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Cognitive Linguistics Investigations

Across languages, fields
and philosophical boundaries

Edited by

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Purple persuasion

Deliberative rhetoric and conceptual blending

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Conceptual blending, or conceptual integration, is a set of general cognitive processes used to combine conceptual structure in mental spaces. We analyze how speakers exploit these blending processes in two examples of persuasive discourse: one a widely distributed email message urging recipients to vote for Democratic candidates in the 1998 U.S. congressional election; the other, a solicitation for monetary donations from the St. Matthew's Church Ministry. Both examples use discourse to prompt very specific actions in the world. We show here how blending theory accounts for the mental operations necessary for readers to metamorphose into activists.

Keywords: conceptual blending, conceptual integration, mental spaces, discourse, usage based data

1. Introduction

Flipping through a magazine, you come across a photograph of a martini glass against a blue satin background. The glass contains a clear liquid, an olive, and a car key in place of the swizzle stick. The caption reads, "Killer Cocktail", and the message is clear. Though there is no explicit mention of either drinking or driving, this bizarre picture functions as a powerful argument against the combination of the two activities. Apparently, the picture of the martini is enough to activate the concept of drinking, the car key is sufficient to activate the concept of driving, and the array of image and caption serves to activate background knowledge about the dangers of drinking and driving.

Comprehension of this simple public service message results largely from the processes of conceptual blending: a set of general cognitive processes used to com-

peaker (Fauconnier 1994). Blending takes place in a conceptual integration network, an array of mental spaces that typically includes at least two input spaces and a blended space. Input spaces represent information from discrete cognitive domains, and the blended space contains structure from both inputs, as well as its own emergent structure. For example, in the killer cocktail blend, one input includes conceptual structure related to drinking alcoholic beverages, and the other input includes conceptual structure related to driving automobiles. The blended space gets partial projections from both inputs and can develop emergent structure of its own. The human agent behaves in such a way that the act of drinking alcoholic beverages impinges on the act of driving a car.

Emergent structure arises out of the imaginative processes of blending. The first process is called composition, and involves the juxtaposition of information from different spaces, as in conjunction and role-filling. For example, in the killer cocktail blend, an element from the driving domain (the car key) has been composed with structure from the cocktail domain, such that it fills the swizzle stick role. Completion, as in pattern completion, occurs when part of a cognitive model is activated and results in the activation of the rest of the frame. In the killer cocktail blend, the martini frame activated by the picture is completed with a frame for drinking alcoholic beverages. Similarly, the car key leads to the activation of a frame for driving. Finally, elaboration is an extended version of completion that results from mental simulation, or various sorts of physical and social interaction with the world as construed with blended concepts. In this example, simulating the possible unfortunate effects of drunk driving constitutes the elaboration of the blend. We shall argue that acts of deliberation depend on this elaboration process.

Below we analyze how blending is recruited in two examples of persuasive discourse: one a widely distributed email message urging recipients to vote for Democratic candidates in the 1998 U.S. congressional election; the other, a solicitation for monetary donations from the St. Matthew's Church Ministry. Both examples use discourse to prompt very specific actions in the world. We show here how blending theory accounts for the mental operations necessary for readers to metamorphose into activists.

2. Voting

This section addresses blending in an email message sent from documentary filmmaker and political activist, Michael Moore, to left-wing, third-party American voters like Greens, Communists, and Socialists. The letter, dated October 8, 1998,

at reconstructing the act of voting so that it is more consistent with the values and goals of political progressives. He does so by framing the act of voting as a "legal act of civil disobedience", and, relatedly, as "sending Congress a message" to cease impeachment proceedings against U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Moore begins his letter with the following proposal:

Dear Friends... Ok, I've had it. The right wing is trying to overturn a national election because... they didn't like the results!

This must be stopped. I would like to propose a legal act of civil disobedience that could send the Right into near oblivion.

With this Moore introduces the oxymoronic concept of a legal act of civil disobedience, prompting the reader to wonder both about what a legal act of civil disobedience might be, as well as what particular action Moore has in mind. Only later do we learn:

The act of civil disobedience I am calling for is for each and every American to go to the polls on November 3 and vote for the Democratic candidate for Congress on your ballot.

