

THE NOTION OF CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATION THEORY

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the problem of conceptual blending representation. As cognitive linguistics is of special interest to the researchers from the end of the XXth century till the present time, theory of conceptual blending has become one of the most important directions in modern linguistics. Conceptual blending is understood as a mental process of creating a new meaning by joining already existed concepts which have their own particular meanings. The process is based on four mental spaces such as generic space, input space 1, input space 2 and blended space which are considered to be small conceptual interconnected elements.

Key words: conceptual integration, mental space, domain, blend, cognitive mechanism, generating a new meaning, linguistic means

At present, the conceptual theory is one of the most urgent problems of cognitive stylistics, which, in turn, deals with the direction of cognitive linguistics. To date, there are many scientific works in which the fundamental theory is presented and described. However, the main problem is the conceptual deep linguistic representation. Based on this, the main goal of this article is to consider previously known facts of the theory of conceptual integration, to reveal the cognitive mechanisms underlying this theory and, mainly, to identify language units that can be based on the cognitive principle of conceptual integration.

The notion of conceptual blending

The theory under study was first introduced by linguists J. Fauconnier and M. Turner, who defined conceptual integration as a cognitive process based on the integration of two or more conceptual spaces based on common conceptual features, as a result of which new meanings are formed. It is believed that the theory of conceptual integration is a continuation of the theory of mental spaces and the theory of conceptual metaphor.

According to J. Fauconnier and M. Turner, the process of conceptual integration includes at least four conceptual spaces: initial, focus, general and integrated spaces. It should also be mentioned that in the scientific literature, instead of the notion of "space", the concept of "domain" is often used. The source / focus space or domain (domain / input space) is a mental space that includes a concept that carries its own lexical meaning and characterized by certain conceptual features. Generic space is a mental space that includes common conceptual features that are inherent in the original and focal mental space. It should be noted that the common mental space is most often revealed after the analysis of the source and focus spaces. The integrated space (blend) is understood as a new meaning that arises as a result of the integration of the original and focal mental space. Therefore, an integrated space is the result of a process of conceptual integration.

To illustrate the mechanism of conceptual integration, let us present a diagram of the analyzed cognitive process.

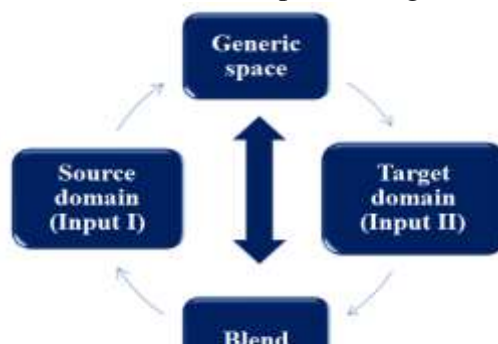


Figure 1. Conceptual Integration Mechanism

The mechanism of conceptual integration is based on three stages. The first step is composition. Composition is understood as the process of constructing a scheme of the mechanism of conceptual integration, namely: the identification of mental spaces on which the entire mechanism of conceptual integration is based. The second stage is development. Development is the process of identifying the conceptual attributes of each domain or mental space. The last stage is completion. Accordingly, completion is the result of conceptual integration. In other words, completion is understood as the generation of a new meaning in an integrated mental space.

Linguists S. Coulson and J. Fauconnier note that the possibility of the existence of conceptual integration comes down to the imagery of thinking as one of the cognitive abilities of a person. Accordingly, the processes of conceptual integration are based on the possibility of establishing relationships between seemingly incompatible concepts, phenomena and objects of the surrounding reality, as well as the ability of a person to perceive and interpret these relationships. Based on this, it should be noted that one of the significant concepts in the theory of conceptual integration is the concept of mappings or connections established between mental spaces. To such connections, i.e. The types of relationship between the source and focus mental domains include imagery, comparison, contrast, similarity, categorization, and more.

In the process of revealing the mechanism of conceptual integration and the allocation of mental spaces, special attention should be paid to the features or properties inherent in the theory of conceptual integration. Only taking into account the features inherent in the analyzed theory, it is possible to construct a scheme for the functioning of the mechanism of conceptual integration.

Peculiarities of conceptual integration theory

Below we present four most important peculiarities of the theory under study:

The theory of conceptual integration is a continuation of the development of the theory of mental spaces and the theory of conceptual metaphor. Therefore, the process of conceptual integration is a complex process of interaction between source and focus space;

Each conceptual space has certain conceptual features. However, not all features are combined and move into an integrated space. The generation of a new meaning in a blend occurs only through the combination of certain selective conceptual features;

In the process of constructing the mechanism of conceptual integration, much attention is paid to the projection of the initial mental space onto the focal one, since the acquisition of a new meaning depends on the correct choice of the projection;

Special attention in the process of conceptual integration is given to background knowledge.

Linguistic representation of conceptual integration

Despite the existence of a sufficient number of works devoted to the study of the mechanism of conceptual integration, the main problem in the field of this study is the linguistic representation of this mechanism. Until now, the issue of linguistic representation of the theory of conceptual integration has been considered by the founders of this theory at the level of the language system. Linguists believe that the process of conceptual integration can be the basis of metaphor and metonymy.

We have made an attempt to further study the mechanism of conceptual integration. As a result, we have reviewed and analyzed the linguistic representation of the studied mechanism not only in the language

system, but also on the scale of discourse. Thus, our hypothesis is the assumption that the process of conceptual integration can be the basis of other stylistic devices, such as metaphorical epithet, comparison, antonomasia, allusion, as well as the basis of many word-formation and phraseological units.

The mechanism and advantage of the theory of conceptual integration

Our analysis showed that the process of conceptual integration is due to close interaction with such cognitive theories of linguistics as the theory of cognitive context, knowledge structures, focusing/defocusing, emergence and inference.

The advantage of conceptual blending in the analysis of linguistic means is in the following:

Conceptual integration allows to analyze structurally and semantically compound linguistic means;

conceptual integration allows to enhance and enrich cognitive-metaphorical analysis;

conceptual integration presents a new comprehension and vision of a stylistic device as a cognitive structure based on the process of conceptual integration;

conceptual integration helps to decode implicit information of the literary discourse.

The role and sphere of conceptual blending application.

Conceptual blending plays an essential role in the construction of meanings in everyday life, in the arts including literature, music, linguistics and social sciences, in technological development and religious thinking. This process is widely used in games, riddles, advertisements, parables, proverbs, caricatures, statements, quotations, philosophical and poetical texts.

The bright example of conceptual integration usage in advertisements may be a picture printed in one magazine where there was described one parachutist who lied on the ground in the forest surrounded by seven bodies all wearing in white garments. The blend, namely, the meaning of the picture was the following: "If you are not an organ donor after your death, you take someone else with you".

In summing up, it should be stressed that the problem of conceptual blending theory is a central problem of both Cognitive Linguistics and Cognitive Stylistics. Conceptual blending can be defined as one of the fundamental processes of human cognition, a specific way of conceptualizing reality based on the mental process of analogy and knowledge transfer from one conceptual field into another.

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