Conceptual integration as networks of communication

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ABSTRACT

Conceptual integration refers to the highly abstract cognitive operations involved in meaning construction, that is, in how we interpret information in social interaction. The paper deals with the fundamentals of the theory of conceptual integration (blending theory) developed by G.Fauconnier and M.Turner as an alternative to widely spread theory of conceptual metaphor resolved by G.Lakoff and M.Johnson. These abstract operations emerge from a network of cognitive connections that compose the conceptual blending or conceptual integration model, which is dynamically built as we make sense of linguistic forms, extra-linguistic information, non-verbal signs etc. Such operations are carried out in mental spaces. Mental spaces are temporary and localized domains in which conceptual information is projected for meaning construction.

ƏDƏBİ MÜHİT

Konseptual inteqrasiya kommunikasiya şəbəkələri kimi

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XÜLASƏ

Konseptual inteqrasiya mənanın qurulmasında, yəni sosial qarşılıqlı əlaqədə məlumatı necə şərh etdiyimizdə iştirak edən yüksək mücərrəd koqnitiv əməliyyatlara aiddir. Məqalədə G.Lakoff və M.Conson tərəfindən həll edilmiş, geniş yayılmış konseptual metafor nəzəriyyəsinə alternativ olaraq G.Fokonye və M.Törner tərəfindən hazırlanmış konseptual inteqrasiya nəzəriyyəsinin (qarışıq nəzəriyyəsi) əsaslarından bəhs edilir. Bu mücərrəd əməliyyatlar – linqvistik formaları, dildənkənar məlumatları, qeyri-verbal işarələri və s. mənaları əldə etdikcə dinamik şəkildə qurulan, konseptual birləşmə və ya konseptual inteqrasiya modelini təşkil edən koqnitiv əlaqələr şəbəkəsindən yaranır. Bu cür əməliyyatlar mental məkanlarda həyata keçirilir. Mental məkanlar müvəqqəti və lokallaşdırılmış sahələrdir ki, burada konseptual məlumat mənanın qurulması üçün proyeksiya olunur.

Introduction / Giriş

The problem of meaning and sense is in the center of attention not only in linguistics, but also in psychology. Understanding is closely related to the semantic levels of meaning and sense as a thought process. "From the point of view of cognitive linguistics, the interested part is the relationship between the structure of knowledge in the text in the process of comprehension and the use of knowledge in the participants of the discourse. Comprehension as a positive result of thought processes depends on the interaction of these two factors (the opposite of subjective knowledge and knowledge in the text)" [11, p.58]. Professor F.Y.Veysalli in his book "Basics of Linguistics" mentions that the famous philosopher, mathematician and astronomer N.Tusi was the first who touched the issue of *sense*: "According to N.Tusi, sense is a set of ideas obtained from experience" [17, p.76]. The word, like other language signs, has two plans. Expression plan and content plan. The plan of expression of a word is usually called a lexeme, and the plan of content is called a lexical concept. Lexical concept is considered a product of thinking. It is the content plan of the word that causes controversy. The task of language is to express ideas and exchange ideas using the meaning of language units. It is possible to create a metaphorical meaning after learning the basic, original meaning of the word. Of course, this requires experience and metaphorical thinking. Lakoff and Johnson [Lakoff G., M.Johnson. Chicago, 1980] note that meaning depends on sense. Unless you understand the sentence, it can't mean anything to you. Moreover, meaning always means something to someone. There is no such thing as a sentence in itself, which does not depend on anyone. When talking about the meaning of a sentence, it (the meaning of the sentence – H.G.) is always the meaning of the sentence of someone, a real person or a hypothetical typical member of a speech society. This theory of Lakoff and Johnson differs radically from standard theories of meaning. Standard theories believe that it is possible for man to explain reality on its own, without understanding it, and that the theory of meaning is based on such a theory of truth.

