



## THE ROLE OF CONCEPTUAL BLENDING IN THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL PHRASEOLOGY

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### ABSTRACT

*The article aims to reveal the importance of conceptual blending in creating phraseological units in the political discourse. The theoretical foundation of Conceptual Blending Theory is presented practically by analyzing political discourse with the reference to stable phrases. The role of using figurative language in politics to improve the effectiveness and persuasiveness of speech is also identified.*

### Introduction

The use of figurative language, in particular, conceptual metaphor and blending has been studied in various types discourse. These two theories are mostly studied conjointly in cognitive linguistics as the basis of conceptual metaphor which is made by conceptual blending. After providing a theoretical overview and a set of American political expressions, the analysis of political discourse is provided to explain the theory more thoroughly. The paper, in particular, focuses on examining the role of conceptual blending in political vocabulary since language is an important tool for politicians to achieve different discourse goals, including persuading, influencing, impressing, debating or negotiating. Innovative conceptual blends used by the American president Donald Trump are analyzed to achieve reach the main aim of the article.

### Literature Review

Conceptual Blending, also known as Conceptual Integration Theory was proposed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002), who claim that blending is a simple mental operation helping to understand the world around us.<sup>1</sup> Conceptual blending or Conceptual Integration is considered to be a basic cognitive operation based on the ability to make inferences, evaluations and assessment. The elements of blending involve two unrelated mental spaces, known as input spaces, a generic space and a blended space. The conceptual blending process goes as follows: the features of both inputs are generated in input spaces, inputs are linked by

<sup>1</sup> Dzanic, N.D. (2007). Conceptual integration theory- the key for unlocking the internal cognitive choreography of idiom modification. *Jezikoslovlje*, 8.2, 169-191.

a generic space where the common features are gathered, and finally, a new innovative meaning is created in the blended space. In this mental process, source domain mostly transfers its features to target domain, which is more abstract and lacks physical characteristics.

Conceptual blending makes the basis for many stylistic devices, like metaphor, allusion, simile, antonomasia and symbol.

Election is a battle.<sup>2</sup>

Election -Target domain, Battle- source domain.

In this conceptual metaphor, blending is an important component without which new features of the election cannot be revealed thoroughly. While elections are mostly regarded as competitions, races, victories or the process of obtaining votes, they possess a new negative meaning by gaining the features of the battle, like defeating, destroying, getting aggressive, opposing, fighting or even cheating.

### Methodology

Qualitative method is mostly used to carry out the research. This is because qualitative content and discourse analysis suits best to understand the materials more effectively. As a material of the research, there were examined transcripts of the meeting between Donald Trump and King Charles on YouTube. The data for the research was collected from secondary sources and speeches of politicians.

### Results and discussion

Political vocabulary can include not only political terminology but also phraseology units that improve the overall effectiveness of speech. This means that the role of conceptual metaphors and blending cannot be underestimated to create new innovative expressions. The following examples take from Donald Trump's speech can explain the mechanisms of conceptual blending in a more precise way.

The lion-hearted people of this kingdom defeated Napoleon, unleashed the Industrial Revolution, **destroyed slavery**, and defended civilization in the darkest days of fascism and communism.

The phrase - destroy slavery- possess a positive meaning even though both of its components are naturally associated with unpleasant feelings. In this scenario, when we blend the words: destroy (damage, break down and violation) and slavery (dependence, suffering and force), there will be a meaning shift from negative to positive- destroy slavery- abolish slavery, give freedom (Figure 1).

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<sup>2</sup> Ashurova, D.U., Galiyeva M.R. (2018). *Cognitive linguistics*. Uzbekistan State World Languages University.

