Formal and Conceptual Blending in Terry Pratchett's Discworld

SYLWIA DŻEREŃ-GŁOWACKA

University of Łódź

sglowacka@uni.lodz.pl

The aim of the paper is to apply the findings of Blending Theory to the analysis of language data which go beyondthe boundaries of conventional linguistic choices. The pages of Terry Pratchett's comic fantasy series Discworld contain not only interesting examples of conceptual blends at all levels of text organisation but also genuine instantiations of lexical blends, which are a rarity in the world of everyday communication.

Keywords: Blending Theory, formal blends, intertextuality, unconventionality, Discworld

1. Introduction

Mental Spaces Theory as put forward by Gilles Fauconnier (1994) has altered the understanding of such notions as reference, truth, and falsity, which came to be interpreted in relation not to objective reality, but to a 'mediating mental representation' of reality. To understand reality, we build a 'reality space' which contains mental representations of everything we perceive. Whenever we state, recall, anticipate something, or imagine a counterfactual, we create another mental space – a short-term and partial construct, which represents a particular scenario of the communicative situation. In everyday functioning we choose just one of the multiple ways in which a given scenario can be construed.

Mental spaces thus contain partial representations of entities and relations and allow the reader or hearer to divide information at the referential level into concepts relevant to different aspects of the same scenario. Different spaces can contain disparate information about the same element, but each individual space contains a representation that is logically coherent (Coulson and Oakley 2000: 177).

In comparison with the stable, general knowledge structures of cognitive domains, a mental space is a relatively small conceptual unit built up for the purposes of local understanding and action (Turner and Fauconnier 1995). The spaces activate only a small amount of the knowledge associated with domains and always refer to a particular situation.

In the field of cognitively-based literary studies, the development of mental space theory has complemented what Peter Stockwell refers to as a model of *discourse worlds*. "Mental space theory offers a unified and consistent means of understanding reference, co-reference, and the comprehension of stories and descriptions whether they are real, historical, imagined, hypothesised or happening remotely" (Stockwell 2002: 96). Whenever we read a literary text, we build a so-called 'fictional space', which allows us to follow the ongoing narrative. In the process of reading, we make constant mappings between various fictional spaces as well as between fictional and reality spaces.

The development of the mental spaces theory has helped overcome one of the main obstacles to the linguistic analysis of literary texts, namely the question of context. For years, structuralists limited their analysis of literature to the text itself. However, with the shift of focus in literary studies towards the reader (*hermeneutics*, *reception theory* and *reader response criticism* – see Rulewicz 1987) and the developments first in the field of semiotics and pragmatics, and then of cognitive linguistics, it became clear that meaning resides mainly in the context of the words used and in the minds of the language users, rather than in the words themselves. Margaret Freeman, in her manifesto of cognitive poetics, defines literary texts as "the products of cognizing minds and their interpretations as the products of other cognizing minds in the context of the physical and socio-cultural worlds in which they have been created and read" (Freeman 2000: 253).

All the three components of text analysis: the writer, the reader, and the text have naturally become the foci of attention in cognitive linguistics. Because CL is concerned with the conceptual workings of the embodied mind, all aspects of human experience and behaviour, whether from the perspective of the writer, from the perspective of the reader, or from the perspective of the text itself, are relevant and are integrated into a cognitive understanding of the literary experience (Freeman 2002: 466).

In overcoming the limitations of structuralist text analyses the notion of *intertextuality* was highlighted. Julia Kristeva (1969) defined intertextuality as a sum of knowledge which allows the reader to understand the meaning of the text, and wrote that "all texts are constructed like a mosaic of quotations, all texts are taking in and transformation of other texts" (1969: 146). Taking this line of reasoning further, Roland Barthes, wrote in 1970 that no reader approaches a text without certain prior knowledge of other texts, which are the 'deja lu', 'mirages of citations' and that a text is experienced only in activity.

No statement could be truer in the case of Terry Pratchett, whose books contain many layers of meaning and multiple cross-references to other literary, philosophical, and linguistic texts, spy and cyber-punk films, computer games, geographical and cultural knowledge -- almost anything that constitutes the intellectual and cultural heritage of a 21st century reader. How many references he will decipher in the reading process depends on his literary awareness and personal experience. It might seem that linguists, for example, are privileged in discovering Terry Pratchett's fascinating language experiments, just as well-read, educated readers are in spotting more cues in

the 'mosaic' of quotations and references than young SF fans, but the unquestionable fact is that the series appeals to linguists, literary scholars, and elder and younger readers for pleasure alike. The multiple layers of references mean that reading any *Discworld* book, the reader will make conceptual mappings between various mental spaces. The mappings between elements in different spaces are at the heart of the theory which is an outcome of mental space studies – the theory of Conceptual Integration (Blending Theory).

