge ɖe do me.  
 Kofi drop PREP hole POSTP  
 “Kofi has dropped into a hole.”

38. Dada le xo me.  
 Mother be.at:PRES room POSTP  
 “Mother is in the room.”

Based on the above illustrations, Time can be conceptualised as a CONTAINER in the Ewe language. Some illustrations are;

39. Ama le yleti gbãto me le suku.  
 Ama be.at:PRES month first POSTP be.at:PRES school  
 “Ama is in the first month at school.”

40. Míe-ge ɖe fe yeye me.  
 1PL-drop PREP year new POSTP  
 “We have dropped into a new year.” (We have entered a new year)

The expressions ‘le...me’ in example (37) and ‘ɖe...me’ in (38) and many of such examples that can be added are those that explain the concept that TIME IS A CONTAINER.

### 3.3 THE COMPLEX METAPHOR SYSTEM

Evans and Green (2007) noted that an early finding of metaphor system by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) was that, conceptual metaphors interact with each other and can give rise to relatively complex metaphor systems. On this note

they discussed two types of metaphors known as the simple metaphor and the compound metaphor. While primary metaphors are said to be foundational or basic, compound metaphors are constructed from the unification of primary metaphors. The primary metaphors are referred to as such, for the fact that they conventionally associate concepts that are equally basic in the sense that they are both directly experienced and perceived. This notion is evident in the Ewe TIME METAPHOR presentation.

Apart from the basic nouns, other nouns are derived from other word classes such as compounding nouns, reduplicating intransitive verbs, changing inherent complement verbs into nouns among a whole lot of others. Here are some examples:

Compounding nouns.

Noun + Noun= noun:

41. Abolo + kpo= abelokpo

bread + oven= breadoven (oven)

42. Detsi + ze= detsize

soup + pot= soup-pot (pot)

Reduplicating intransitive verbs:

43. Va + va= vava

come+ come= (coming).

44. Zo + zo = zozo

walk + walk = walking.

Reduplicating the verb part of Inherent Compliment Verbs and then add them to the noun forms:

45. Dzi ha = hadzidzi  
sing song= singing

46. No tsi = tsinono  
drink water= drinking

47. Tsi megbe = megbetsitsi  
remain back= lateness

48. Ðu ye = Yeđuđu  
dance+ dance= dancing

In the earlier presentations some of these nouns occurred in some of the illustrations. A closer observation of such nouns revealed that, they rather act in the sentences as entities that used the time. Some of them are;

49. Wò ye-đuđu                      đu game na      mí.

2SG dancing-dance.RED eat time PREP 1PL

“Your dancing has eaten our time.” (Your dancing has taken all our time.)

50. E-fe      megbe-tsitsi      gblě      yeyiyi na      ɖevi-a-wo.

3SG-POSS back-red.remain destroy time PREP child-DEF-PL

“His lateness has destroyed the children’s time.”

(He has wasted the children’s time due to his lateness.)

Basically, we understand these sentences to mean that, it is the persons, Wò ‘your’ and E ‘His’ that used up the time in the different presentations. But closer observation shows that it is what they rather possessed, which are yeđuđu ‘dancing’ and megbetsitsi ‘lateness’, that ate up and destroyed the time.

These examples explain the fact that, primary metaphors can be unified in order to provide more complex conceptual mappings known as compound metaphors (Evans and Green 2007:322).

### 3.4.0 THE ONTOLOGICAL METAPHORS OF TIME

It has been explained by Lakoff and Johnson (1980:25) that, when we view our experiences in terms of events, activities, emotions, ideas etc as entities and substances, it provides the basis for a wide variety of ontological metaphors. In this section we shall discuss time as a substance and also as an entity. Kövecses (2002:34) in his explanation of ontological metaphors states that, “the cognitive job of ontological metaphors is that we conceive of our experiences in terms of objects, substances and containers.”

#### 3.4.1 TIME AS A SUBSTANCE.

A substance is a physical reality that can be touched or felt. It can be quantified, referred to, assigned a value and can be used up. In Ewe, time can be conceptualised as an abstract substance, that can be quantified, referred to, assigned a value and be used up. The statements below illustrate that.

51.  $\Upsilon$ eyiyi sue aḍe koe kpɔto na mí. (Time is quantified.)

time QNT DEM INT remain for 1PL

“We have just a little time left.” (We have just a few minutes left.)

52. Ga ma me wò-dzi Edem. (Time is referred to.)

time DEM POSTP 2SG-born NAME

“She gave birth to Edem at that time.”

53. Ʋeyiyi la le vevie. (Time is assigned value.)

time DEF be.at: PRES. important

“The time is important.”

54. Wo-zã game-a vɔ. (Time is used up.)

3pl-use time-DEF finish

“They used up the time.”

### 3. 4.2 TIME AS AN ENTITY

An entity is a separate unit that is complete and has its own character (Macmillan English Dictionary).

Time as an entity can move about.

55. Fe sia le du dzi.

year DEM be.at: PRES race POST

“This year is running.” (This year is passing swiftly.)

56. Ʋeyiyi la dɔ

time DEF arrive

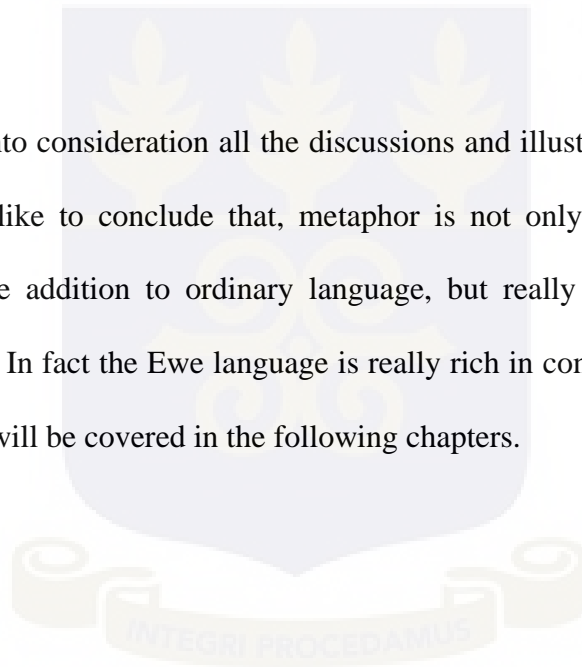
“The time has arrived.” (Time is up.)

### 3.5. SUMMARY

In this chapter so far, we have been examining how time is metaphorically structured in our common everyday expressions. The reason is to confirm the claim made by the pioneers of the conceptual metaphor theory that, metaphor is pervasive both in thought and everyday language.

We have noticed that time cannot be avoided in humans. It evolved with humanity and therefore controls every activity under the sun. It controls human life from birth to death. Even the movement of the sun and the moon are guided by time. Kövecses noted that time is a notoriously difficult concept to understand. But in the discussions so far, it is evident that the metaphorical expressions of time are pervasive in the Ewe language. As such, we have identified a lot of expressions to explain these concepts that; TIME IS A POSSESSION, TIME IS A GIFT, and TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT among others.

Taking into consideration all the discussions and illustrations presented above, I would like to conclude that, metaphor is not only a stylistic feature or a decorative addition to ordinary language, but really a matter of conceptual structure. In fact the Ewe language is really rich in conceptual metaphor. More grounds will be covered in the following chapters.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR OF DEATH**

#### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, the study has dealt with one of the most valuable commodities, time, in almost every culture around the globe. The chapter was full of different metaphorical conceptions and expressions about time that has never been thought of as such in the language under study. In the current chapter I shall deal with death, another entity that almost everybody is concerned about (Goody 1962:51), since it plays a significant role in the life of a person. The concern about death has given rise to different comprehensions and conceptualisations of it from culture to culture. For that matter, different languages, including Ewe, present a variety of ways of talking about it. A close study of the Ewe language reveals that, expressions about death, in the language are largely metaphorical. This chapter therefore focuses on the metaphorical expressions of death in the Ewe language.

First, I shall discuss what death is basically and then try to explore the different comprehensions and concepts of death as pertaining to different beliefs and cultures before proceeding to the Ewe metaphorical presentations.

#### **WHAT IS DEATH?**

Basically, death is understood as the end of being alive, an irreversible cessation of life for that matter. Mbiti (1989:145) noted that, “the last thing that happens to mankind on earth is death, that inevitable and, in many societies,

most disrupting phenomenon of all.” Death involves a complete change in the status of a living thing; that is, the loss of its essential characteristics. Death stands between the world of human beings and the world of spirits, between the visible and the invisible (Mbiti 1989:145). People all over the globe by no means have a singular view on what death is and on what happens after death (de Witte 2001:24). Man’s view of death varies according to a person’s background and beliefs. In The Teacher’s Outline and Study Bible it has been noted that “when men look at death, they think of it as...

ceasing to exist.

passing into oblivion.

some semi-conscious, sleepy-eyed existence.

reincarnation into another form of life on earth.

moving on onto another world and being given another chance to work one’s way into heaven, that is into being acceptable to God (pg.110).”

“To the Christian, death never means extinction, annihilation, non-existence or inactivity. It simply means that a person is separated from his body or from God or from both (The Teacher’s Outline and Study Bible, 1994:50).” In the Bible therefore, three types of death have been spoken of. First is physical death, that is, the separation of man’s spirit from the body. It is when a person ceases to live on this earth and is buried. A second type of death in the Christian perspective is spiritual death, the separation of a man from God while he is still living and walking about on earth. Eternal death is another type of death identified in the Bible. It is an eternal state of being dead to God and it is called the second death.

Before the advent of Christianity, man's concept and views about death among most African countries differ as much from the Biblical concept as night differs from the day. Among most of the Ghanaian languages of which Ewe is not an exception, it is believed that death is a journey from this world to another world. Among the Ewes the result of this conception is that, food and other items such as money and working tools are buried with the dead with the idea of helping him to have a successful life hereafter; even to the extent of killing the dear wife and other servants of chiefs (Obianim 1990:35). Secondly, funerals are performed with the idea of allowing the deceased to start on the said journey.

Despite this believe, the mention of death puts fear into the individual. It is also the belief of the fore fathers that death, as a spirit being, stands close by to enter any house and take away anyone that pleases him. As such, instead of stating that a person is dead, other statements are made to pass on the message. Some of these include:

1. a. E-gbe dze.

3SG-refuse salt

“He has refused taking salt.” (He is dead)

b. Nyɔnu la de afɔ atukpa me.

Woman DEF put leg bottle POSTP

“The woman has put her leg into the bottle.”(The woman is dead.)

Most especially, it is never said of a chief that he is dead. To date the most common euphemisms used are:

2. a. Tɔgbui yi kɔfe.

oldman go village

“The oldman is gone to the village.”(The chief is dead.)

b. Tɔgbui mu zi.

oldman overturn seat

“The old man has overturned a seat.”(The chief is dead.)

Mbiti (1989:145) observes that “death is something that concerns everybody, partly because sooner or later everyone personally faces it and partly because it brings loss and sorrow to every family and community.” For this reason, in Ghana and most African countries, hundreds of people come together to pay their last respect to a deceased loved one or to sympathise with a bereaved family or friend.

#### 4.2. THE GRAMMATICAL ILLUSTRATION OF DEATH

Grammatically, both the noun and the verb form of death in Ewe have the same written form with the same pronunciation. The noun is ku ‘death’ and the verb is also ku ‘die’. Both are pronounced /kú/. As a result, whether it is a noun or verb can only be detect according to context.