The term conceptual integration is based on G.Fauconnier's theory of mental spaces. At the root of the blend is a conceptual integration mechanism. It is noteworthy that G.Lakoff's works, which have been going on since 1968, played an important role in opening this field of research. Versions of the book Mental Spaces appeared in 1984 and 1985. Mental spaces and connections were assessed as cognitive constructions. M.Turner considers *blending* as a daily process: "Blending is

not something special or costly. Blending operates almost entirely below the horizon of consciousness. We usually never detect the process of blending and typically do not recognize its products as blends. Very rarely, the scientist can drag a small part of blending onstage, where we can actually see it. But the mind is not made for looking into the mind, and as a result, we see blending only infrequently, and poorly" [16, p.18]. According to the blending theory, metaphorization, as stated in conceptual metaphor theory, is not limited to projection from the source area to the target area, but also involves the formation of mixed mental spaces that create meaning in the process of conceptual integration.

Sweetser [Sweetser E. Cambridge, 1990] proposes to apply the theory of mental spaces to describe polysemy. He studies the ambiguity of connectors and evaluates them (connectors – H.G.) as connectors that connect mental spaces. Connectors allow you to extrapolate information about an object from another data prism. Sweetser considers three levels of connective communication:

1) propositional content level (content domain);

2) epistemic assessment level (modal) (epistemic area-epistemic domain);

3) speech act level (illocutive) (speech act area-speech act domain). According to scholar mental spaces and possible worlds are related: "Mental spaces [...] are an extremely general mechanism for describing the interconnections between parts of complex conceptual structures. Although mental spaces may correspond to the sorts of structures which might in other theories be analyzed as possible worlds (for example, conditional "spaces" might be so treated), in other instances a mental space corresponds to a belief state, or to a visual representation, or to something more like a semantic domain. The crucial characteristic of a mental space is that there can be systematic cognitive mappings between it and other mental spaces, with consequences for (inter alia) reference" [13, p.134-135].

As is known, the analysis of cognitive metaphor began with the conceptual metaphor theory of G.Lakoff and M.Johnson. Usually, cognitive theory of metaphor and conceptual metaphor theory are equated. The theory of conceptual integration (blending theory) of G.Fauconnier and M.Turner is considered as a different approach to the analysis of cognitive metaphor. Their (conceptual integration and conceptual metaphor – H.G.) methods of analysis depend on the direction of the process. Blending theory uses a number of new and old terms: *mental frame, mental space, mental network, vital relations, blend, projection, emergent structure in blend and mental network, human scale, compression, and expansion* (see more about it: Dabrowska E., Divjak D.(eds.). Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics. Berlin; New

York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2015). Instead of the *two-domain model*, which is part of a larger and more general model of conceptual projection, M.Turner and G.Fauconnier proposed a **many-space model** [Turner M., Fauconnier G, 1995]. Scholars use the concept of *mental space* as a counterpart to the concept of *conceptual domain*. Metaphorical projection directed from the source domain to the target domain is a special case of a more complex set of processes that need to include two middle spaces in the analysis to explain. Conceptual projection from one mental space to another always involves projection to "middle" spaces−abstract "generic" interspaces or richer "blend" interspaces. Projection to middle space is a general cognitive process that operates within contextual conditions at different levels of abstraction. Middle spaces are indispensable places for mental and linguistic work. Thus, unlike the two conceptual areas in the theory of G.Lakoff and M.Johnson, it is proposed to consider four mental spaces: two input spaces, generic space and blended space or blending. Let's look at the definition of conceptual integration or blending: "Conceptual integration' – often called 'blending' – is a basic and pervasive mental operation. It allows us to 'blend' two mental spaces to create a third that is not merely a composition of the first two but instead has emergent structure of its own. A typical conceptual integration network includes two input spaces. a blended space. and a generic space. The generic space has the structure taken as applying to both inputs. All conceptual integration networks have a partial cross-space mapping between the two input spaces and selective projection from the inputs to the blended space. The blended space inherits some structure from the inputs and also has emergent structure of its own obtained by elaboration and pattern completion" [6, p.77]. For example, the notion of "computer viruses" originated from medical terminology because it appeared in the computer sphere with the help of a special dictionary that combines prototypes of the medical field. Initially, there were computer programs that destroyed the work of harmful organisms and other programs. As a result of the transfer of one phenomenon to another, a blending of elements of the two spheres (biological organisms and malware) is created. However, the elements of this blending do not apply only to the elements of the input spaces (medicine and computers). The blending itself can integrate with other areas, such as social viruses, mental viruses, and so on. In the process of thinking and communicating, the speaker's attention is simultaneously focused on different situations and their different parameters, resulting in conceptual integration. It is necessary to refer to grammatical tenses and verb forms to determine which space is in the center of the blend [15, p.183-204].