However, Moore does not advocate voting for Democrats because he supports their policies. Rather, he opposes the policies of their chief political adversaries, the Republicans. Consequently, Moore's first rhetorical goal is to counter the default interpretation of the act he advocates. Because voting Democrat usually signals support for Democratic policies, Moore makes several remarks that serve to distance himself from the Democrats. For example, Moore writes: "I am not a member of the Democratic party"; "To me they are a barely tolerable version of the Republicans"; "I did not vote for Clinton in 1996"; and even, "Yes, most Democrats suck".

Here, as in many places in the letter, Moore's rhetoric is meant to appeal to the values and goals of his target audience. In particular, he is forced to contend with the implicit tension in being a participant in third-party politics while advocating a particular political action that inherently acknowledges its impotence in current American politics. By recruiting conceptual blending processes, Moore invites readers to construct models which allow them to maintain these incompatible goals. Below we analyze five distinct instances of blending that shape Moore's argument.

Palatable candidates

Clinton's policies that signalled an abandonment of liberal ideals. Nonetheless, Moore argues, Clinton was elected in a fair and democratic election and should be permitted to serve as President of the United States for the remainder of his second term. With the following excerpt, Moore presents his readers with a blend that acknowledges both the limited choice in American politics, and Clinton's status as the legitimate winner of the election. Capitalizing on the entrenched mapping between ideas and food (see also Lakoff & Johnson 1980) Moore writes:

... the majority who could stomach that pathetic choice on the ballot went and voted for Bill Clinton.

One input, perhaps structured by a model of ordering food in a restaurant, involves a scenario in which the agent imagines the palatability of menu items and makes her decision on this basis. The other input contains a model of voting in which citizens evaluate the political platforms of candidates on the ballot. In the blend, we are invited to imagine citizens evaluating the ballot in the way one might evaluate a menu, such that candidates are chosen based on how tasty their ideas are. On this construal, people who don't vote correspond to people who will not eat in a particular restaurant because they don't like the menu.

However, note that in the restaurant case, the diner doesn't typically know the details of the menu until after he has been seated. But, because the contents of the ballot are widely publicized ahead of time, people like Moore can actually avoid the polling booth if they don't like the list of candidates. So, rather than relying on prototypical domain knowledge, the stomach blend recruits a slightly less prototypical model, which better matches the topic input. The restaurant space is thus structured by a model in which both the contents of the menu and the taste of the food are so well-known that people might well use this knowledge to choose whether or not to dine there. In America, the menu at a place like Denny's or McDonald's might serve as a potential counterpart for the ballot in Moore's blend.

As noted above, this blend capitalizes on entrenched mappings between ideas and food, exemplified in sentences such as "I devour books", and "She won't swallow your proposal". Indeed, the use of the verb "stomach" to refer to tolerance for unpleasant things is entrenched enough to be listed in many dictionaries. As argued in Coulson and Oakley (2005), conceptual blending is often involved in conventional metaphoric expressions, although the mappings are not elaborated in the same way they are in more spectacular blends (such as the "Killer Cocktail" blend discussed in the introduction). For both novel and entrenched metaphors, conceptual structure from both input domains is activated as well as the structure in the blended space. But, because entrenchment often leads to automaticity, the

Depending on their linguistic experience, readers differ in the extent to which they utilize retrieval over more effortful interpretive strategies, and differ in their awareness of the different domains activated by a blend such as the palatable candidates one discussed here. The domain of food consumption implicitly evoked by the verb "stomach" is available for integration with concepts from the domain of political choice evoked by "ballot" and "voted". While the food domain is likely to be more salient for some speakers than others, the visceral sense of being nauseated by the candidates is what makes this text potentially compelling. The rhetorical efficacy of the text, then, depends in part in the reader's willingness to construct the blend.

Stinky candidates

In suggesting that readers "hold their nose" while voting, Moore again evokes the unpalatable candidate blend while simultaneously signalling his sympathy with third party politics. He writes:

If you want Congress to stop this witch hunt, if you want Congress to start focussing on the REAL problems facing this country and the world ... get out and vote November 3. Hold your nose if you have to.

Since the writer and his audience dislike the policies of Democrats as well as Republicans, Moore must frame the act of voting with the proper "attitude". Thus Moore's 'hold your nose while voting' blend is aimed at describing the manner of the proscribed action.