Here are some examples of the noun forms of death:

3. a. Ku le afe-me na wo.

death be.at:PRES house-POSTP for 3PL

“Death is in the house for them.” (They are bereaved.)

b. Ku la gbã dzi nɛ.

death DEF break heart for.3SG

“Death has broken her heart.” (She is down broken-hearted because of the death.)

The verb forms of death are also exemplified below:

4. a. Xevi la ku.

bird DEF die

“The bird is dead.”

b. Kofi fofo ku etsɔ.

Kofi father die yesterday

“Kofi’s father died yesterday.”

In this study, the matter of concern is the noun form of death.

#### 4.3.0 DEATH METAPHOR ANALYSIS

Universally, death has been conceptualised in different ways. The Ewe expressions of death show that it is conceptualised as human, water bodies, possession and a whole lot of entities. These conceptions with their expressions are discussed below.

### 4.3.1 DEATH PERSONIFIED

In literature, personification is a representation of inanimate objects and abstract ideas as human beings. This is exemplified in an old adage thus; “Necessity is the mother of invention.” Here necessity has been represented specifically as a woman. This representation is mostly adopted by poets, dramatists and novelists to create certain effects on their readers and audience.

Personification is not only a matter of literature but is also largely used in our everyday speeches. Lakoff and Johnson (1980:33); Kövecses (2002:35) noted that the phenomenon is a form of ontological metaphor that does not only allow us to conceptualise entities as mere persons but also gives us the idea of acting towards it. They noted some examples such as: Life has cheated me. Inflation is eating up our profits. The computer went dead on me.

In these statements, life and inflation, abstract entities, and computer, a physical object, were given human qualities of having the ability to cheat, eat and die.

Personification is again noted as permitting us to use knowledge about ourselves to comprehend other aspects of the world (Kövecses2002:50). From time immemorial, man wanted to understand what death could be. The unexpected loss of loved ones through death has set man on mental torture to want to know what exactly death is, where it lives and what it does with the departed. Man was left with no choice than to conceptualise it as having the capability of performing different actions as humans do. As a result, death is

feared, adored, or respected ever since. In Ewe, most utterances about death depict personifying it. To lay emphasis on these conceptions, most of them have become names for people in the community. Some of them are listed as an appendix. Most of the illustrations will be derived from these names. The first analysis concentrates on the general characteristics of humans that are conceptualised about death.

#### 4.3.1.1. DEATH HAS HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS

Every personality has a set of qualities that make him distinctive; this is what is referred to as his or her character. As such, someone can be said to have good or bad character. The qualities of a person can make him interesting or attractive. Death is of so much concern and interest to mankind that, the Ewes, like many other Ghanaians, do conceptualise death as possessing human qualities. The following examples illustrate the personification of death in Ewe:

5. Ku vā-a            ŋu-m(mí).  
 death move-HAB eye-1SG(1PL)  
 “Death is jealous (of me/us).”

This expression is made when a supportive person in a family is dead. To the community, death, as a person, has been jealous of the bereaved family that was being supported by the dead person and for that matter robbed them of that beloved one.

Similarly it has been conceptualised that death has been cheating people. This happens when a family, despite their scanty income, has struggled to invest in the education or upbringing of a member of the family with the hope of enjoying later, but all of a sudden, missed him through death. Here are some expressions:

6. a. Ku ba- m/mí.

death cheat- 1SG/1PL

“Death has cheated me/us.”

b. Ku ba-a ame ηuto.

death cheat-HAB person INT

“Death cheats people.” (Death is a cheat)

While example (6a) gives the understanding that death has cheated the bereaved family by not allowing them to enjoy the fruit of their labour the expression in example (6b) is usually made when it seems that death has picked all the good and useful members of the family leaving behind only the useless ones. This also shows that death is a cheat.

Another conceptualised characteristic of death that can be analysed is the ability to degrade people as in the next statement.

7. Ku d̥i̥d̥i-a ame

death lower-HAB person

“Death degrades people.”

This statement is usually made when it seems that the death of a person has caused the degradation of the bereaved family. Indeed when a person cannot be

responsible in some crucial issues of life, such as burying your own parents or child as the community expected, it causes the loss of your status, reputation or self esteem.

Among the northern Ewes, most especially in Awudome and Peki, it is expected of a child to care for the parent when they become too old to care for themselves. People who have dead conscience do neglect and care less about their parents; even where there seems to be no help from anywhere. When these helpless people die later and the supposed children or wards turn up for the burial and funeral rites, they sometimes become the scorn of the entire community. In most cases the statement normally made is that:

8. Ku do ɲukpe wo/mi.

death wear shame 3PL/2PL

“Death has put them to shame.” (They are full of shame.)

This same statement is made when a quarrel ensues between close relatives or friends and one of them dies soon after. The whole community sees death as coming to disgrace the other party.

It is also conceptualised that death has a retentive memory. So, he has the ability to remember or to forget. As such it is only when he remembers you that he will come for you. In a conversation between two people one can wish the other well, by saying that:

9. Ku ne-ɲlo wò be.

death 3SG-forget 2SG forget

“Death should forget about you.” (I wish you long life.)

Apart from some of the general characteristics of humans that are conceptualised about death there are some human capabilities also that can be identified in the everyday speech of the Ewe speaker. We turn to them in the next section.

#### 4.3.1.2. DEATH IS A CHILD

Among the southern Ewes, the Anlo people, death is conceptualised on the one hand as being a child and for that matter having parents. This is stated clearly during announcement towards the final funeral rites and also during the process. The following statements illustrate this concept:

10. a. E-kua        tɔ    kple   nɔ        do    gbe   na    mi.

DEF-death father CONJ mother plant voice PREP 2PL

“The father and mother of death greets you” (The bereaved family greets you).

b. Eku-a        tɔ    kple   nɔ        ma    ku-    fe    la    katã .

death-DEF father CONJ mother shared death- debt DEF INT

“The parents of death shared the debt” (The bereaved family shared the debt).

Here, they are referring to the maternal and paternal families of the deceased. Among the Ewes, anybody who is bereaved is conceptualised as the owner of death rather than being a parent. For this it is stated thus:

11. a. Míe-de ku-tò-wo gbɔ fifia.

1PL-go death-owner-PL near now

“We have been to the owners of the death.”(We have been to the bereaved family.)

b. Míe-da nya la de ku-tò-wo gbɔ.

1PL-put word DEF PREP death-owner-PL POSTP

“We have contacted the bereaved family on the issue.”

Just as names are given to children at birth, death has been nicknamed as:

“Ku Azãgidi” “Ku Salagatsi”

Here Azãgidi and Salagatsi can be taken to be the first names of death.

#### 4.3.1.3 DEATH IS A WORKER

Death has again been comprehended in terms of engaging in vocations like farming, hunting and fishing just as men do. Here, death is personified as a human being capable of setting a trap or fishing. This can be noted in the following expressions:

12a. Ku tre azã

death set trap

“Death has set a trap”

b. Ku do xa

death set trap

“Death has set a fish trap.”

The sudden and unexpected death of some loved ones made people comprehend death as an enemy to mankind, a cruel predator that has a superior strength. Man therefore believes that it might have some destructive ways. In examples (14a&b), his cruelty and wickedness has been displayed as setting traps, as both the hunter and the fisherman do, to steal from people, their loved ones. Furthermore, death does not only act like the fisherman or the hunter, but also like the farmer as in this statement:

13. Ku tso ati  
death cut tree  
“Death has cut a tree”

People who command authority are seen as giant trees in the society that are untouchable. So when death strikes such personalities, they are referred to as trees that have been cut down.

#### **4.3.1.4 DEATH IS A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENT**

Before the advent of Christianity, trial by ordeal is one of the fastest ways that the community depended on to bring culprits to book. In some instances when libation is poured death strikes the offender immediately. In other instances where it is difficult to pass judgement by the living, cases are referred to the ancestors and deities, whom they believe have superior power over them, to come to their aid; after that everybody waits patiently for the outcome. In both cases when death strikes in the family of the supposed offender, it is believed that judgement has been passed. These occurrences have given rise to the

conceptualisation of death as a law enforcement agent. As such, statements such as these below are made.

14a. Ku tso afia na mí  
 death cut acquittal for 1PL  
 “Death has given us judgement”

In this case, death is said to acquit when a different person is struck instead of the suspect.

b. Ku tso nya me  
 death cut word POSTP  
 “Death has settled the matter”

In the same manner example (14b) indicates that the death of one person out of the supposed suspects has settled the matter by showing the offender. In both cases therefore death is seen performing the duty of a judge. In other instances, death becomes a police officer that applies shackles to the imprisoned as in:

15. Ku-de-ga  
 Death-put- metal  
 “Death has applied shackles.”

These statements are in turn used as names for members of the winning families as a way of making allusions to their opponents.

#### **4.3.1.5 DEATH IS A MERCHANT:**

Death is conceptualised as a dealer that deals in the buying of human lives. This conception is realised in speeches that imply that certain deaths occur due

to the mistakes of oneself or someone else. It is evident in the statements below:

16. Dzila-wo-e dzra dɛvi la na ku  
parent-PL-FOC sell child DET prep death

“It is the parents that sold the child to death.”

(It is the parents that caused the death of the child)

This statement shows that either the negligence or a serious mistake from the parents might have caused the death of the child. The same way someone’s mistake can cause his or her own death as the next statement shows.

17. Ɖekakpuia-wo le wo-fe agbe dzra-m na ku.  
youngman-PL be.at:PRES. 3PL-POSS life sell-PROG PREP death

“The young men are selling their lives to death.”

(The young men are living a reckless life.)

In both statements, the sellers are the parents and the young men respectively and the buyer is no other person than death. So where death occurs in cases like this, then there has been a successful transaction between the two parties, the parents or the young men on one hand and death on the other.

#### **4.3.1.6 DEATH IS A WARRIOR**

It is expected of a warrior to possess certain outstanding qualities. For example, warriors are expected to be courageous, brave and victorious and can also lose a battle. So, any person that exhibits such qualities is honoured as such. Some statements about death in Ewe give the understanding that death is a warrior.

Let’s consider the following:

18. a. Ku bu alɔ./ Ku da dadagbo

death lost hand

“Death has missed the target.

b. Ku ɔu dzi.

death eat top

“Death has won”

c. Ku-a do dzi.

death-DEF plant heart

“Death is courageous.”

d. Ku di ge.

death seek quarrel

“Death has sought for quarrel.”

From the above expressions, it is inferred that death occurrences are conceptualised as being a struggle or conflict between the deceased and the bereaved family at one side and death at the other side. As such death is seen in the above statements displaying some of the above mentioned qualities in warfare.

Most often, when someone has been able to survive a fatal accident or a severe sickness, people rejoice with him and make funny statements as a way of teasing death as exemplified in (18.a). In another instance death is said to win a battle or struggle, as in example (18.b), when a great person that commands respect and everybody seem to be at his beck and call, dies. If this is so, then indeed death is very courageous, (example 18c), to be able to kill such a person that everybody might have been afraid to approach. Sometimes, warriors are

noted to be quarrelsome, so they can get into a fight or struggle with their opponents. In this view, when a very dear person is dead we sometimes have the conception that death has sought quarrel with the bereaved, as stated in example (18.d ), for which he couldn't do anything.