Input spaces correspond to the source domen and target domen in conceptual metaphor theory, although the number of input spaces may be more than two. Generic spaces contain the most abstract elements (roles, frames and schemas) specific to both input spaces, i.e., play a key role for metaphorization at the most abstract level. In the blending, the details of the input spaces are "blended", as a result of which a qualitatively new conceptual structure is formed. To model the process of metaphorization, let us turn to zoomorphic metaphor *"Man is Dog".* Cognitive metaphors with a zoonym component are used as an understanding mechanism for a person to understand himself and the surrounding world. Different characteristics of a person can be actualized through a metaphor. This transition can be called a *metaphorical trace*.

Throughout history, there has been a close relationship between humans and animals. Some animals are friends of people and some animals have always been dangerous for people. As a result of this rapprochement, people have become familiar with the characteristics of almost most animals, and have learned their way of life through long observations. Although domestic animals are considered closer to humans, it has been possible to study wild animals as well. It is easy to observe and identify the characteristic features of animals; but it is very difficult to study people's characters; almost impossible. Perhaps that is why it has always been relevant to transfer human feelings and attitudes to animals. In all languages, in all cultures, animals have been used to reveal, clarify and figuratively describe human nature.

MAN IS DOG

Input Space 1 Target Domain	Blend MAN - DOG	Input Space 2 Source Domain
MAN human being an employee has consciousness qualities free	loyal adaptable struggle goal attack protection hunting bloodshed	**DOG** good guard a domesticated canin mammal has instinct adaptable loyal companion easily trained

Target domen a *man* is projected by the source domen which is represented by the *dog*. "Dog" has historically been considered a symbol of loyalty, protection and support. Dogs are also used for hunting, which means they are also good hunters. Dogs are obedient animals. Due to the characteristics we have listed, dogs are called "people's friends". However, it is unacceptable to use expressions related to "dog" to a person. The fact that dogs are extremely loyal, obedient and faithful to people gives rise to the formation of negative opinions as well as positive opinions towards them. It is not by chance that a flatterer is called "a flatterer like a dog; barking at a bone, barking at a lick" etc. are addressed with expressions like. It is not considered a shame to hit and humiliate such people because they are considered worthless and meaningless people. Such people have never been treated well in society. The nature of such people has created conditions for the emergence of such offensive metaphors. That's why such people are viewed as impersonal, lowly and humble people. The

mentioned statements also prove that the word "Dog" is used to reveal the true face of such people. Let's pay attention to idioms in the Azerbaijani language; act like a dog, eat like a dog, chase like a dog, catch like a dog, live like a dog, die like a dog, etc. The appearance of such contradictions shows that the culture, lifestyle, beliefs and thoughts of the two peoples are sharply different.

Composition, Completion, Elaboration causes the emergent structure in the blending; blending contains a structure that is not transferred from inputs. The structure formed within the blending is represented by the following [7, p.49-50].