The inputs to this blend include voting, and holding one's nose while acting. The act of voting entails going to a designated space and making a choice among several candidates. Holding one's nose while acting calls up a different frame, that of completing an unpleasant task. Consistent with the unpalatable candidate blend discussed above, one might hold one's nose while eating something that tastes bad. Similarly, one might hold one's nose while doing a task that involves a foul stench, such as changing a diaper, cleaning a toilet, or taking out the trash. Composing voting and holding one's nose results in framing the act of voting as an unpleasant but necessary chore, much like some of the tasks mentioned above. Moreover, entrenched meaning of the 'stinks' metaphor, allows speakers to understand the text as acknowledging the limited political options available to progressive voters.

The distinct nature of these acts emerges when one considers that the 'holding your nose while voting' blend produces inferences not usually attributable to either voting proper or to unpleasant stench-ridden tasks. In voting, one makes a choice

two stinky diapers. In the blend, however, the voter is performing an unpleasant task in a stench-ridden environment, and that task is to choose the thing that stinks the least. Thus the voter should choose Democratic candidates because they stink less than the Republican candidates.

Public conversation

After noting that Bill Clinton won the 1996 Presidential election, Moore continues:

That was the will of the people. And that is the will the Republicans are trying to subvert.

In the passage above (which precedes the actual proposal), Moore frames his as yet undefined act of civil disobedience as preventing the Republicans (construed as a unified entity) from subverting the will of the people (also construed as unified). Thus Moore advocates neither Democratic congressional candidates, nor their party leader President Clinton. Rather, he advocates the “will of the people”. Though he hasn’t yet revealed how the Republicans are trying to subvert the will of the people, we know that it has to do with Clinton being elected President in a fair and democratic election, and that the Republicans did not like the results.

Immediately after his discussion of Clinton’s (re)election in 1996, Moore moves to the related, but non-identical, issue of impeachment proceedings:

All the public opinion polls – New York Times, Wall Street Journal, CNN – have said the same thing over and over: The American public does NOT want impeachment. Yet, Congress has decided to tell the public to take a flying %\$#@& and has moved ahead with the impeachment process anyway.

Although it is easy to construe impeachment as tantamount to overturning an election, each is a distinct concept. Strictly speaking, impeachment involves accusing a public official of high crimes; and while this may result in removing the accused official from office, it need not. Overturning an election, on the other hand, usually occurs when there is evidence that the voting process was unfair. But, because both can result in removal of an official from office, it is easy to set up cross-space mappings between the two concepts. Moore’s task is also supported by models set up earlier in the letter: because Clinton’s 1996 election has been construed as the will of the people, impeachment (and removal from office) is *subverting* that will.

Thus Moore relies on conceptual integration to construct a simplified model of the relationship between electoral politics, political ideology, and the impeach-

CNN) with statements uttered by individual citizens. In the larger picture, the story of a conversation between individual people, or representatives of different groups, is being blended with the more abstract communication (or miscommunication) between politicians and citizens.

Moore’s blend exemplifies a key phenomenon in conceptual integration theory: compression to achieve human scale. Compression is a tendency for objects from multiple related spaces to be represented in a single blended space (Fauconnier & Turner 2002). For example, the same person can be viewed in different stages of his life, as in a cartoon where the former basketball star Michael Jordan plays a game against himself at an earlier stage in his career (see Coulson 2003). Fauconnier and Turner discuss many different sorts of compression, and note that this phenomenon often allows us to represent abstract concepts with more familiar frames. In Moore’s example, the opinions of many different people in the opinion poll are mapped onto a single person in the blend so as to facilitate the application of the “human scale” conversation frame in the blended space.

For the most part, Moore’s blends are quite standard: the construal of polls as the voice of the people, election results as the will of the people, and Clinton’s impeachment as the subversion of the will of the people were all publicly available at the time he composed the letter. However, his description of Congress members telling their constituents to “take a flying %\$#@&” represents a novel extension. There is, of course, no actual town meeting in which Congress members hurl epithets at their constituents. Rather, Moore prompts the reader to construe two independent sets of occurrences – one involving the release of opinion polls which reveal public opposition to impeachment; and the other, the decision by the House Judiciary Committee to proceed with impeachment – as an integrated event scenario. The compression here is used to construct a conversational frame with potential motivational properties.