#### 4.3.1.7 DEATH CAN IMPRISON

In a prison, criminals are either confined as a punishment for a crime or waiting for a trial. Death is sometimes conceptualised as being capable of imprisoning people. Christians therefore do pray to God to deliver them from death. In Ewe the statement is rightly said as such. Here are some examples:

19a. *Ɖe nye agbe tso ku si me*  
 remove 1SG.Poss life from death hand POSTP  
 “Save my life from death.”

b. *Me-de-m asi na ku o.*  
 3SG.NEG-put-1SG hand for death NEG.  
 “He did not hand me over to death.”

#### 4.3.1.8 DEATH POSSESSES

Earlier in chapter two, we noted that *je* is a possessive marker that is used with nouns and pronouns to show the possession of something in Ewe. With the same illustration, I shall discuss the conception here that death is a possessor.

First there is the conception that death has a building where he keeps or imprisons his captives.

20.a. Wo-vu ku fe agbo na wò... (Job.38:17)

3PL-open death POSS gate for 2SG

“Death’s gate is open for you”

b. ...gedɛ si-wo ɔ̄o ta ku fe xɔ gã-wo me. (Pro.7:27)

many DEM-PL reach head death POSS house big-PL POSTP

“Many that were led to the chambers of death”.

Secondly, the point of death is believed to be the end of day for mankind. So, death is believed to have been the night that belongs to death. This is evident in this line taken from an Ewe hymn.

21. Ku fe zã ma-dzi ɲɔ na mí o.

death POSS night NEG-frighten PREP 1PL NEG

“Death’s night shall not frighten us” (We shall not fear death).

During funeral arrangements every importance is attached to it. Where it seems that an attention is to be given something that does not concern it, peoples’ attention is quickly drawn to it by saying that:

22. Ku-a tɔ le vevie

death-DEF own be.at:PRES important.

“The death’s own is important” (An importance must be attached to the death).

It is also believed that death as a human has a hand that he uses to capture his captives as illustrated in (26).

23. Ku    je   asi   faɛ   la    lé-e.

death POSS hand cold DEF catch-3SG

“The cold hand of death has caught him.” (He is dead.)

All the illustrations show that just as humans possess and use their possessions death also possesses and uses people in the same manner.

#### **4.4.0 OTHER METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS ABOUT DEATH**

All the conceptions discussed so far are based on personification as a type of ontological metaphor. In this section I shall discuss the idea that death is not only personified. The metaphorical concept of death in our physical and cultural experiences is extended to a large number of entities in our environment. Often we talk and think about death as things such as food, insects, plants etc. I shall discuss these into detail here.

##### **4.4.1 DEATH IS A PLANT**

Some of the distinctive features of a plant are its roots, branches, flowers and fruits. The conception of death among the Ewes is extended to comprehending it as a plant. Here are some examples.

It is conceptualised that death grows roots and is stated thus:

24. Ku-   to-   ke.

death- grow- root

“Death has grown a root.”

In the Ewe community, death is said to have grown roots when there are some rampant death occurrences in the family, especially when members die at a certain unripe age or through some mysterious deaths, and it seems nothing can be done about it. Often, it is believed that there must be a source that needs to be given some divine attention to save them from such calamitous situations. Without that, this fearful utterance is made to scare people away from such a family.

Another statement about death that gives the evidence that it is conceptualised as a plant is:

25. Ku-    dɛ-a            alɔ.  
           death- remove-HAB branch  
           “Death grows branches.”

Death is said to have grown branches when an occurrence in one town affects people in other towns far away.

Lastly, trees are usually noted for the type of fruits that they bear. So just as we have a mango tree, guava tree, apple tree and the like, the Ewes think there is a death tree as stated below:

26. Ku-    ti- ma- tso  
           death- tree- NEG- cut  
           “Death tree cannot be cut.” (No one can eliminate death.)

This simply implies that death is inevitable.

#### 4.4.2 DEATH IS AN INSECT

The sting of some insects, such as wasps, bees and some species of ants is very painful and irritable. Since it is usually sudden and unexpected, an insect sting makes people become upset, hurt and annoyed. Most times, the loss of loved ones makes people feel sharp pain and become upset too. This experience has made the Ewe speaker to conceptualise death as an insect that has stung them.

This is evident in the following statements:

27.a Ku- te- m  
 death- sting- 1SG  
 “Death has stung me.”

b. Ku-tea-ame  
 death-stings-person  
 “Death stings people.”

Some insects are known to have poisonous stings that are fatal as exemplified here:

28. Ku fe aḍi si-m.  
 death POSS poison cut-1SG  
 “Death’s poison has killed me.”

In Ewe this statement gives the notion that the poison is fatal.

#### 4.4.3. DEATH IS A CONTAINER

Death is sometimes viewed as a container having a bounding surface with an inside and an outside, just like rooms and houses. People are then conceptualised as being in and out of it. Here are some examples from the Holy Bible:

29a. Nu-v- si ma-he ame ayi ku me o. (1Jn.5:16)

thing-bad DEM NEG-pull person go death POSTP NEG

“Sin that does not lead to death.”

b. Elabena e-to ku me yi de agbe la me. (Jn.5:24)

for 3SG-pass death POSTP go Prep. life DET POSTP

“We have passed through death into life”

c. Ame si me-l- novi-a o la e-tsia ku me.

Person DEM NEG-love kinship-DET Neg det 3SG-remain death POSTP

“He who does not love his neighbour, remains in death.”

d. E-dɔ ku-do nu.

3SG-reach death-hole mouth

“He is at the point of death.”

The postposition me ‘inside’ is the evidence that death is a container that has a containing region.

#### 4.4.4. DEATH IS EDIBLE

The metaphorical expressions to be illustrated here show that death is conceptualised as food. Here are some expressions:

30. Ku le ze-a me. (Biblia. IIFia:332)

Death be.at:PRES pot-DEF POSTP

“Death is in the pot.”

This expression indicates that this particular food is poisonous and must therefore not be eaten.

The translation of Jesus, suffering death in our stead, from English into Ewe gives the concept that death can be tasted as we do food.

31. Be wò-a-ɔ̃ ku a-kpɔ. (Biblia. Heb.2:9)

that 3SG-taste death POT-see

“That, he should taste death.” (He suffered death)

Since food is one of the things that are swallowed, the next expression is also evidence that death is conceptualised as food.

32. Wo-mi ku le dziɔɔdu me. (Biblia.1Kro.15:24)

3PL-swallow death be.at:PRES victory POSTP

“They swallowed death in victory.”

The concept about death as food is again evident in the title of Akotey (1988)’s tragic Ewe novel as:

33. Ku ɔ̃ ɔ̃ na wo.

Death satisfy stomach for 3PL

“They were satisfied with death.”

In the story, certain incidents sent the fiancée of a prince of a mighty kingdom away from home. The prince decided to go after her and eventually met her. On their way back home, the girl died and the prince could not stand the pain and so breathed his last breath just at the outskirts of the town. Grieve sent King Agrona and the wife, his parents, to death; since they could not stand the loss of their only son. For this Akotey (1988) explained that, people who speak about the doom of this kingdom always say that the parents of the prince were rather satisfied to die than to live and be grieving over the death of their son; hence the title of the book.

It is interesting to note that, the sort of attitude that Africans, especially Ghanaians, show towards food is rightly exhibited in their conception about death. Let's consider this expression that:

34. Ami le                    ku-a            ŋu    ŋuto.

fat    be.at:PRES death-DEF body INT

“The death is fatty.” (The funeral is gay)

As Africans, we like fatty food. Our liking for fatty foods is exposed in the way we describe an expensive funeral with a lot of food and drinks in abundance for people's use. As such, people become excited and spread the news to others with the kind of expression stated above in (35).

#### 4.4.5. DEATH IS AN OBJECT/SUBSTANCE

With ontological metaphors we can view our experiences as entities, substance, or objects so we can refer to it, quantify and identify a particular aspect of it.

Since death is an abstract concept we need to give it a more clearly delineated status, so we can give it the right metaphorical mapping.

Some other utterances in Ewe indicate that, death is conceptualised as a physical reality that can be touched and felt.

First, the severe pain during labour is stated as catching death physically as in these statements:

35. À-lé            ku   hafi   a-dzi   vi. (Biblia. IMos.3:16)

2SG.FUT-catch death before SUBJV-born child

“You will catch death before giving birth.” (You will give birth in pain.)

Secondly, death as an object can be referred to as unspecified or unknown quantity as depicted here:

36. Ku   aḍe   dze aḍe   me   na wo

death DEM fall house POSTP for 3PL

“A certain death has fallen into their house.” (The household has been struck by a kind of death.)

On the one hand, death as an object is expressed to be valued or costly, as exemplified below, when a lot of people attended the funeral with posh vehicles.

37. Ku-a xɔ asi.

death-DEF receive price

“The death was valuable.” (The funeral was gay.)

In this example, the funeral is described as valuable because the deceased person was a very important personality; hence his funeral attracted a lot of people.

On the other hand death can be valueless when the funeral turn up to be the opposite of the type described earlier. Here is an example:

38. Ku-a me-dji nu o.

death-DEF. NEG.-resemble thing NEG.

“The death was not valuable.” (The funeral was not gay.)

When people are fed up with life, they sometimes wish to die. In cases like this, death is conceptualised in Ewe as an object that is being searched for and is expressed as exemplified here:

39. E-di ku vevie gake me-kpɔ-e o.

3SG-search death dearly but Neg-see-3sg Neg

“He has searched diligently for death but did not find it.” (He wanted to die.)

Death can also be quantified when there is more than one funeral at a time or a lot of death occurrences. It is stated thus:

40.a Ku sɔgbɔ le du-a me.

death plenty be.at: PRES town-DEF POSTP

“Death is plenty in the town.” (The funerals are many in the town in the town.)

b. Ku-nya-wo va sɔgbɔ le fome-a me  
 death-word-PL come many be.at:PRES family-DEF POSTP  
 “There are many death occurrences in the family.”

Furthermore, even though everybody seems to be hostile to death, it is classified among the Ewes as the good and bad. If a person dies through normal sickness, no matter the duration of the sickness, then his death is a good one. So there are expressions such as these:

41. a. Ku nyui ko-e dzɔ-na le du-a me.  
 death good INT-FOC born-HAB be.at:PRES town-DEF POSTP  
 “There are always good deaths in the town.”

b. Ku nyui aɖeke me-le afe ma me o  
 death good QNT NEG-be.at:PRES house DEM POSTP NEG  
 “There is no good death in that house/family”.

So with regards to example (a), death occurrences in the town are good since there has never been any accidental or mysterious death. But example (b) gives the notion that members of that house never die a normal death and this is conceptualised as bad death. ‘Bad deaths’ are classified under those caused by accidents and sicknesses thought of to be forbidden. Accidental deaths include road accidents, drowning, hanging, and any death that occurred through bleeding. Sicknesses such as epilepsy, madness, and AIDS, are all considered to be forbidden sicknesses, and therefore cause bad death. Metaphorical expressions for this concept include:

42. Ne è-ku ku v- la woa-dji wò kaba.  
 If 2SG-die death bad TOP 3PL-bury 2SG quick

“If you die a bad death you will be buried early.”

Another point to consider is that, death, in the status of an object, can be possessed. As a possession, here are some metaphorical expressions:

43.a. Agbeko *fe ku la xɔ asi.*

Agbeko POSS death DEF receive price

“Agbeko’s funeral was gay.”

b. Tɔgbui Aglago *fe ku la tu afe.*

oldman name POSS death DEF reach house

“Chief Aglago’s funeral is almost due.”

Here the names attached to the funerals have given the understanding that those people possess them.