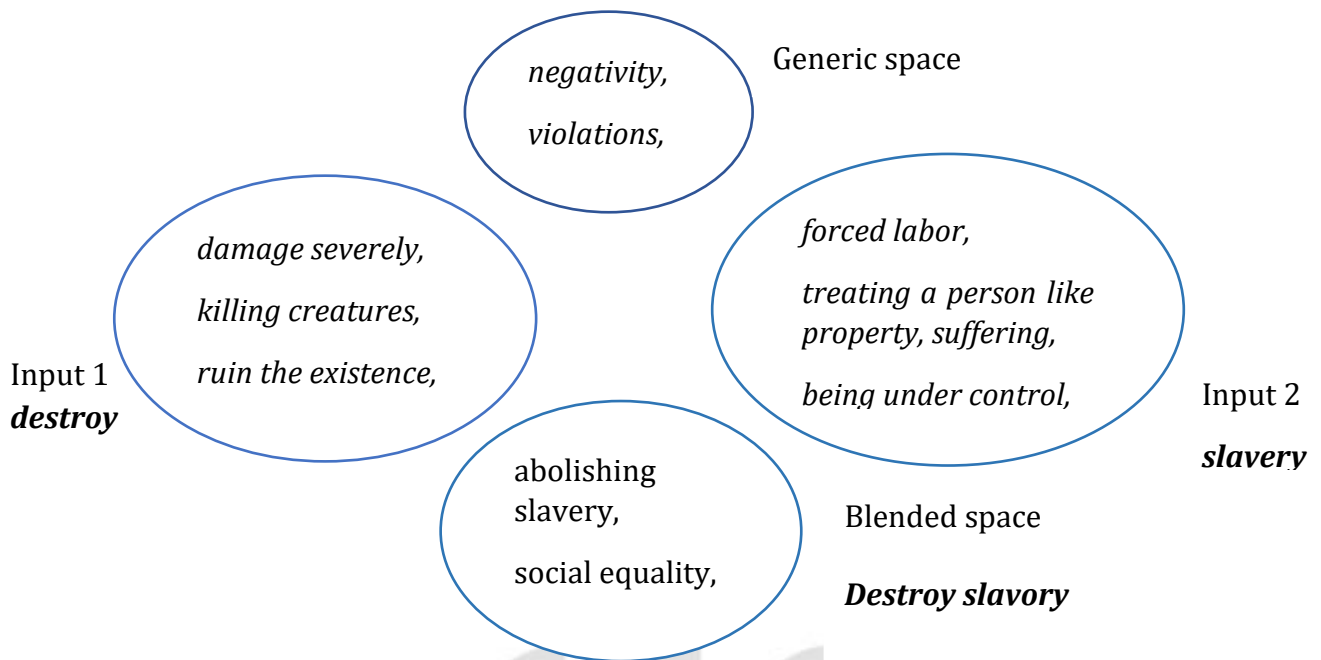


Figure 1. Conceptual integration network for **destroy slavery**.

Conceptual blending can also create the stylistic device epithet (adjective that highlights the quality of a noun), which is observed in the next example provided.

*He wrote that he was "entirely motivated by a **desperate desire** to put the great back into Great Britain in the finest tradition of British sovereigns.*

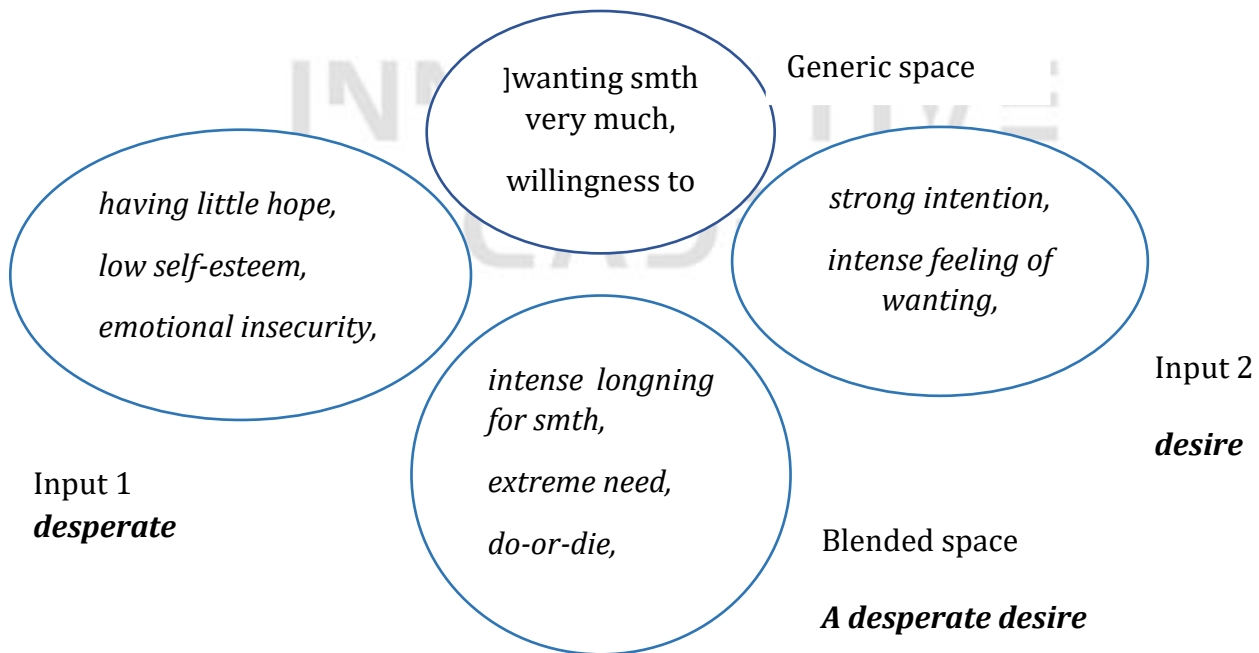


Figure 2. Conceptual integration network for **a desperate desire**.

A new emotional construct can be created through conceptual blending: desperate (emotionally intense, hopeless and lacking control) + desire (strong wish, motivation and can be controlled) = intensified need or want for something. The illustrative explanation of this

epithet is provided in Figure 2, which shows the organization of associative ideas to the blend: desperate desire in different mental spaces, generic and blended space.

### Conclusion

Figurative language can be used in politics widely to express the ideas more effectively and emotively. Conceptual blending plays a crucial role in forming political phraseology, in particular, collocations or word combinations. Stylistic devices like metaphors, epithets, allusions or symbols cannot be formulated without the help of conceptual blending as it is the core of them. The reason why conceptual metaphor and blending are studied together is the strong relationship between two theories. The more idiomatic expressions are analyzed, the more discoveries can be made in Cognitive Linguistics in the future.

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