Moore’s blend has desirable rhetorical characteristics from both a cognitive and an affective standpoint. Cognitively, the event integration simplifies reasoning about a complex series of events. Moreover, the integration of the construal of the political process with that of an interpersonal argument invites the reader to complete the blend with knowledge from her own argumentative experiences. Because Congress has already proceeded against the will of the public, Congress maps onto the winner of the argument, and the reader (who also corresponds to the public) maps onto the loser. If the reader truly integrates knowledge about the political process with her own personal experience with losing arguments, it can evoke the sorts of emotions that accompany the latter. This, in turn, helps motivate the revenge frames that support Moore’s ultimate call to action

Sending a message

Having framed the political act of impeachment as a defiant act of disobedience on the part of Congress, Moore invokes a salient counterfactual in which the House Judiciary Committee behaves in a manner more consistent with the 'message' in the polls. In fact, Moore later draws on this scenario in his attempts to convince people to vote. Voting is framed as a poll that Congress will listen to. He writes:

The act of civil disobedience I am calling for is for each and every American to go to the polls on November 3 and vote for the Democratic candidate for Congress on your ballot. That's right, my fellow cynics and progressives – the only way to send a true message to the right wing is to throw every Republican out of office.

Here he capitalizes on a mapping between polling and voting. In both models, individual members of the public express their opinions and the results are tabulated in order to express collective opinion. And, while both influence the political sphere of events, only voting has explicit political consequences. Winning an election is constitutive of assuming a political role in a way that favourable poll results are not.

Moore elaborates on the public conversation blend by scripting what the citizenry should "say" in reply to Congress' recent actions, thus framing voting for Democrats as the citizenry's turn in conversation:

Imagine if the Democrats are voted in by overwhelming numbers (when all the pundits are predicting a Republican landslide). The message would be loud and clear to all these new Democrats – THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WANTS THE AGENDA OF THE (SO-CALLED) CHRISTIAN RIGHT REMOVED FROM THE HALLS OF OUR UNITED STATES CONGRESS!

Here Moore describes the message as being "loud and clear", adjectives appropriate for verbal communication, but not for the abstract information presumably conveyed by the results of an election. Their use here is licensed by a conceptual blend between voting and speaking. Pascual (2002) suggests that due to the centrality of talk in human social life, many situations that involve information exchange – from perception to abstract instances of communication – are metaphorically construed as verbal communication (see also Turner 2002). A phenomenon called *fictive interaction*, Pascual shows how this blend is common in rhetorical situations that occur in the courtroom. As noted in our discussion of the *Public Conversation* blend, fictive interaction can be seen as an attempt to construe abstract situations with more motivating "human scale" frames.

commonalities are represented in a generic space that contains a communicating agent, a communicative action, a message, and a recipient. In the blend, voting sends a message, which (unlike the vote in the politics space) is audible. Interestingly, the number of votes maps onto the loudness of the reply in an adversarial conversation. Moreover, as in a conversation, the louder the message the more conviction we attribute to the speaker. Moore suggests that if enough readers follow his advice, the message will be so forceful as to end the public debate. Framed this way, Moore can assert another consequence of speaking: the end of the right-wing's political agenda.

Interpretation is supported by the configuration of mental spaces needed to represent the complex conditional in this excerpt. Besides embedding the counterfactual Democratic landslide in a scenario that includes the prediction of a Republican landslide, the excerpt above sets up two sorts of contingencies dubbed content-level and epistemic-level by Sweetser (1990, 1996). At the content level, the antecedent is the Democrats being elected (in the case where pundits predict a Republican landslide), and is (in some sense) causally related to the consequent space where the message is clear. At the epistemic level, the antecedent remains the same, and the epistemic consequent is that people oppose the Republicans. Thus the election of Democrats licenses the inference that voters oppose the Republicans.

Interestingly, given the structure Moore has set up, a Democratic victory will be interpreted quite differently from a Republican victory. Because votes are generally interpreted as an endorsement of the elected candidates' policies, a Republican victory would presumably be interpreted as support for the right-wing agenda. However, by this point, Moore has clearly framed voting for a Democrat as voting against the right-wing policies embodied by Republican candidates. Indeed, Moore goes even so far as to propose that the act of voting for a Democrat is an act of civil disobedience.