So far, the ontological status given to death, this abstract idea, has helped in qualifying, classifying, and referring to it.

#### 4.4.6. DEATH IS A MOVING OBJECT

In Ewe death is thought of as a thing that is moving about. Below are some illustrations:

44.a. Ku tu wɔ kpuie

death reach 2SG short

“You are at the point of death.”

b. Ku alili wò.

death reach 2SG.

“Death will surprise you”

c. Ku to mía ñu va yi

death pass 1PL body come go

“Death has passed by us.” (We have escaped death)

The above expressions explain the fact that Ewes conceptualise death as an unpredictable vehicle that moves at an invisible speed to pass you by or hit you.

#### **4.5. SUMMARY**

In this chapter I have surveyed the metaphorical conceptions of death in Ewe in relation to the daily expressions made about it by the speakers. The central idea throughout has been to attempt to explain metaphorical expressions as compared to everyday speeches. By way of conclusion I want to draw attention to the fact that utterances about death, although seem to be normal and natural for everyday purposes, are largely structured metaphorically.

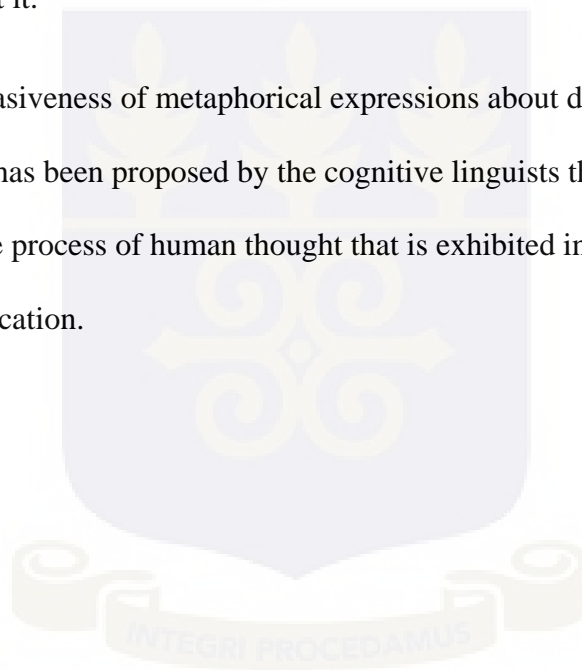
First, we can see that, a large part of the way we speak about death in Ewe derives from the way we speak about ourselves, humans. As such, it has been extensively personified.

Secondly, the study has revealed that death can be given different ontological status. By this we have been able to treat it as a discrete entity or substance and

therefore we have been able to refer to it, quantify, classify and identify a particular aspect of it.

Indeed I can say that the different source domains that were employed to understand death have been very useful for the metaphorical structuring in this chapter. This rich metaphorical structure notwithstanding, I will like to state the fact that, all that has been discussed about this target domain is just a small quantity of all the possible linguistic expressions that the Ewe speaker uses to talk about it.

The pervasiveness of metaphorical expressions about death is another evidence for what has been proposed by the cognitive linguists that metaphor is an inevitable process of human thought that is exhibited in everyday human communication.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS OF SENSATIONS IN EWE

#### 5.0. INTRODUCTION

Sensation is a physical feeling that is caused by having one or more of the sense organs stimulated. Sensation affects all the various parts of the body, including, the head, face, shoulders, hands, legs, back, heart, and others.

Kövecses (2002:16), asserts that “...the human body plays a key role in the emergence of metaphorical meaning not only in English and other Western languages but also...in languages and cultures around the world.” This assertion is true about most Ghanaian languages of which Ewe is not an exception. I have noted that, in Ewe the way we conceptualise and describe the concept, sensation, is highly metaphorical in nature. Based on this assertion, I have decided to survey the metaphorical expressions of this concept in this chapter.

Since sensation is caused by the stimulation of one or more of the sense organs, I think it will be proper to first discuss the conceptualisation of the five main senses. This is contained in the next section.

#### 5. 1.METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS OF THE FIVE SENSES

The five main sense organs in humans and other animals are the faculties by which outside information is received for evaluation and response. Our senses form part of us. The sense organs include the eye, nose, tongue, ear, and the

hand. With these organs we have the sense of sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch. Close analysis of these senses reveal that most of the expressions about them in Ewe are to a large extent metaphorical.

First, let us consider the sense of hearing. It is the sense by which sound waves are perceived. The perception of sound waves has different metaphorical expressions in the Ewe language. The expressions show how hearing is conceptualised in different situations. These expressions are naturally considered as idioms in the language, as their meanings cannot be deduced from the combined meanings of the actual words. However, as said earlier, the conceptualisation is rather metaphorical as shown in the various illustrations. The following are just but a few.

When someone hates to listen to anything audible the statement sometimes made is that:

1. Nya ma le to-me to-m na-m.  
 word DEM be.at:PRES ear-POST prick-PROG for-1SG  
 “That word is pricking my ear.” (I don’t want to listen to that.)

The statement being referred to by the speaker here is conceptualised as a thorn or any sharp object that is being used to prick the ear.

Another expression is:

2. Mia-fe yli-dodo le to gba-m na mí.  
 3PL-POSS noise-RED.shout be.at:PRES ear break-PROG for 1PL  
 “Your shouting is breaking our ears.” (You are noisy.)

In this case too, shouting is conceptualised as a physical object which is being used to break the listeners' ears.

In another instance, where a person is being inquisitive about any message, he is sometimes told teasingly that:

3. To-me      vivi-na      na wò.

ear-POSTP sweet-HAB for 2SG

“Your ear is sweet for you.” (You are inquisitive.)

So the ear here is conceptualised as an edible that is sweet.

Second is the sense of sight. The eye is the light-sensitive organ of vision of both humans and animals. With our eyes, we are able to see the features of objects we look at, such as colour, shape size and depth (Faye 2008). Sight is conceptualised in different forms as evident in the statements below:

4. ðevi-a      fe      ŋku ða      ŋutò.

child-DEF POSS eye sharp INT

“The child's eye is sharp.” (The child can see clearly.)

It will be realised in the above expression that, the eye is conceptualised as a sharp object or weapon. This conception occurs when someone can quickly spot out anything from afar and also find the tiniest object that is being searched for.

A situation in which something is unpleasant to look at also has its funny conceptualisation. Such a thing is given the status of an object, capable of pricking. Here are some expressions:

5. E-fe dzedze-me tɔ ŋku ŋutɔ.

3SG-POSS RED.appear-POSTP prick eye INT

“His appearance severely pricked the eye.” (His appearance is an eye sore.)

6. Afe-a me le ŋku tɔ-m.

house-DEF POSTP be.at:PRES eye prick-PROG

“The house is pricking the eye.” (The house is an eye sore.)

7. E-fe nu-wɔna-wo le ŋku tɔ-m na-m.

3SG-POSS thing-do-PL be.at:PRES eye prick-1SG DAT-1SG

“His actions are pricking my eyes.” (His behaviour is an eye-sore.)

We shall see from the expressions above that, someone’s appearance, the undesirable nature of a certain house or home, and the actions of someone are all given the status of a pricking object on the eye. This means that, one would not like to have a second look at those kinds of things.

Further, it has been realised that any object that gives bright light is conceptualised as an entity that has the ability to hold or catch the eye.

8. Ye la lé nye ŋku-wo.

sun DEF catch 1SG.POSS eye-PL

“The sun has caught my eyes.” (The sun is in my eyes.)

9. Ama fe awu la le ŋku lé-m.

Ama POSS dress DEF be.at:PRES eye catch-PROG.

“Ama’s dress is catching eyes.” (Ama’s dress is too bright for the eyes.)

What these statements mean is that, the brightness that the sun and the dress are emitting has blinded the speakers.

In another situation, a reduction in the ability to see in individuals also has its metaphorical expressions as illustrated below:

10. E-*fe*      *ŋku le*      *tsitsí-m*.

3Sg-POSS eye be.at:PRES extinguish.RED-PROG

“His eye is extinguishing.” (He cannot see properly.)

The eye here is conceptualised as fire, light or lantern that is going off. So when there is loss of sight it is stated as the light is off. The same loss of sight is expressed as “the eye is broken” or “sprouting” in examples such as:

11. *Tɔgbui fe*      *ŋku gbã*.

oldman POSS eye break.

“Old man’s eye is broken.” (Old man has loss of sight.)

12. *Fofo-nye*      *gbã ŋku na-m*.

Father-1SG.POSS break eye DAT-1SG

“My father has broken my eyes.” (My father has blinded me.)

The eye in this case is taken to be an object that can break.

A complete loss of sight is also conceptualised as the eye shooting as a plant.

For example:

13. E-*fe*      *ŋku tó*.

1SG-POSS eye sprout.

“His eye has sprouted.” (He is blind.)

‘Tó’ in Ewe is polysemous. It can also mean “spoil” as in the statement:

14. Bli-a tó.  
maize-DEF spoil  
“The maize is spoilt.”

So the expression in example (13) can be explained as in example (14).

The sense of taste is as important as the other senses discussed earlier. This is what enables humans and other animals distinguish qualities of taste. It has been noted that, taste is determined by receptors called taste buds and are located on the surface and sides of the tongue, the roof of the mouth and entrance to the pharynx (Lewis et al 2004). In Ewe these locations are mentioned to tell the quality of taste distinguished at a particular time. Most of these are stated metaphorically.

First, food of any kind that has been enjoyed for its good taste has different metaphorical expressions such as:

15. Nu-ɖuɖu-a lé aɖe ɲuto.  
thing-eat.RED-DEF hold tongue INT  
“The food holds the tongue very much.” (The food is very palatable.)

16. Nu-ɖuɖu-a tsi mía-fe ve me.  
Thing-eat.RED-DEF remain 1PL-POSS throat POSTP  
“The food has remained in our throat.” (We shall never forget the taste of this meal.)

These expressions give us the idea that, food in example (15) has the capability of holding or catching while that of (16) is conceptualised as any object that can move and remain in the throat.



It is true that, what we hear, see, smell or taste affects us in different ways that give rise to our sensations.

### **5.2.0 THE SENSATION METAPHORS**

The senses we have discussed earlier give us a wide range of sensational metaphors that are worth noticing. They involve the whole being and are widely used in everyday discourse without noticing them as such. In literature, they are used for artistic and rhetorical purposes. Akafia(1993) and Obianim(1990) used sensational metaphors extensively in their books, “Ku Le Xome” and “Amegbetɔa, alo Agbezuge Ɖutinya”, respectively to glue readers to their artistic work. Most of the expressions used in this section are extracts from those books. We cannot list every sensation that a person may have because they are enormous. So, those discussed in this study are just but a few of the whole lot.

Sensations are abstract concepts. As such they need to be given different ontological statuses before we can deal with them rationally. The evidence is shown in the following discussions.

### **5.2.1 ILLNESS.**

Illness is a state of bad health, a physical feeling. In the expressions below it will be noticed that illness has been conceptualised as a person, substance, container and an object. This has provided the opportunity for elaborate structuring.

First illness is personified as capable of striking any person as in these examples:

20. Dɔ-léle fo-e fu anyi.

illness-catch.RED beat-3sg strike down

“He was struck down by illness.” (He is down with sickness.)

21. Dɔ fo-e.

sickness strike-3SG

“Sickness stroke him.” (Sickness fell on him.)

22. Dɔ fo nu na-m.

sickness strike mouth DAT-1SG

“Sickness stroke my mouth.” (I have herpes simplex.)