A conceptual blend is a scenario of a particular communicative situation in which at least two different conceptualisations of an event are merged. It is an integrated structure for which two (or more) mental spaces work as inputs. The mapping between counterparts in the two spaces is formally schematised in the third space – the generic space, which contains an inventory of the shared material. A blend, the fourth space, is, as Turner and Fauconnier put it, both less and more than the sum of its inputs. It is less because it incorporates only those aspects of the two spaces which constitute the generic space, and it is more because the structure, resulting from the integration is not available in any of the inputs. The mapping between the input spaces is formally expressed by cross-space correspondences and all the four spaces are connected via projective links.

Once the blend is established, we can manipulate its various elements as an integrated unit. 'We operate over all four spaces simultaneously, but the blend gives us structure, integration and efficiency not available in the other spaces' (Fauconnier and Turner 1996: 113). The new, emergent structure of the blend is the strongest point of Blending Theory (BT) and, since all metaphorical mappings involve conceptual integration, it predisposes the BT to complement Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), which will also be discussed in this paper.

It is important not to assume an automatic correspondence between conceptual blends and structural blends – linguistic expressions that involve a formal merger of counterparts from two different input spaces. The process of formal blending at the level of expression has the same general characteristics as conceptual blending at the level of thought, but blends in thought are seldom mirrored by formal blends in language. As Turner and Fauconnier (1995) point out, language has other means for prompting us to perform conceptual integration.

In their 1995 *Conceptual Integration and Formal Expression*, Turner and Fauconnier argue convincingly that the belief that a formal expression names or otherwise indicates the appropriate counterparts of a conceptual construction is just a folk theory, and they claim quite the opposite – the structure of compound words is not compositional. Contrary to what seems to make sense at the practical level of language use, namely the belief that the meanings of the words are in the words themselves and their combinations, cognitive linguists have argued that the meaning of a word is context-dependent and the same word will activate its different 'active zones' in various combinations.

If a formal blend does occur, it seems to be a lucky after-effect of the conceptual merger. Changing reality may create a gap in the linguistic market – for instance, the faster pace of life has deprived many people of sufficient time for two meals: breakfast and lunch, and resulted in their taking just one of them at the most convenient moment. "Brunch" has evolved as the natural item missing from vocabulary. Undoubtedly, successful formal integration into a single word strengthens the status of a conceptual blend and the rarity of such cases will make them highly conspicuous. What makes them rare, is first of all the fact that their formation is an evolutionary, i.e. time-consuming process.

But, in addition to the evolution of socio-cultural models, resulting in everyday terms like "brunch", skillful and observant poets and writers may find revolutionary 'short-cuts' and provide instances of felicitous formal blends offering researchers an opportunity to study the unique interconnection of form and concept in novel and therefore salient examples. Terry Pratchett's narratives, which mirror our reality, will often merge or modify already existing 'stored schema-meaning pairs' (Barlow 2000) from our reality space to fit new situations in the fictional space of the Discworld. All the blends quoted below are conceptual blends and many of them also involve formal integration.

Another reason for the rarity of felicitous linguistic blends at the word level is also the stable nature of words as linguistic elements. Michel Barlow (2000) argues, however, that not only words or noun-noun compounds have the status of syntactic/semantic units. His analysis of compositionality and blending calls for an approach which will allow for "form-meaning pairings of differing degrees of complexity and different degrees of specificity" (2000: 318) It is the stance I also adopt here, and the examples of blends from the *Discworld* series are grouped according to the various levels of linguistic analysis that they involve: macro blends at the level of a story, structural blends at the level of a phrase and word, and phonological mimes at the lowest level. At times, blending overlaps with the theory of conceptual metaphor, which will also be illustrated by examples.

2. Macro Blends in the Discworld Series

Discworld is a flat disc "carried through the starry infinity on the backs of four giant elephants, who are themselves perched on the shell of a giant turtle" (Pratchett 1986: 7), although some dissenters believe that it is a perfect sphere (Pratchett 1992: 85). It is inhabited by people as well as dwarfs, trolls, werewolves, fairies, wizards, witches and Luggage made of sapient pearwood, which travels on hundreds of little legs and bites its master's enemies. Almost each book of the series could be viewed as a conceptual blend in itself, in which Terry Pratchett brings together reality and fictional spaces, or combines various fictional spaces. In *Masquerade*, for example, three witches try to solve the mystery of the Phantom of the Opera. In *Soul Music*, rock'n'roll music invades the hearts and minds of the wizards at the Unseen University. *The Last Continent* is "a bit... australian" (Pratchett's original punctuation), just as *Interesting Times* is a book about the dawn of a revolutionary

movement in a country resembling China. *Thief of Time* is a clearly "post-Matrix" book, where some characters move so fast through the crowd that others do not see them.