Legal act of civil disobedience

In many ways, Moore's portrayal of voting as an act of civil disobedience is the most striking aspect of the piece. Civil disobedience, by its very definition, involves the violation of the law. In contrast, voting is not only legal, but strongly encouraged by law. However, by recruiting peripheral aspects of structure from the concept of civil disobedience, and blending it with structure in his own 'sending a message' blend, Moore directs his readers to integrate two concepts that appear to be contradictory.

call the Spirit of the Law, is a construal of the law as being enacted to promote the common good. In the latter space, which we might dub the Letter of the Law, an act of disobedience is defined as an act that violates the law. The blended space composes the act of disobedience with the justification for law. Civil disobedience is thus an act that violates the law to promote the common good. Elaborating this blend produces the inference that the law in question is unjust, and that acts of civil disobedience are meant to bring public attention to the unjustness of the act. Further, just as acts of civil disobedience are aimed at sending a message that the law is unjust and should be repealed, Moore suggests that his proscribed action is aimed at sending the message that the impeachment proceedings (and, indeed, right-wing policies more generally construed) are unjust and should be stopped. Thus Moore's legal act of civil disobedience represents a keying of emergent structure in the more standard concept of civil disobedience. In short, what is a violation of the law in the civil disobedience space corresponds to a violation of a general principle not to vote for either Democrats or Republicans in the progressive politics space.

In this way, the *legal* act of voting has been construed as an act of civil disobedience in the blend. Rather than doing something illegal for the greater good, Moore suggests his readers do something politically distasteful. Further, by capitalizing on the parallels he has set up between disobeying an unjust law and signalling disagreement with unjust Republican policies, Moore is able to appeal to an ethic – that of civil disobedience – that is likely to arouse a sympathetic response in his target audience of disgruntled progressives.

Summary

This section has shown how blending can be used to compress and combine a number of simplified models in order to form integrated event scenarios. Among other things, Moore's blends frame voting as speaking in a larger political argument, voting as an unpleasant but necessary task, and voting as a form of protest. As discussed above, the correspondences between domains are animated in the blend to produce emergent structure. Although analyzable, it is their emergence as blends that make them potentially persuasive. Thus the success or failure of Moore's letter does not simply depend on being able to establish the appropriate mappings – for example, understanding the intended correspondences between personal dialogue and the political process. The mappings are necessary, but not sufficient for persuasion. The rhetorical efficacy of the text depends on the reader's willingness to integrate and elaborate the models in a way that yields the desired

ing. Moore's letter is a call for a particular action from readers which has been successively framed and reframed so as to make it palatable to its intended audience. The persuasive element of the letter is not aimed at changing the reader's goals, but changing her construal of one particular action – that of voting for a Democrat – so that it is consistent with presumably extant goals. These observations are consistent with other research on argumentative discourse that suggests people attempt to exploit conceptual blending to reframe a particular scenario, but not to restructure their opponents' value systems (Coulson 2001).

3. Purple point of contact

This section concerns an elaborate invitation to support a church group which one of the authors actually received via the U.S. postal service. It is a very complicated message that includes a letter, a 'prayer page' to send with donations, a return envelope for the prayer page, and a purple sealed envelope bearing a message from Jesus Christ. The letter urges its recipient to perform a number of concrete actions in order to show her faith, and be blessed by Jesus. In particular, the reader is instructed to:

1. Place the purple sealed envelope under his or her pillow
2. Sleep on this "purple point of contact just like the children of Israel did when God instructed them to do so (Numbers 15: 38, 39)"
3. Mail back the prayer page with a donation to the Ministry
4. Open the purple sealed envelope to receive the "purple point of contact blessing".

This package is a rich piece of persuasion, the success of which depends on the reader's willingness to construct a number of blends outlined below. In particular, we focus on blending involved in the metaphoric construal of making a donation as sowing a seed, and on how the reader is invited to construe her own actions as fulfilling the purple point of contact. Analysis points to an important role for blending in understanding commonalities between performative aspects of language and the social construction of reality. In performative language (as when a justice of the peace pronounces a couple "man and wife"), and ritual (as when parents in a particular Italian village carry their child up a set of stairs to ensure his success in life), actions in one space, or domain, serve to effect changes in another (Sweetser 1998, 2000).

However, performativity only occurs when the scenario fulfils particular

ascent and success are always available, the everyday act of taking the child upstairs to bed is not construed as contributing to the child's success in life. The import of the action in the course of the ritual thus stems from its status as an entrenched blend in which the action and the metaphor have been integrated such that the physical actions are construed as causing metaphorical effects. In the case of, "I now pronounce you man and wife", the utterance is fully integrated with the marriage frame only when it is uttered by an individual with the proper social authority (a judge, a minister, a priest, etc.), preceded by the appropriate sequence of utterances, and, perhaps, followed by a kiss.