Modification. Any space can be modified at any moment in the construction of the integration network. For example, the inputs can be modified by reverse mapping from the blend, as in the Buddhist Monk case where we add to the inputs the existence of the location asked for in the riddle by backward projection of the spot of "encounter" from the blend. Another well-known story that explains the modification is the story of M.Turner Lionman [Turner M. Oxford, 2014].

To illustrate the origin of ideas and the antiquity of blending, let's start with an unforgettable example from archaeology − the lionman. The lionman is a 32,000 - year-old ivory figurine found in 1939, smashed to bits in a cave in southern Germany. When it was found, it did not look like a lionman, and its shards lay neglected for decades. But since its full reassembly in 1998, scientists have pointed to this figurine as evidence that creative human culture came from a major evolutionary change, an expansion in "working memory". Is there such a thing as "working memory"? Most researchers think so. There are debates over what it involves, but it is thought to be a mental system that lets us hold transitory information active in the mind while we work on it. The idea that researchers have put forward of this major evolutionary change is this: If there was an expansion of working memory in our ancestors several tens of thousands of years ago, then they would have been able to hold more concepts simultaneously active in mind, concepts like lion and man. The idea is that the artist needed to do that in order to be able to come up with the idea of a lionman.

Perhaps the lionman is a result of expanded working memory. Perhaps this figurine is evidence of a moment when our ancestors could at last hold active in mind both lion and man. But that is a little hard to swallow, because it is difficult to believe that earlier people could not have thought of a lion attacking a man, which all by itself holds both lion and man in mind, in a little emotion-packed story. Be that as it may, what the figurine of the lionman most clearly shows us is the mental ability to *blend* different concepts: *Lion and man* are not merely held in mind at the same time;

they are also used to create a new, blended concept, a *lionman*, which is neither a lion nor a man, exactly.

People can put together mental blends that contain new ideas. The idea of the *lionman*, for example, is a blend of *lion* and *man*. The blend calls upon the idea of *lion* and the idea of *man*. Each of these is an "input mental space" that the blend uses. We could call them "inputs" or "contributors" or "donors" or "ingredients" or use a range of other words, and any of these words is probably as good as any other. The blend takes parts of each of these input mental spaces, but only parts, and puts them together into a single new idea, a simple, tight idea that fits the mind nicely. *The mental web* for this thinking contains a mental space for *lion*, a mental space for *man*, and a mental space for their blend, the *lionman*. The *lionman* has elements that belong to neither *lion* nor *man*. We can carry that blend with us, hold it in mind, and use it to think about our identity and our place in the world.

Entrenchment. Blends are often novel and generated on the fly, as in the Buddhist Monk case, but they recruit entrenched mappings and frames. Blends themselves can also become entrenched, as if the Complex Numbers blend, giving rise to conceptual and formal structures shared throughout the community.

Event integration. Blends are a basic instrument for achieving event integration. In the Skiing Waiter and Image Club examples, the event integration is the purpose of the imaginative construction. But in the Buddhist Monk case, it is only a means for solving the riddle about the existence of a location with certain properties.

Wide application. Though uniform in their dynamics, integration networks can serve many different goals. In the examples we have seen so far, these goals include transfer of emotions (Image Club) and inferences (Buddhist Monk and Computer Desktop), counterfactual reasoning (Iron Lady), conceptual change and creativity in science (Complex Numbers), integrated action (Computer Desktop and Skiing Waiter), and construction of identity through compression (Graduation).

Fauconnier and Turner hink [Fauconnier G. Cambridge, 1997] that it would be better to have more than one blending structure. Scholars believe that not all blendings are equal. Some blendings may be better or worse than others. These principles create competition between them and motivate them.

For more than thirty years, various research works on conceptual mappings in cognitive linguistics have been steadily strengthening each other, leading to valuable generalizations and deeper understanding in this area. Without a theory of conceptual metaphor, there would be no conceptual blending foundation, and without a detailed linguistic analysis of the 1980s and 1990s, there would be no neural linguistics.