There are cases where illness is conceptualised as being possessed as in the statements below:

23. Nye dɔléle sia le wu-ye ge.

1sg.POS illness-RED.catch DEM be.at:PRES kill-1sg PROSP

“This illness of mine will kill me.”

24. Anyi-dze-dɔ la fome-dɔ wò-nye na wo.

ground-fall-sickness TOP family-sickness 3SG-be DAT 3PL

Epilepsy is a sickness for the family. (Epilepsy is in the family.)

Some other expressions show that, illness is conceptualised as an object of any kind that can be handled anyhow. Here are some illustrations:

Illness can be split or cracked as in:

25. Dada dze dɔ

mother split/crashed illness

“Mother has split illness.” (Mother has taken ill.)

The conceptualisation in this expression is that illness is either firewood or a coconut fruit. Dze in the expression can also mean to ‘lodge at’. So there are expressions such as the following:

26. Dɔ-léle dze du-a me.

illness-catch.RED lodge at town-DEF POSTP

“Illness has lodged in the town.” (There is an outbreak of disease in town.)

27. Dɔ-léle dze mía dome.

illness-catch.RED lodge at 1PL POSTP

“Illness has lodged among us.” (There is an outbreak of sickness among us.)

Further, illness, conceptualised as an object can also be touched or held physically as expressed here:

28. Dada le dɔ lé-m.

mother be.at:PRES illness catch-PROG

“Mother is catching sickness.” (Mother is ill.)

29. Me-le titi lé-m

1SG-be.at:PRES gout catch-PROG

“I am holding gout.” (I am suffering from gout.)

Next, illness as an object can be located.

30. Anyi-dze-dɔ le Ama ŋuti.

ground-fall-illness be.at:PRES Ama body

“Epilepsy is on Ama.” (Ama is epileptic.)

A contagious disease is stated as being an object that is shared and received.

31. Nyɔnu la ma dɔ la na wo katã.

woman DEF share illness DEF DAT 3PL INT

“The woman shared the sickness among them all.”

(They all contracted the disease from the woman.)

32. Kofi xɔ dɔ tso Ama gbɔ

Kofi receive illness PREP Ama POSTP

“Kofi received sickness from Ama.” (Kofi contracted the sickness from Ama.)

As a moving object, an illness can move to and fro.

33. Agɔbaya fe dɔ-léle la trɔ bubui.

NAME POSS sickness-catch.RED DEF turn another.

“Agɔbaya’s illness turned another.” (Agɔbaya’s illness has turned worse)

34. Egbe dɔ-léle va e-dzi.

today sickness-RED.catch come 3SG-POST

“Today sickness has come upon him.” (Today he is sick.)

All the expressions discussed so far about illness are everyday expressions.

### 5.2.2 COMFORT

Comfort is a state of being comfortable, a condition in which somebody feels physically relaxed without any pain or other unpleasant feelings. It is a feeling of well being. Comfort can be provided by something as simple as a drink of

water or a favourite object, or by something as complex as a satisfying personal relationship or the removal or lessening of pain, anxiety, grief or fear. In effect a person can experience a physical, psychological or an organisational comfort.

The comfort level of a person in Ewe is expressed in different ways. These expressions reveal how comfort is conceptualised in the language. A few of these conceptions are discussed as follows:

First, comfort in Ewe is associated with the human heart. When there is comfort, the heart is conceptualised as an object that can be cold:

35. E-fe dzi fa.  
3sg-POSS heart cool  
“His heart is cool.” (He has comfort.)

36. Fa akɔ nɛ.  
cool chest DAT:3sg  
Cool his heart. (Comfort him.)

The expression in 35 indicates that the heart itself is cooled while that of 36 shows someone needs to cool or must cool the heart.

In another concept, comfort is expressed as removing the heart as an object from a certain place and put down somewhere. In effect if you want to comfort somebody you can persuade the person in that sense as in:

37. Ɖe dzi ɖi.  
remove heart down  
“Remove heart down.” (Be comforted.)

In addition to these, people in pain are seen to be having their hearts hung above; so, the heart descends when there is comfort. As a result, statements such as the following are made to indicate comfort or to be comforted.

38. Nye dzi dze e-me.

1sg heart drop 3sg-POSTP

“My heart dropped inside.” (I have peace./I am comforted.)

### 5.2.3 JOY.

Joy is great happiness. Happiness gives the feeling of pleasure, contentment or joy. In Ewe, joy, happiness and gladness are all translated as “dzidzɔ.” So the sentences ‘I am happy.’ and ‘I am glad’ could both be translated as:

39. Me-kpɔ dzidzɔ .

1SG-see heart-straight

“I have seen joy/happiness/gladness.” (I am happy/glad.)

In the same vein ‘I am full of joy.’ or ‘I am very happy.’ are also translated as:

40. Dzi-dzɔ yɔ me-nye.

heart-straight fill POSTP-1SG

“Happiness/Joy has filled me.” (I am full of joy.)

Now, dzidzɔ can be translated literally to mean ‘heart-straight.’ This is evident in the expression:

41. Dzi dzɔ-m.

heart straight-1SG

“Heart straightened me.” (I was happy.)

The state of joy has different types of expressions according to how it is conceptualised in the language. It must be noted that the verbs contained in the statements give us the clue to how this feeling is conceptualised at a time.

Joy is an abstract concept. Nevertheless the expressions of this experience show that it has been given an ontological status and so conceptualised as an entity, object, substance, and a container.

First, joy in some sense is expressed as an entity that can be seen physically. It is thus stated:

42. Me-kpɔ dzi-dzɔ.

1SG-see heart-straight

“I have seen joy.” (I am happy.)

43. Nye dzi kpɔ dzidzɔ.

1SG heart see heart-straight.

“My heart has seen joy.” (I am happy.)

In example (43), the heart is rather conceived of as the entity that saw the joy instead of the person.

Joy can either be a substance or material of any kind that can fill a space as exemplified here:

44. Dzi-dzɔ yɔ me-nye.

heart-straight fill POSTP-1sg

“Joy has filled me.” (I am full of joy.)

45. *Dzi-dzɔ yɔ afe-a-me fuũ*  
 heart-straight fill house-DEF-POSTP INT  
 “Joy has filled their house.” (Their house is full of joy.)

Just as water flows from the tap, joy is also conceived of as flowing in the person; so when the person’s joy ended abruptly, it is expressed as if the flow has stopped.

46. *Ef-e dzi-dzɔ la nu tso.*  
 1sg-POSS heart-straight DEF mouth cut  
 “His joy has cut off.” (His happiness has ended.)

Joy is also conceptualised as a clothing or plant in the sense that, anything or person that makes someone happy is conceived of as clothing the person with joy. Examples include the following:

47. *E-tso nu si a-do dzi-dzɔ na-m la da dji.*  
 3sg-take thing REL POT-wear heart-straight DAT-1sg DEF put down  
 “He has put down what will clothe me joy.” (She left behind what will make me happy.)

48. *Me-di be ma-do dzi-dzɔ na wò.*  
 1SG-want COMP 1SG-wear heart-straight DAT 2SG.  
 “I want to cloth you with joy.” (I want to make you happy.)

The ontological status given to joy has also given us the opportunity to quantify it. As such someone’s experience of joy can either be little or more.

So here are such expressions:

49. Dzi-dzɔ            gã    yɔ    nye    dzi-me.

Heart-straight big fill 1SG heart-POSTP

“Great joy fills my heart.” (I am filled with great joy.)

50.

Agbeko tɔɔ dzi-dzɔ            gã    yi    a/ɛ-me.

name take heart-straight big go house-POSTP.

Agbeko took big joy to the house. (Agbeko went home with great joy.)

51. Dzi-dzɔ            aɔke    me-le                            me-nye    o.

heart-straight none NEG-be.at:PRES POST-1sg NEG

“There is no joy in me.” (I am sad)

Various kinds of states may be conceptualised as containers. Even where there is no natural physical boundary that can be viewed as defining a container we impose boundaries (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:29). These bounding surfaces include a wall, fence or an abstract line or plane. The next expression shows that joy has been conceived of as a container surface that has a bounding surface as either a wall or fence.

52. Agbezuge tsi            dzi-dzɔ            kple    avi    dome.

name remain heart-straight CONJ cry POSTP

“Agbezuge remained between joy and cry.” (Agbezuge was confused.)

#### 5.2.4 FEAR

It is an unpleasant feeling of anxiety or apprehension caused by the presence or the anticipation of danger. Fear also belongs to the abstract target concepts

but can be given an ontological status. As a result we can conceive of it as an object, or substance so we can quantify, qualify or refer to it.

To begin with, we can linguistically quantify fear as an object as these statements show:

53. Ale wòtsɔ vɔv- afã kple dzidodo afã bia gbe-e.  
 so 3sg-take fear half and heart-RED.sow half ask voice-3sg  
 “So he took half fear and half courage to question her.”  
 (So in a confused state of fear and courage he questioned her.)

54. Vɔv- aɖeke me-le ɖevi la me o.  
 fear none NEG-be.at:PRES child DEF POSTP NEG  
 “There is no fear in the child.” (The child is fearless.)

- 55 Vɔv- gã lé ame-wo katã  
 fear big catch person-PL INT  
 “A big fear caught all people.” (Everybody became nervous.)

Secondly, fear is conceived of as any animate thing that has the ability of catching. Here is an expression:

56. Vɔv- lé mí katã le xɔ-a me.  
 fear catch 1PL all be.at:PRES room-DEF POST  
 “Fear caught all of us in the room.” (We were all frightened.)

The same fear is personified as being lazy as such does not perform well.

57. Vɔv- me-wɔ-a nu gã o.  
 fear NEG-do-HAB thing big NEG  
 “Fear does not do a big thing.” (A fearful person does not progress.)

When someone is afraid, he feels his heart beat. In that condition the heart is conceived of as a string that has cut off. This is expressed as:

58 Nye dzi lã kpo.

1sg.POSS heart cut short

“My heart has cut short.” (I felt my heart beat.)

When people panic it is conceived of as fire burning inside the person.

59. Dowokakpɔ fe dzi lé dzo ɔɛ dɔme nɛ.

name POSS heart catch fire PREP stomach DAT:3sg

“Dowokakpɔ’s heart caught fire in her stomach.” (She panicked)

60. Agbeko fe nu me lé dzo.

NAME POSS mouth POSTP catch fire

“Agbeko’s mouth caught fire.” (Agbeko panicked.)

### 5.2.5 THOUGHT/THINKING

Thought is the reasoning power of a person. The activity or process of thinking is also understood as thought. Again, thought is the idea, word or image that comes into the mind of a person. Metaphorical expressions can also be identified in the statements made about thought in Ewe. Here are few illustrations:

#### 5.2.5.1 THOUGHT IS A MOVING OBJECT

61. E-fe susu-wo yi viĩ

3SG-POSS mind-PL go far

“His thoughts went far away.” (He was lost in thought.)

62. Agbezuge *fe* susu-wo le                      tsatsa-m.

NAME POSS mind-PL be.at:PRES roam.RED-PROG

“His thoughts are roaming about.” (His mind was wandering.)

### 5.2.5.2 THOUGHT IS A CONTAINER

63. Ame-gbe-to                      *fe*    susu me                      goglo.

human-refuse-father POSS mind POSTP deep

“A person’s mind is deep.” (The human mind is impossible to understand.)

64. E-*fe*                      *de*de                      me-va                      nye susu me                      kpɔ o.