Similarly, in the purple point of contact letter, the solicitation succeeds only if the reader believes that her actions of putting the purple envelope under her pillow and mailing in the donation will result in a blessing. In the case of marriage, the integration is licensed (largely) by the social authority of the utterer. In the present case, the integration is licensed by the extent to which the St. Matthew's Church Ministry is construed as acting with the authority of God. Consequently, much of the text of the letter is aimed at establishing the religious legitimacy of the Ministry, framing the act of donation as an act of faith, and constructing a blend in which the act of donation (and fulfilling the other instructions contained in the letter) can be conceived of as causally connected to the receipt of the blessing.

Let's have church here in your home

A number of aspects of the letter seem to be aimed at promoting the religious authority of St. Matthew's Church Ministry, and the construal of reading the letter and following its instructions as religious acts. For example, the fact that the organization ("St. Matthew's Church Ministry") contains the words "church", "ministry", and the name of a New Testament saint, all suggest a legitimate connection to Christianity. The letter is peppered with quotations from the Bible and accompanying citations of chapter and verse. Moreover, on the first page of the letter we find the following invocation:

Our dearly beloved in Christ, turn to page two and let's have church here in your home.

The reader is thus invited to integrate her activity of reading the letter with her conception of attending church. Normally, reading a letter (particularly a solicitation from an unknown organization) is construed as a secular, and, often private, activity. Moreover, attending church involves leaving one's home to go to a place of worship with others in a public space. Aspects of each input domain are selectively

blend is helped along by strategic modes of address (e.g., "our dearly beloved in Christ") that one might expect to hear at a religious ceremony.

In this blend, the minister does not speak to the congregation from the pulpit. Rather, the Ministry communicates with the reader via the letter. Constructing the blend thus involves establishing cross-space mappings between the Minister in a church and the writers of the letter (viz. the St. Matthew's Church Ministry), and between the members of a congregation and the reader of the letter. In turn, completion from background knowledge about church yields inferences about the relationship between the reader and the writers of the letter. In particular, the letter writers in the blend are construed as possessing a Minister's knowledge and wisdom, as well as his moral authority over his Congregation.

Testimony

One of the interesting facets of this communication is the extent to which it functions generically as a blend between an epistle and a chain letter, where the reader is entreated to send some small amount of money to various people on a list, with the expectation that it will lead to exponential returns when subsequent recipients send money to the reader. In the purple point of contact letter, we learn almost from the outset that the blessing God will give us for fulfilling the instructions in the letter has a distinct financial component. The letter starts with the following testimony from a woman named Priscilla:

I was a sinner and drank real heavy and had a lot on my mind. I remember some of the scriptures that you had written to me and . . . I felt God speaking to my heart saying, "My daughter, your sins are forgiven." I felt so good inside, for I knew God had saved my [soul]. Rev., I haven't drank another drop from that day. I wrote you a letter and joined the Gold Book [Seed Harvest Prosperity] Plan, and it seemed like heaven just opened up my life. I didn't have transportation, but now since I have been a member of the . . . Plan God has really been blessing [me]. I have a new Ford and Cadillac. Not only that, but I have never been broke.

Note that the persuasive character of this testimony depends crucially on the congruity of the reader's worldview and that advocated by the St. Matthew's Church Ministry. For example, the writer presumes that the biblical faith is a part, or, at least, a potential part of the reader's construal of reality. In other words, the writer presumes that the reader believes in God, as well as in the divinity of Jesus. Rhetoricians have argued that all arguments ultimately rest on shared facts. he-

faith, and appreciate the value of the proposed blessing, persuasion will simply not occur.

Given these objects of agreement, Priscilla's testimony is aimed at promoting a conception of God as an entity willing to grant monetary favours. Moreover, readers are invited to map sister Priscilla's speedy transformation from a poor sinner to a prosperous disciple onto our own case – provided, of course, that we are willing to see ourselves as downtrodden sinners. In Perelmanian terms, this is also an object of agreement, as we will not do what the letter bids unless we see ourselves as sinners who might potentially benefit from the blessing.

The inputs to the blend involve two sets of spaces to represent the scenario described by Priscilla, first, a troubled past, second, joining the plan, and finally, the resolution of her problems; and, another set of spaces to represent the reader's own troubled present, and desired future. The blend inherits its causal structure from the Priscilla domain, and its elements from the reader's domain. Thus the reader imagines herself joining the plan, and construes this act as causally mediating a transformation from her own troubled present to her own desired future. Persuasion, then, depends on both sharing the objects of agreement that enable the reader to believe Priscilla's story, and the reader's willingness to blend her own situation with aspect of Priscilla's.