Neural linguistics is exciting and successful because it has revealed not only the biological and computational dimensions of neural systems, but also the radical cognitive results obtained as a result of theoretical analysis and extensive empirical observations.

What mapping is: "...mappings between domains are at the heart of the unique human cognitive faculty of producing, transferring, and processing meaning. Although simple, this idea is powerful in two ways. It yields general procedures and principles for a wide array of meaning and reasoning phenomena, including conceptual projection, conceptual integration and blending, analogy, reference, and counterfactuals; and it provides us with insights about the organization of cognitive domains to which we have no direct access" [5, p.1].

"The domains are also mental, and they include background cognitive and conceptual models as well as locally introduced mental spaces, which have only partial structure. It has been a major goal of cugnitive linguistics to specify meaning construction, its operations, its domains, and how they are reflected in language. Research on these matters is progressing rapidly, uncovering the intricate schemas be hind everyday grammar, the richness of underlying conceptual systems, and the complexity of mental space configurations in ordinary discourse. A recurrent finding has been that visible language is only the tip of the iceberg of invisible meaning construction that goes on as we think and talk. This hidden, backstage cognition defines our mental and social life. Language is one of its prominent external manifestations. Meaning construction is a cornerstone of cognitive science" [5, p.1-2].

Projections can be metaphorical or metonymic relationships between concepts and are made possible by the Identification Principle (ID), which allows for the mental connection of two concepts: "If two objects (in the most general sense), a and b, are linked by a pragmatic function F(b = F(a)), a description of a, da, may be used to identify its counterpart b" [4, p.3]. Thus, the following sentence: *The gastric ulcer in room 12 would like some coffee* [5, p.11] can be easily understood by the following projection, where the disease represents a patient who wants to quench his thirst:

The Identification Principle

a ——————————————— > b

an illness (gastric ulcer)   patient in hospital

[mental space 1]   [mental space 2]
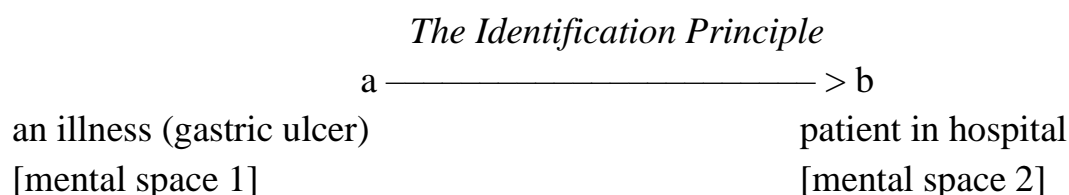
Mental spaces are structured according to so-called space builders. They participate in the construction of a new mental space or in focusing on existing mental spaces. Space builders, prepositional phrases (*in Len's picture, in John's mind, at the shop, in Fred's mind's eye, in Susan's opinion, in 2020, at the factory, from every point of view*), adverbs (*really, probably, possibly, theoretically*), connectors (*if... then...; either... or ..*) or can be a combination of subject-predicate (*Max believes ..., Mary hopes ..., Susan states .., Tom claims*). In the sentence *The gastric ulcer in room 12 would like some coffee **The gastric ulcer*** is a space builder. This expression helps us to build a projection between the disease and the patient. Almost all doctors remember patients by the names of their diseases. For example, jaundice, appendicitis, chickenpox, neuritis, etc.