3SG-POSS remove.RED NEG-come 1SG mind POSTP ever NEG

“His removal has never come to my mind.” (I never thought of his removal.)

65. Biabia    sia    kple bubu-wo nɔ du    *fu*-m                      le

RED.ask DEM and other-PL                      race run-PROG be.at:PRES

nye susu me.

1SG mind POSTP

“This and other questions were running in my mind”

(I was deeply thinking about this and other questions.)

### 5.2.5.3 THOUGHT IS PERSONIFIED

66. Ye-*fe*                      susu-wo ga-le                      e-gblɔ-m                      na ye kokoko.

LOG-POSS mind-PL REP-be.at:PRES 3SG-say-PROG DAT LOG INT

“His thoughts are still telling him.” (He is still convinced.)

67. E-fe        susu dzro-a    nya    yaɣla        ɖe    sia    ɖe    me.  
 3SG-POSS mind mix-HAB word hide.RED    one    DEM one POSTP  
 “His mind searches through every hidden word.” (He is able to investigate thoroughly.)

68. Agbeko fe    susu a-zɔ        afo a-de        tefe    ma    kokoko.  
 NAME POSS mind POT-walk leg POT-go place DEM INT  
 “Agbeko’s mind will surely walk to that place.”  
 (Agbeko will surely pursue that case.)

69. E-fe        susu-wo kplɔ-e    yi viĩ.  
 3SG-POSS mind-PL lead-3SG go far  
 “His thoughts led him far away.”

The personification of thought is evident in the different human activities that have been associated with it, in all the above examples.

#### 5.2.5.4 THOUGHT IS QUANTIFIED

70. Ma-kpɔ-e    ɖa        be        susu aɖe li    mahã.  
 1SG-see-3SG towards COMP mind one exist Q  
 “I shall see if there is any mind.” (I shall see if there is any reason.)

71. Susu geɖe    le        asi-nye    le        ŋuti-wò.  
 mind many be.at:PRES hand-1SG be.at:PRES body-3SG  
 “I have many thoughts concerning you.” (I have plans for you.)

The number or degree of thought is expressed in the above *statements*.

### 5.2.5.5 THOUGHT IS GRADABLE

Our thoughts are capable of being graded according to the kind of attitude we show towards people and situations. People who act positively or give positive ideas are said to have good thoughts while most commonly, when people are wicked, they are referred to as people of bad thoughts. Here are some illustrations:

72. Susu v-ko-e nɔ-a ta-me nɛ.

thought bad INT-FOC stay-HAB head-POSTP DAT.3SG

“He has only bad thoughts in his head.” (His thoughts are evil.)

73. Wɔ̀ susu-wo nyo.

2SG thought-QNT good.

“Your thoughts are good.” (Your ideas are laudable.)

### 5.2.6 LOVE

Love is an intense feeling of positive emotion toward a person or thing. It can be romantic, fraternal or love of God. Since love is mostly caused by sight and touch at certain times, I think it is proper if the expressions of it are included in this metaphorical analysis.

Love, as a noun in Ewe, is a gerund. Gerunds in Ewe, unlike in English are formed by reduplicating the verb form. For example:

74.a Nyɔnu sia l-m ɲutu.

woman DEM love-1SG INT

“This woman loves me a lot.”

- b. Nyɔnu la fe lɔl- sɔgbɔ.  
 woman DEF POSS love.RED many  
 “The woman’s love is great.”

Love, in the first illustration, is a verb while that in the second is a noun.

We now proceed to the metaphorical expressions of love.

### 5.2.6.1 LOVE IS A STRING

When lovers seem to be deeply in love with each other, it is conceptualised that their love has been fastened together just as strings are tied to make knots.

75. Wo-fe lɔl- la sa kɔ  
 3PL-POSS love DEF tie knot  
 “Their love has tied a knot.” (They are deeply in love.)

76. Lɔl- bla wo ɖɛkae.  
 love tie 3PL one  
 “Love has fastened them together.” (They are one in love.)

### 5.2.6.2 LOVE IS POSSESSED

77. Àxɔ wò lɔl- la le e-si-a?  
 2SG-receive 2SG.POSS love DEF be.at:PRES 3SG-hand-Q  
 “Will you take your love from her?” (Will you stop loving her?)

78. Mía-fe ləl- ta me-wə esia-wo katã.

1PL-POSS love because 1SG-do DEM-PL INT

“I did all these because of our love.”

### 5.2.6.3 LOVE IS PERSONIFIED

The personification of love has well been illustrated in the book of 1Corinthians chapter 13, in the Holy Bible. Love has been well personified giving it some good qualities of a person. For example:

79. Ləl- la me-vã-a ŋu o.

love DEF NEG-shake-HAB eye NEG

“Love does not shake its body.” (Love is not jealous.)

80. Ləl- la me-do-a e-dokui de dzi o.

love DEF NEG-raise-HAB 3SG-self PREP POST NEG

“Love does not raise itself up” (Love is not boastful.)

Love, in these expressions has been presented as a person without those negative characteristics such as being jealous and boastful.

Other expressions about love being personified include:

81. E-gblə be ləl- koe dɔ ye.

3SG-say COMP love FOC send LOG

“He said that it was love that sent him.” (That he was compelled by love.)

#### 5.2.6.4 LOVE POSSESSES

Some expressions about love indicate that it has possessions as evident in these examples:

82. Ma-kafu            lɔl- fe    ɲusẽ    gã ma.  
 1SG.FUT-praise love POSS strength big DEM  
 “I will praise that big strength of love.”

- 83 Ma-nyrɔ            ɖe    lɔl- fe    fu-a    me  
 1SG.FUT.-sink PREP love POSS sea-DEF POSTP  
 “I will submerge in the sea of love.” (I will deeply get into love.)

#### 5.2.6.5 LOVE IS QUANTIFIED

The number, degree or amount of love is often stated to show how deeply or not a person is in love. We can say linguistically therefore that love is quantified as in the next expressions:

84. Le            wò    lɔl- gbogbo si    ne-tso    na Yɔxɔme    ɲuti.  
 be.at:PRES 2SG love plenty DEM 2SG-take give NAME body  
 “Because of the plenty love that you have given Yɔxɔme.”  
 (You were compelled by the deep love that you have for Yɔxɔme.)

85. Lɔl- blibo    xɔ    menye    ɖe    ɲu-wò.  
 love whole receive POSTP-1SG PREP body-2SG  
 “I am deeply in love with you.”

86. Lɔl- aɖeke me-le                      ye me      ɖe      e-ŋu      o.  
 love none NEG-be.at:PRES 1SG POSTP PREP 3SG-body NEG  
 “She has no love in her for him.” (She doesn’t love him.)

### 5.2.6.6 LOVE IS A CONTAINER

Love in some instances is viewed as a container, with an inside and an outside.

This leads to expressions such as those in 87 and 88.

87. Lɔl- me-e                      srɔɖɔɖe nyui do-a      go tso-na.  
 love POSTP-FOC marriage good go-HAB out from-HAB  
 “Good marriage comes out from love.” (Love is the root of marriage.)

88. Mía kpli-i                      míe-ge      ɖe      lɔl- tɔxɛ      aɖe      me  
 1PL LINK-3SG 1PL-drop PREP love special certain POSTP  
 “We have entered into a special love”

In both expressions love is conceived of as a container with an inside.

The metaphorical expressions about love have been explored. It is evident in the different linguistic expressions that the concept of love calls for metaphorical understanding.

### 5.2.7 ANNOYANCE AND ANGER

Annoyance is the feeling of mild anger and impatience. In fact, a person normally gets annoyed when any of his five senses is irritated. Annoyance is

used interchangeably with anger in Ewe but a difference can be struck between the two. Anybody who is irritated becomes annoyed. When annoyance is at the extreme, where the sense of hurting someone sets in, then anger, which is a strong feeling of grievance and displeasure has developed. Annoyance is “dziku” while anger is “dɔmedzoe” in Ewe. The two concepts have their various expressions in the language which can be analysed linguistically to distinguish some metaphorical understanding.

First is annoyance. It is understood in terms of a garment that can be worn. For example:

89 E-do dziku.

3sg-wear annoyance

“He wore annoyance.” (He was annoyed.)

90. Da-nye do dziku na-m.

mother-1SG wear annoyance DAT-1SG

“Mother wore me annoyance.” (Mother annoyed me.)

In example (89), it is understood that the person irritated wears annoyance, as a garment himself but example (90) gives the concept that the one who irritates clothes the person irritated.

Secondly annoyance is conceptualised as a visible object.

91. E-kpɔ dziku.

3SG-see annoyance

“He saw annoyance.” (He is annoyed.)

As an object, it can be located at different places. Here some illustrations:

92 Dziku le dɔme na Xɔmeku.

annoyance be.at:PRES stomach DAT NAME

“Annoyance is in Xɔmeku’s stomach.” (Xɔmeku is harbouring annoyance within himself.)

93. Dziku le wo dome.

Annoyance be.at:PRES 3PL POSTP

“Annoyance is among them.” (They are annoyed with each other.)

94. Dziku le afe-a-me

annoyance be.at:PRES house-DEF-POSTP

“Annoyance is in the house.” (Every person is annoyed in the house.)

Annoyance is also conceptualised as a possession.

95. Ame fe dziku me-wɔ-a Mawu fe nu dzɔdzɔe o.

person POSS annoyance NEG-do-HAB God POSS thing righteous NEG

“Man’s annoyance doesn’t do God’s righteousness.”

96. Afe-nɔ-a fe dziku nu me-nya-nɔ-na o.

house-mother-DEF POSS annoyance mouth NEG-know-stay-HAB NEG

“It is difficult to stand her annoyance.” (She has an uncontrollable anger.)

As explained earlier, anger is expressed as fire burning in the stomach. This is evident in the next set of expressions. First, as a fire, anger is said to be set by the one who is angered.

97. E-do dɔme-dzoe ɔe ŋu-nye.

3SG-set stomach-fire PREP body-1SG

“He has set stomach-fire on my body.” (He is angry with me.)

‘Dó’, as most other words in Ewe, is polysemous. As such, the meaning is derived from the context in which it is found. In example (97), it means ‘to set’ because of the word ‘fire’.

98. Nye dɔme-dzoe bi ɔe wo ŋu.

1SG stomach-fire burn PREP 3PL body

“My anger burnt on them.”

Secondly, just as fire burns and quenches so does anger in this sentence:

99 Nye dɔme-dzoe la nu fa.

1SG.POSS stomach-fire DEF mouth cold

“My anger is cold.” (My anger is calm.)

### 5.2.8 WEEPING

Weeping is the act of someone crying. It occurs when people feel physical pain, grief or depression. In some other situations, people weep when they are overjoyed. Weeping in Ewe is conceptualised in different forms as we shall see in this section.

### 5.2.8.1 WEEPING IS AN OBJECT

Weeping is expressed as something that can be seen and touched.

100. Me-lé avi me.

1sg-grasp weeping POSTP

“I grasp weeping inside.” (I started crying)

The expression here can be said to be a complex metaphor whereby weeping, is not only conceptualised as an object but also as a container object that has an inside. So the statement basically meant the inside of the weeping has been grasped to mean he started weeping.

### 5.2.8.2 WEEPING IS A SUBSTANCE

Conceptualised as a physical reality, weeping is given the status of a material of any kind that can fill an area. For example:

101. Afe-a-me yɔ̃ fũ kple avi-fafa.

house-DEF-POSTP full ADJT with cry-squize.RED

“The house was full of weeping.”