Sowing the seed of \$5, \$10, or \$20

The letter repeatedly appeals to a metaphoric construal of making a monetary donation as sowing a seed. For example, towards the end of the letter proper, that is, the part of the letter addressed to the reader (rather than the part of the letter addressed directly to the Lord), we read:

We believe you are going to sow a seed so **God** can bless you with a harvest. God said, "Give and it shall be given unto you ..." Luke 6:38. We pray that you will sow \$5.00, \$10.00, \$20.00, or more. Let God lead you. Our prayer is that, by faith, what you sow will start being returned to you before the seventh day of next month, as God sees fit. He knows best how and when to let it begin. Let us pray over this last page and purple sealed word. Let us bow our heads in prayer – shall we? [all emphasis in the original]

Broadly, *sowing a seed* maps onto *sending a donation*, and the *harvest* maps onto the *money* that the sender receives in return. Mappings in the network are set up by a conventional metaphoric connection between agriculture and investment, which maps the metamorphosis of a seed into crops for harvest onto the difference be-

licitly by the statement, "We pray that you will sow \$5.00, \$10.00 ..." in which the object of "sow" is not a type of seed (as in the agriculture input), but a unit of currency (that originates in the material input). Linguistic prompts also help the reader identify the mapping between the harvest and the monetary returns, in "Our prayer is that, by faith, *what you sow* will start being returned to you ... [emphasis ours]" Since the letter reader will presumably sow money, she can expect money to be returned to her.

The structure in the blend differs from conventional conceptions of agriculture in several ways, especially in its recruitment of structure from a third input which we might dub the Spiritual space. For example, on the prayer page, which the reader sends in with her donation, is written, "I am sowing [followed by a list of potential dollar amounts] as my seed unto the Lord, in faith". Thus unlike real seeds, the seed of \$5 is not planted in the earth; and, unlike a conventional investment, it has not been used for its purchasing power.

The example here involves a prototypical case of conceptual integration in which the blended concept involves partial structure from each of its inputs as well as novel structure of its own. In the context of the blend, the \$5 has some of the properties of conventional money (it can be used to buy things) and some of the properties of a seed (it will undergo a transformation). Further, unlike most agricultural endeavours, the relationship between the initial sowing of the seed and the final harvest is not mediated by farming activity. In contrast to default knowledge about managing investments, the transformation from seed to harvest here occurs "by faith". Because it is a seed of faith, the coming harvest depends on receiving a blessing from the Lord. Moreover, receiving the blessing depends in turn on following the instructions to achieve the purple point of contact: mailing in the donation, sleeping on the purple envelope, and opening the purple envelope after sunset on the following day.

The purple envelope please

Inside the envelope is an image of Jesus from religious art, His hand raised in a generic blessing gesture. At the top of the picture is a quote from the New Testament, "... If two of you shall agree ... it shall be done ..." Matthew 18:19. At the bottom of the picture, the caption reads "Jesus, my letter is in the mail on its way to the people of God who will pray over it for me." But perhaps most striking, is that this text is divided by a line drawing of a woman's hand, holding a letter up towards Jesus – as if for Him to bless it.

The image prompts the reader to unmask the hand (i.e. reconstitute the whole)

istry. Importantly, in the picture, although the reader holds the envelope in her hand, the stamp on the envelope has already been cancelled. This suggests it is no longer in the reader's actual possession, but is being processed by the postal system. Thus in one input (derived from the original piece of religious art), Jesus issues a generic blessing with no specific target. In the other input, metonymically evoked by the envelope with the cancelled stamp, the reader sends in her prayer page with donation.

The information represented in the two input spaces constitute two separate events, which need not be construed as integrated. People mail letters every day and rarely consider the spiritual implications of such an act. Similarly, Jesus can be construed as blessing any number of objects and actions in the world, with no preference given to the transactions of the U.S. postal system. However, given the background knowledge set up by excerpts such as "Lord, keep Your eyes upon this very envelope until... it is returned back to this little 47 year old church ministry. Lord, bless this dear one as they open this purple Sealed Word after sunset and after they have mailed their prayer page back to us", the visual image prompts the reader to construe the disparate input spaces as a unified event structure. Jesus blesses the prayer page as it passes through the postal system, and blesses its sender as she opens the sealed purple envelope.