Fauconnier shows that there are different types of *projections* in the semantics of natural language and in everyday thinking [5, p.9-11]:

Projection mappings will project one part of the structure of one domain on top of another. The general (and deep) idea is that we use the structure and vocabulary of other domains (source domains) to talk and think about some domains (target domains). Some of these projections are used by all members of a culture − for example, TIME AS SPACE in English. To organize our concept of everyday time, we use the structure of our concept of daily space and movement: *Christmas is approaching; The weeks go by; Summer is around the comer; The long day stretched out with no end in sight.* Projections are culturally and lexically rooted, and as Turner points out [Turner M. Princeton, 1991], they actually define a category structure for language and culture. On the contrary, although vocabulary often makes the projection transparent, we usually do not understand the projections when used, and in fact we have to be surprised and amused when we are pointed out. In such cases, although the projection is cognitively active, it is opaque: the projection of one domain onto another is in a sense, automatic. Domain projection transformations can be constructed locally as well as in context, in which case they are not generally understood as belonging to the language, but rather as part of a "creative" and ongoing structure of thought and discourse. At the same time, there is no formal difference between lexically rooted (opaque) situations and those that are consciously perceived as innovative.

Another important class of domain connections are the ***pragmatic function mappings***. The two relevant domains, which may be set up locally, typically correspond to two categories of objects, which are mapped onto each other by a pragmatic function. For example, authors are matched with the books they write, or

hospital patients are matched with the illnesses for which they are being treated. This kind of mapping plays an important role in structuring our knowledge base and provides means of identifying elements of one domain via their counterparts in the other. Pragmatic function mappings, like projection mappings, will often be responsible for semantic change over time. Metonymy and synecdoche are pragmatic function mappings.

A third class of mappings, ***schema mappings***, operate when a general schema, frame, or model is used to structure a situation in context. In Langacker's cognitive grammar framework [Langacker R. Stanford, 1987; 1991], grammatical constructions and vocabulary items "call up" meaning schemas.

Fauconnier and Turner consider mental spaces [5, p.11] as partial structures that proliferate when we think and talk, allowing a fine-grained partitioning of our discourse and knowledge structures. For instance, in saying *Liz thinks Richard is wonderful*, we build a space for Liz's reported beliefs, with minimal explicit structure corresponding to Richard's being wonderful. In saying *Last year, Richard was wonderful*, we build a space for "last year" and in saying *Liz thinks that last year Richard was wonderful*, we build a space for *last year* embedded in a belief space, itself embedded in a base space.
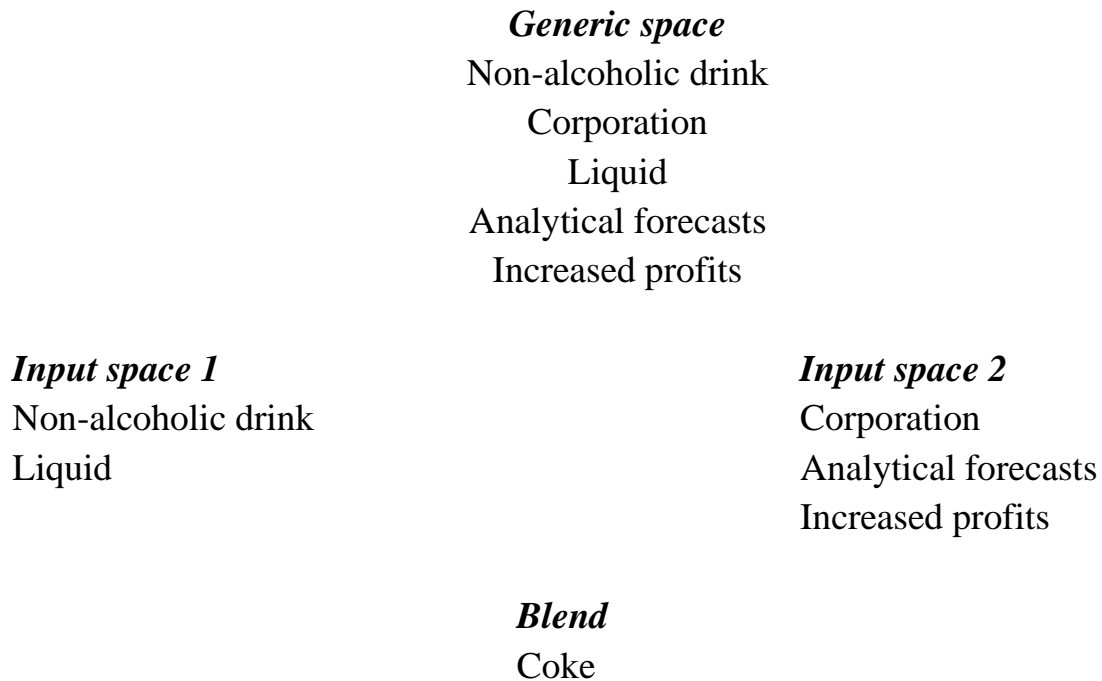
The theory of conceptual integration serves to explain the development of metaphors and metonymy, especially figurative means. To prove this point, S.Coulson and T.Oakley [Coulson S., Oakley T. Amsterdam, 2003], cite the newspaper headline as an example.