At certain times expressions about weeping indicate that it is a possession of those weeping.

102. Nye avifafa la wɔ̃ dɔ̃ ɖe e-dzi.

1SG.POSS weep.RED. DEF do work PREP 3SG-POSTP

“My weeping worked on her.” (She was touched by my weeping.)

103. Wɔ̃ avi-fafa sia gɔ̃me ɖe?

2SG cry-squeeze.RED. DEM meaning Q

“What is the meaning of your weeping?”

Weeping, in the expressions above, is not only possessed but are also given different statuses as entities that can cause some actions as in (102) and need to be explored for an explanation as in (103).

### 5.2.8.3 WEEPING IS PERSONIFIED

When someone breaks down in tears for any reason, it is expressed as the person giving the difficult situation to weeping, as a person that can console.

For example:

104. Me-tso-e            na    avi

1SG-take-3SG DAT weeping

“I gave it to weeping.” (I burst into tears.)

### 5.2.9 HUNGER

Hunger is basically, the need or desire for food. It is also used to mean a great need or desire for something. As such, if someone is hungry on the one hand, it is understood that, the person wants to eat food. In this sense physical feeling occurs. On the other hand, to be hungry for something else other than food shows how ambitious you are about such a thing.

Hunger is a natural feeling. Hunger is translated in Ewe as:

105. Dɔ/Dɔ-wu-ame.

hunger/hunger-kill-person

This shows that, to be hungry is rather conceptualizing it as having the ability to kill. So hunger is personified as in these examples:

106. Dɔ le wu-ye-m.

hunger be.at:PRES kill-1SG-PROG

“Hunger is killing me.” (I am hungry.)

107. Le yeyiɪ sia me la dɔ nɔ

be.at:PRES time DEM POSTP DEF hunger be.at:NPRES

wu-ye-m vevie.

kill-1SG-PROG INT

“At this time hunger was killing me severely.” (At this time I was feeling very hungry.)

108. Dɔ-wu-ame-e dɔ-e wɔ-fi fi

hunger-kill-person-FOC send-3SG 3SG-steal theft

“It is hunger that sent him to steal.” (He was compelled by hunger to steal.)

109. Dɔ-wu-ame a-ɔ va dze du-a dzi.

hunger-kill-person POT-one come fall town-DEF POSTP

“A hunger attacked the town.” (There was famine in the town.)

The concept being expressed in the later expression is that, hunger is not only a person, but an offensive player in a match or an opponent in a fight that attacks his opponent by surprise.

### 5.2.9.1 HUNGER IS MEASURABLE

Hunger is given an ontological status of being measurable as in:

110. Dɔ̃ gã a-dɛ to.

hunger big POT-one sprout

“A big hunger sprout.” (There was famine.)

From the expression, hunger is measurable as being big. We can identify another metaphorical concept from the same expression that, hunger is a plant. So it sprouts.

The above linguistic expressions about hunger are just but a few.

### 5.2.10 SLEEP

It is a state of not being awake. It is a time where voluntary functions are suspended and the body rests and restores itself. The linguistic expressions about sleep are discussed below:

#### 5.2.10.1 SLEEP IS PERSONIFIED.

The personification of sleep has given it some human capabilities as exemplified in the following examples.

111. Al- le tso-ye-m.

sleep be.at:PRES take-1SG-PROG

“Sleep is taking me.” (I am feeling sleepy.)

112. Al- fu-m anyi.

sleep throw-1SG ground

“Sleep threw me on the floor.”

As these examples illustrate, wanting to sleep is conceptualised as the sleep taking and throwing someone onto a surface as a person will handle any object.

113 Me-nɔ-a do dzi vuu al- ko-e xɔ-ne

1SG-stay-HAB work POSTP INT sleep INT-FOC receive-3SG

le asi-nye.

be.at:PRESS hand-1SG

“I would be working till sleep will take it away from me.” (I work from dawn to dusk)

### 5.2.10.2 SLEEP IS A CONTAINER

It is conceptualised as an object used to hold something as in the expressions below:

114. Me-yi al- me.

1SG-go sleep POSTP

“I entered into sleep.” (I fell asleep.)

115. Me-ge de al- me.

1SG-drop PREP sleep POSTP

“I dropped into sleep.” (I fell asleep.)

116. Nu-v- de mi al- me.

thing-evil put 2PL sleep POSTP

“Sin has put you into sleep.” (Sin has blinded you.)

### 5.2.10.3 SLEEP IS QUANTIFIED

As compared to some of the sensations discussed earlier, some expressions about sleep also give the understanding that an amount of it can be determined.

117. Al- geḍe tsi ta gbo ne.

sleep many remain head POSTP for.3SG

“A lot of sleep remained besides his head.” (He couldn’t sleep).

The implication of the discussions of these expressions is that sleep is metaphorically conceptualised.

### 5.2.11. PAIN

Pain is experienced by a person when he is violently struck, injured or is ill. It is an unpleasant physical sensation. Physical pain can occur in any part of the body. Secondly, people in an emotional distress are also said to be in pain. This can be a pain of rejection, loss of a companion, or being unsuccessful in any situation in life.

The expressions of pain are largely metaphorical. A few are discussed below:

First, feeling pain is expressed as rather hearing it as in:

118. Me-se veve le wò wɔ-na ɲuti.

1SG-hear pain be.at:PRES 2SG do-HAB body

“I heard pain on your deed.” (I am hurt because of your deed.)

Other source domains include the following:

### 5.2.11.1 PAIN IS CONTAINER

119. Míe-le veve-sese-wo me to-m.

1pl-be.at:PRES pain-hear.RED-pl POSTP pass-PROG

“We are passing through pain.” (We are grieved.)

120. Wò-e-ɔe-m tso veve-sese me.

2SG-FOC-remove-1SG from pain-hear.RED POSTP

“You have removed me from pain.” (You have saved me from pain.)

### 5.2.11.2 PAIN IS A SUBSTANCE

121. Veve-sese yɔ me-nye.

pain-RED.hear fill POSTP-1SG

“I was filled with pain.”

### 5.2.11.3 PAIN IS PERSONIFIED

122. Veve-sese kplɔ-e yi ku me.

pain-RED.hear lead-3SG go death POSTP

“Pain led him into death.” (He died through pain.)

#### 5.2.11.4 PAIN IS POSSESSED

123. Nye veve-wo ne-nɔ nye dɔme ne woa-vo na-m.

1SG.POSS pain-PL LINK-stay 1SG.POSS stomach LINK 3PL-rot DAT-1SG

“My pains should remain in my stomach and get rotten.”

(I shall not complain about my pains)

### 5.3 SUMMARY

In the different sections of this chapter we have considered the relevant linguistic expressions of sensations in Ewe. This is to give further evidence to the assertion by the cognitive linguists that, metaphor can be conceptual and linguistic. So far, we have noted, from the discussions that, a wide range of conceptual metaphors are noticed from the five main senses:

sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell.

In addition to that, we realised that, even though sensations are abstract concepts, they can be given different statuses linguistically. As a result, it has been evident, in the small sample of all the possible linguistic expressions that, most of the expressions about sensations in Ewe are largely metaphorical.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **6.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, we will try to give an overview of the whole study and give some suggestions.

#### **6.1 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

In this study so far, we have been looking at the metaphorical expressions of some concepts in Ewe namely TIME, DEATH and SENSATION to establish the fact that metaphors are pervasive. These target domains are just some of the most important areas of experience in our everyday lives. Preceding the major analysis, some related issues were discussed in chapters one and two.

In the first chapter we discussed the general introduction to the study. It is opened with the background to the study which introduced us to the bases of this study. In the same chapter we have an ethno-linguistic description which gives us general information about the speakers and the status of the language under study. Other sub-sections in this chapter include the statement of the problem, relevance of the study and the objectives. The theoretical framework, the principle on which the study is based, is also captured here. It has been stated there that the study is within the framework of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). To them, metaphor, which “is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words”, is rather “pervasive in everyday life.”

The second is the review of literature. In the review, we examined how metaphor was used over the years in Ewe as a figure of speech. We found out

that, metaphor was extensively used as a figure of speech before the advent of the cognitive semanticists' assertion that, "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:3). Even after this assertion, it is still "for most people a device of the poetic imagination and a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:3). This confirms what Adam (2008:53) suggests that, "metaphor is probably the most useful linguistic tool in creative and imaginative literature." In order to examine the two opposing views, we first explored how metaphor was extensively used in the Ewe language as a useful linguistic tool in creativity and imagination.

In oral literature, we found out that, the folks use figures of speech extensively to create vivid word pictures to make their presentations emotionally intense and concentrated, and to state ideas in new and unusual ways. For this purpose metaphor was not an exception. It is used in areas like, folk tales, dirges and proverbs especially. These usages were exemplified.

We continued to explore the art of figurative language usage in written literature. In all the genres prose, drama and poetry, we found out that writers used metaphor, as one of the figures of speech, with the same intention as in the case of oral literature.

The second thing we were concerned about in the same chapter is what the conceptual metaphor is all about. As already stated above, we found out that Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are of the opposing view that the use of metaphors as a rhetorical device to persuade others of a particular point is not enough and that it is "pervasive in everyday language, thought and action." In this sense therefore, we explained metaphor as understanding one conceptual domain in

terms of another conceptual domain. That is to say that, there is a mapping between a target and a source domain (Kövecses 2002:4). So in thinking of one thing in terms of another, elements of the source domain are mapped onto elements of the target domain.

We continued to discuss the three categories of conceptual metaphor as identified by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). These were noted as structural, orientational and ontological metaphors. Upon these fundamental principles we proceeded to discuss the main target domains of the study.

In chapter three we noticed that TIME is metaphorically structured in our common everyday expressions of it. The discussions exposed us to the fact that, time is unavoidable. It evolved with man and controls every activity under the sun. It affects both animate and inanimate entities. As a result the pervasiveness of the metaphorical expressions of time is evident in the Ewe language. So, some conceptual metaphors of time discussed include: TIME IS A POSSESSION, TIME IS A GIFT and TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT. All the expressions were analysed in the light of the different types of metaphors explained in chapter two.

In the same vein we examined the conceptual metaphors of DEATH in Ewe in chapter four. Our findings were not different from our focus. The study demonstrates that, utterances about death, although seem to be normal and natural for everyday purposes are largely structured metaphorically. The different source domains used for the understanding of the target domain were very resourceful. Death has been extensively personified, and also given

different ontological statuses and for that matter was easy to be referred to, quantified and classified.

Chapter five was used to find out about the metaphorical expressions of sensation in the language under study. First, was the analysis of the five main senses. From the findings, it was evident that, most of the expressions about them are largely metaphorically structured. We proceeded to delve into the expressions of sensation. Since sensation is caused by the stimulation of one or more of the sense organs, the conceptualisation of it does not differ from that of the sense organs. There were a large range of metaphorical expressions. These sensations include sickness, pain, sleep, fear, joy, love and comfort among others. Linguistically, most of the sensations were personified in addition to being structured as containers and possessions and a whole lot of source domains.

This current chapter contains the gist of all the previous chapters in addition to the concluding remarks in which we noted some of the key findings of the study.

## **6.2 FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS**

We have been trying to support the claim made by Lakoff and Johnson (1980:3) that, metaphor is not just a matter of language but on the contrary, human thought processes are largely metaphorical. Before our final remarks we will like to state some of our major findings.