The picture epitomizes the set of actions, reinforcing the spiritual import of her donation. It is, in fact, a rhetorical technique Aristotle termed *energia* or *bringing-before-the-eyes* (Aristotle 1994), in which the reader witnesses in the present all that is supposed to have occurred up to this point. *Energia* is an example of compression in which structure from a number of spaces that each represent events occurring at different points in time, are integrated into a single scene in the blended space. Moore, in his description of the argument between the American people (as expressed in the polls) and Congress (as expressed by their impeachment of Clinton), exploits compression in a similar way to construe a complex scenario with a single frame that evokes emotions and other associations consistent with his rhetorical goals.

Summary

The desired rhetorical effect of this letter depends on the existence of systematic correspondences between the three input spaces displayed in Table 1.

Besides conventional agricultural metaphors for investment (e.g. investments that grow), the letter authors are exploiting conventional agricultural metaphors for spirituality (e.g. spiritual growth). The former play into the readers' greed.

Table 1. 3-input blend

Material	Spiritual	Agriculture
Reading Letter Mail Prayer Page w/ \$5 donation	Attending Church Make Offering	Sow Seed
Sleep on Purple Envelope Receive Money	Commit Act of Faith Receive Blessing	Cultivate Seed Reap Harvest

in this blend are being exploited not only for their inferential possibilities, but also for their sociocultural significance.

Further, while the letter clearly establishes the mappings between sending the money, sowing a seed, and making an offering to God, establishing the blend goes further. Without the blend (or, at least, without some sort of a blend), there is no way that anyone would believe that sending off \$5, \$10, or \$20 could ever result in a new car. Similarly, the reader will not carry around the purple envelope or sleep on it unless she or he believes the action will have the spiritual and/or the monetary results implied in the blend. So, to reiterate, anyone who performs the actions described in the letter will do so because they have adopted the blend where mailing \$5 is sowing a faith seed, sleeping on the envelope is an act of faith, and that the ultimate result of these actions will be a monetary blessing from God. Moreover, the difference between someone who does and someone who does not carry out the instructions has little to do with the mappings (presumably anyone can figure out what one is supposed to do and why), and everything to do with integrating and elaborating the structure in the blend until it becomes a motivating frame.

4. Conclusions

Deliberative rhetoric is the primary means of getting human beings to think and act according to the expectations of others without recourse to violent coercion. We have suggested that, as an interpretive model capable of describing the strategic and tactical ways human beings frame situations, conceptual integration theory provides a means of addressing this fundamental area of human cognition. Moreover, in the analyses above we have attempted to demonstrate the importance of blending for understanding specific, attested instances of human deliberation. In sum, deliberation recruits elaboration as blends animate mappings in a way that makes them compelling.

ional structure in our understandings of the choice of political candidates and the choice of what to eat for lunch. Nor does he make reference to holding one's nose while voting purely because of its analogical potential. These blends were recruited because of the way they frame the topic space of American politics for a disenfranchised third-party citizen. Such a citizen may discard a political letter couched in language designed to appeal to a mainstream voter, but be willing to consider a plea which establishes initial agreement between writer and reader that both consider Democratic candidates to be too conservative.

Conceptual blending is used to integrate concepts with different affective valences, often so that the desired course of action is seen as consistent with the audience's value system. Further, compression is used to simplify complex causal relationships, both so they can be more readily understood, and so that they can be construed with motivational "human scale" frames. This suggests our concepts have abstract, inferential, as well as affective and motivational properties. Moreover, neither is set in stone as speakers frequently employ conceptual blending processes to reconstrue a particular action to alter its inferential, affective, sociocultural, and even spiritual significance.

We have also seen that the binding force of blends-we-act-on depends as much on the ontology supported by our cultural values and practices as on the structural correspondences between the representations in the different domains. For example, we have argued that the possibility of interpreting polling data as the voice of the people depends on our cognitive capacity for conceptual integration. But so, too does the possibility of construing the beliefs of the 270 odd million American citizens as the will of a unified American people depend on the existence of polling practices, voting practices, and standard procedures for interpreting the results. Relatedly, the success of rhetorical efforts to reify a blend like sowing a faith seed will depend in a complex way on the character of their appeal to social roles and previously established cultural practices. While conceptual integration does indeed account for the mental operations necessary to incite action, these examples suggest that the roots of action extend beyond the individual's nervous system as conceptual blends are intimately intertwined with human doings.

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