Coke Flows Past Forecasts: Soft drink company posts gains

In this title we see the company (Coca Cola Inc.) and the metonym of the famous product of this company − the drink "Coke". It is known that the mechanism of metonymy is based on the replacement of one element with another, for example, the representation of one class instead of the whole class, the part instead of the whole, and so on. It is clear that in this case, the author of the title under the word "Coke" is not a drink, but a company that earns more than expected. Metonymy, in turn, is accompanied by a complex metaphor, "flows past the forecasts" which is necessary to convey this idea. The metaphor helps to create the image of a "liquid state" in which the drink has the ability to "spill beyond certain predictions".

According to the theory of conceptual integration, we can distinguish two input spaces: the beverage (non-alcoholic beverage input space) and the company (corporate input space). In the first place, Coke presents a drink with its own characteristics. Second, Coke is a large, non-alcoholic beverage company with

growing profits. However, despite such a significant difference, the concepts are represented by the generic Coke metonym, which allows the company to associate with the product. The generic space includes the common elements of the two input spaces: beverage, beverage liquid, corporation, analytical forecasts, and increased sales revenue. This process can be illustrated as follows:

Generic space
Non-alcoholic drink
Corporation
Liquid
Analytical forecasts
Increased profits

Input space 1
Non-alcoholic drink
Liquid

Input space 2
Corporation
Analytical forecasts
Increased profits

Blend
Coke

According to S.Coulson and T.Oakley the result of the conceptual integration mechanism is *blending*. A new space, a new concept operating in new conditions is being obtained. The feature of the title is to integrate several mental spaces into a single cognitive model. The main goal of Conceptual Blending Theory is to reveal the operation of cognitive mechanisms to present the complex features of meaning construction in a simple form: "Conceptual blending operates largely behind the scenes. We are not consciously aware of its hidden complexities, any more than we are consciously aware of the complexities of perception involved in, for example, seeing a blue cup. Almost invisibly to consciousness, conceptual blending choreographs vast networks of conceptual meaning, yielding cognitive products that, at the conscious level, appear simple. The way we think is not the way we think we think. Everyday thought seems straightforward, but even our simplest thinking is astonishingly complex" [7, p.440].

Conclusion / Nəticə

A conceptual blend, or conceptual integration, is a set of general cognitive processes used to integrate a conceptual structure in mental spaces. Conceptual integration is a basic mental operation applied in many areas of thought and action, including unified structural and dynamic features, including metaphor and metonymy. Conceptual integration creates networks of communication between mental spaces. Some of these mental spaces generally plays the role of entry into a new, mixed mental space that is evolving. As for the metaphor, the source and the target play the role of an introduction to the blending. Creating blend often involves the use of metonyms.

According to this theory, cognitive operations that occur in the human brain and link language and thinking, can create all sorts of meaning: from simple concepts to complex theories. We are not aware of how exactly interpretation process is held, just as not aware of all the chemical reactions taking place in our brain [Fauconnier G. Cambridge, 1994].

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