In the study, we agreed to the fact that metaphor is a property of concepts and helps to better understand certain concepts. As a result, the linguistic analysis of the three domains; TIME, DEATH and SENSATION, with the metaphorical expressions about them, gave us insights into our daily experiences of them owing to the fact that they are some of the most important areas of experience in our everyday lives. We have found out that all the metaphorical linguistic expressions about these target domains show that they can be mapped onto different source domains to establish their pervasiveness.

First, is that, these concepts can be personified. We found out earlier in the text that personification permits us to use knowledge about ourselves to comprehend other aspects of the world. So, we understood death a non human entity in terms of human characteristics and activities. It was therefore personified to be a child; that is why it has both parents and the extended family. It is also a warrior and a merchant among others. The same way, some of our sensations, linguistically are also given this ontological status. Examples such as LOVE, WEEPING and SLEEP among others are equally personified.

Another way by which we comprehend these target domains is by metaphorically possessing them, despite the fact that they are abstract concepts. Comprehending them as such caused some of the expressions to show that they are given value, given out as gifts and kept in safety. In certain situations too they were sold out by the owners.

In addition, container metaphors were well evident in our findings. Even though there is no natural physical boundary in all the target domains, we were able to impose boundaries onto them according to how they are

metaphorically expressed. We have tried with some examples to show that one can move in and out of these abstract concepts just as we do in physical realms.

Another interesting structuring of these concepts is that they are edible. This edibility gives the comprehension that, the concepts even though are abstract, are sometimes destroyed, and at other times to show victory and satisfaction of a condition in which a person finds himself. Further, motion of objects was evident in the linguistic expressions of the concepts. They are for that matter expressed as getting nearer to us or we running into them.

On the basis of all our findings we cannot differ in any way but to accept the claim by the cognitive scientists and linguists that, metaphors pervade our normal conceptual system.

This thesis admittedly is a preliminary analysis of Ewe metaphorical expressions. In the study, details of a particular dialect of the Ewe language were not considered. Almost all the expressions were given according to their general acceptance in the standard written form. So it is important to collect data in the various dialects of the language for further study. We are sure a wide range of metaphorical entailments will be revealed. Secondly, the concepts discussed as noted earlier are just some of the most important areas of experience in our everyday lives. Other equally vital areas of our lives include LIFE, OCCUPATION, RELIGIOUS RITUALS, and KINGMAKING. The analysis of these areas on the bases of linguistic evidence we are sure, will give us a wide range of metaphorical structures. In the preceding chapters, it will be noted that some examples of the metaphors include some materials from the Holy Bible and the Ewe Hymn Book. These could be referred to as borrowed

metaphors or loan translations of Christian metaphors in Ewe. Nevertheless, these expressions fit into the language. It is my opinion that this area of loan metaphors could be researched into to ascertain the degree percentage of infiltration.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

EXTRACT FROM OFORI (2004:137) ON THE USE OF METAPHOR  
AS A FIGURE OF SPEECH.

Metafo	Nufola	Axa
1. Gbloti kple adzagba wònye.	Kpeglã	4
2. Eganye adzagba kple sika.	Kpeglã	4
3. Xexe sia me nye agamagbalẽ	Dzikunya	5
4. Amegbetɔ trɔ zu bli kple kokote si wofɔna dea vu yia asitoe	Agbebaɔa	8
5. Dzata wònye hele alẽbgbalẽ me...	Dzikunya	10
6. Amegbetɔ fe dzi la xe vi dzodzoe.	Kumasi	13
7. Ke amegbetɔ la zu tetekpɔ na ehavi.	Kumasi	36
8. Fifia miezu gamemewo.	Fudzikomele	39
9. Fifia miezu vinyewo.	Yevu la	40
10. Ekema miezu alẽvi fifia.	Fudzikomele	40

**APPENDIX II****NAMES OF PEOPLE IN EWE DERIVED FROM THE CONCEPTIONS ABOUT DEATH AND THEIR MEANINGS (EXTRACTED FROM EGBLEWOGBE (1977))**

Kuade	–	Some death. (A type of death)
Kubame	–	Death cheats people.
Kubualo	–	Death has struck wrongly.
Kuadzɔdzinawo	–	They are happy about the death.
Kudeaɖi	–	Death poisons
Kudahe	–	Death is poor.
Kuɖudzi	–	Death has won.
Kudige	–	Death has sought for a quarrel.
Kudinya	–	Death has caused trouble.
Kuadodzi	–	Death is brave.
Kudzeha	–	Death has broken loose
Kudega	–	Death has applied shackles.
Kudoagba	–	Death has packed up.
Kudose	–	Death has imposed a law.

Kudzo	–	Death is gone.
Kuɖeaga	–	Death is at a distant.
Kuɖiɖiame	–	Death degrades people.
Kuhoadu	–	Death has extracted teeth.
Kufeasi	–	The hand of death.
Kugbeadzɔ	–	Death has refused payment. (Death has refused bribery.)
Kugblɛnu	–	Death has spoilt things.
Kuleafe	–	Death is at home.
Kueleagbeɖu	–	It is death that is around life.
Kulexɔme	–	Death is in the room.
Kulekpɔto	–	Death is on the fence.
Kulilim	–	Death surprised me.
Kumakpeɖu	–	Death does not feel ashamed.
Kumedzina	–	It is death I delivered for.
Kuneɖlowɔbe	–	Death should forget about you.
Kunyaglo	–	Death is too much of a common place.
Kunevatsɔ	–	Let death come and take.

Kukplɔame	–	Death leads people.
Kusiaku	–	Any kind of death.
Kusɔgbɔ	–	Death is plentiful.
Kuteame	–	Death stings people.
Kutoaɖu	–	Death has grown teeth.
Kutokɛ	–	Death has grown roots.
Kutɔ	–	Death's own.
Kutɔdzɔ	-	Death is right.
Kutɔnyo	–	Death's own is good.
Kutɔlevevie	–	Death's own is important.
Kutsana	-	Death roams about.
Kutsoati	-	Death cuts tree.
Kutreazã	-	Death has set a trap
Kueɖoafia	-	Death makes people chief
Kuɖoxa	-	Death has set a fish-trap
Kuebiahl-	-	It is death who takes revenge
Kuɖufia	-	Death reigns
Kuɖuke	-	Death has eaten up the roots

Kugbesika	-	Death hates money
Kufɔnyuiawo	-	Death has picked the good ones
Kugbadu	-	Death has destroyed the town
Kugbafɛ	-	Death has destroyed home
Kudidzre	-	Death has sought for a quarrel
Kudolo	-	Death has posed a riddle
Kudeamelo	-	Death is harassing
Kudzɔdzi	-	Death rejoices
Kudɔiamenu	-	Death teases people
Kudzɔdzinawo	-	They are happy about the death
Kunyawo	-	Death knows them
Kudzɔnu	-	Death's beads
Kutuka	-	Death has broken loose
Kudzro	-	Death without cause
Kudzronu	-	Death begs for food
Kudɛama	-	Death strips people naked
Kudɔaba	-	Death has spread a mat
Kudɔɔ	-	Death has closed the door

Kudoagba	–	Death has packed up
Kubluafo	-	Death has taken the wrong step
Kudahe	–	Death is poor
Kudese	–	Death has imposed a law
Kubame	–	Death cheats people
Kuave	–	Death is painful
Kuli	–	Death exists
Kuegbadzi	–	The death has caused heartbreak
Kunyawo	–	Death knows them

### APPENDIX III

#### EXTRACTS OF METAPHORICAL EXPRESSIONS FROM THE BIBLE

Womi ku le dziɔɔɔ me.

Ame si mel-a nɔvia o la, etsia ku me.

Ku le zea me.

Àlé ku hafi adzi vi.

Ku evelia mawɔ v- aɔke o.

Be wòadɔ ku kpɔ.

Nuv- si makplɔ ame ayi ku me o.

Mieto ku me yi ɔe agbe la me.

Ame si mel- novia o la etsia ku me.

#### APPENDIX IV

#### SONG TEXTS WITH DEATH METAPHOR EXPRESSIONS

##### FROM THE EWE HYMN BOOK

1. Ame ka g- nya nye kugbe ma?

Dkekewo yina, ku tum kpuie

Oo aleke nye kuyi atso!

Wu ale si nyea mebuna!

Mawu, Mawu le Kristo fe vu ta

Nawo be ku malilim o. (Hymn 434:1)

2. **Ku anya gba nye agbado**

Si nye anyigbadzinu;

**Ke mate nu abia hl- o,**

Wotso nye nuv-wo ke,

È Afetɔa tsɔ wo kem.

Avulɛla ku dɛ 'ta (Hymn 436:1)

3. Anyigba nyui vavã 'dɛ li,

Dzidulawo nɔfe;

Ɖkeke mavɔ la dɛ zã ɔa,

Dzidzɔ dɛ veve ɔa.

Fima tsi dzidzi mavɔ le

Kple sefofo mavɔwo

**Ku nye fute goglo, si ma**

'Nyigba sia tso mía gbɔ. (Hymn 455:1)

4. Wò alɛvi maɔifo,

Wohe wò d'atikɔgo!

**Èdo dzi se dɛ ku me**

Wònnye wodo vlo wò hafi.

Nuv- wo kata netsɔ

Be miawo miagav- o.

Kpo mia nublanui, oo Yesu! (Hymn105:1)

5. **Ku mete ŋu lée o,**

Yesu agbefia!

**Eŋe ku fe ŋusē**

Yesu xɔla!

Eva do go tso yɔme. (Hymn 115:3)

6. Tsitreŋsigbe nyui aɔe gbɔna,

Si ava kpakple dzidzɔ gā.

**Mí katā tim míato ku me,**

Ayi ɔe dzidzɔ mavɔ me (Hymn 118:3)

7. **Yɔdo, ku kple tsiefe hā**

**Fe ŋusē nu atsi kaba**

Ne Yesu ayɔ mí la,

Míadze afemo kple dzidzɔ.

Hiātutu kple fukpekpe

Ano míafe afɔ te. (Hymn 119: 8)

**8. Yesu li! Ku wò ti la**

**Magado ɲɔdzi na mí o.**

**Yesu li! Eɖu ku dzi**

Exo ɲusẽ futɔ la si

Haleluya (Hymn 121: 1)

**9. Oo dzidzɔɲɔli!**

Oo kɔkɔɲɔli

Afetɔ la tsi tre vavã!

**Nuv- he ku vɛ**

**Ke Kristo ɖe mí**

Dzi nadzɔ wò, Kristohame la. (Hymn 122: 1)

**10. Nɔviwo , mitso aseye**

Ɖe Yesu miaxɔla gã la ɲu

**Etu afɔ ku f'agbo.**

Exo vi bubuwo katã

Tso futo v- abosam si

Hewo wo mawuviwo. (Hymn 123:2)

## APPENDIX V

### DEATH METAPHOR IN SOME EWE POEMS

#### 1. AGBEMATSIMATSI FE KU

a. Vov- do nye nuto hã

**Le ku azãgidi fe yoyo nu**

**Efe dola ses8 mawo**

**Meklãa ame aɔke qi o**

b. Vi noko dzo haha,

**Le ku fe amedodowo nu**

**Wose efe afaziwo,**

Hede asi avifafa me (Hoh 1987)

#### 2. SALAGATSI

Ku nenyè al- mado

Salagatsi nenye al- mado.

Amegãwo zo azoli nyuiewo yi tsiẽ.

Le nye hã nye kugbe la

Salagatsi nezu al- mado loo. (Hoh1987)



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