In *Small Gods*, Terry Pratchett brings together the ancient world of Greek philosophers and the medieval world of the Holy Inquisition. The two different religious and philosophical systems, thousands of years apart, suddenly collide in a shared world. The clash highlights the counterpart elements of the two époques. There is a juxtaposition of religions (monotheism vs. polytheism), attitudes towards other cultures (tolerance vs. animosity), life aims (search for truth vs. uncompromising defence of "the only truth") etc. The story is about what might happen if the Inquisitors had the chance to fight the free thinkers of the Ancient World in person.

In another book, *The Truth*, Pratchett compresses different stages of the development of the press. The story's point of departure is the invention of print, which gives rise to an early form of journalism, with its elevated subjects, unbelievably limited number of copies, and lack of photographs. Then, in the fictional space of Discworld, within days journalism skips five hundred years, and first reporters, photographers, marketing strategists, trivial and sensational topics become the workaday reality. This blend itself becomes an input to another one. In the book, the press is operated by dwarfs, photos are taken by a vampire and so on. We see the author combining the temporally modified space of journalism with a fictional space of nonexistent characters. Naturally, at this level, the conceptual blends are too complex to be associated with any particular linguistic expression.

These "macro blends" are supplemented by episodic occurrences of other conceptual integrations. For example, there is a mad inventor in *Thief of Time*, whose job is to equip time monks for dangerous missions. As two of the monks approach Qu's shed, there is an explosion within and a wooden dummy in a monk's robe tumbles very quickly out of the window. When the door bursts open and Qu looks out, we witness the following scene:

(1) 'Did you see that? Did you see that?' Qu said. 'And that was just one spoonful!' He nodded at them. 'Oh, hello, Lu-Tze. I was expecting you. I've got some things ready.' (*Thief of Time:* 170)

At this point it becomes obvious that the name of the inventor is not a coincidence and that he comes from the fictional space of James Bond movies. Pratchett paraphrases the well-known lines of the character named Q: *"Oh, hello, Bond. I was expecting you. I've got some things ready"* and substitutes Lu-Tze for Bond, merging the two fictional spaces.

In *Small Gods,* an Ephebian philosopher Didactylos reflects:

(2) 'Life in this world,' he said, 'is, as it were, a sojourn in a cave. What can we know of reality? For all we see of the true nature of existence is, shall we say, no more than bewildering and amusing shadows cast upon the inner wall of the cave by the unseen blinding light of absolute truth, from which

we may or may not deduce some glimmer of veracity, and we as troglodyte seekers of wisdom can only lift our voices to the unseen and say, humbly, "Go on, do Deformed Rabbit… it's my favourite."' (*Small Gods:* 226)

The quote opens with a reference to 'Plato's cave', one of the best-known philosophical conceptions of cognition. The speech is debased, however, when the formal register of such expressions as *sojourn, existence, blinding light of absolute truth, glimmer of veracity* is paired with the colloquial *Go on, do Deformed Rabbit… it's my favourite*. From a solemn analogy we switch to a reference to a low-culture form of entertainment. Both situations brought together here make use of shadows cast upon the wall, which acts as a trigger of the blend. Obviously, blends at this level are again conceptual rather than linguistic, but this time one can already pinpoint the linguistic mechanisms guiding us towards conceptual integration. Registers from different domains are mixed, and the juxtaposition of elements from different registers evokes various mental spaces which are combined to form an integrated event.

3. Blends at Phrase Level

Although Barlow (2000) agrees with the claim of Turner and Fauconnier that blending within words is indeed rare, he expects to find (and manages to do so) far more numerous examples of formal and conceptual integration at the level of syntax. Assuming that set collocations and idioms can be regarded as syntactic units, it may be worthwhile to look at the occurrence of novel elements in fixed phrases. Due to the absence of a marked division between strong and weak collocations, the creative/fixed dichotomy is difficult to maintain. Barlow assumes that more frequent shorter collocations would be most likely to be inserted in sentences as a whole chunk (with no blending), while the looser longer collocations would be more likely to undergo compositional blending processes.

3.1 Phonological Mimes

The three examples which follow exploit the phonological characteristics of language (marked in the generic space), in the form of either a homophone or a mime (which has an appeal of a homophone despite some formal differences in both graphological and phonological shape), but each of them also integrates the phonological aspect with elements of other levels of linguistic organisation. Therefore, the examples in this section complement the earlier analyses rather than constitute a group of any distinct formal kind. In the first example, Albert, Death's servant, is talking about a mysterious red continent:

(3) "Terror Incognita" we called it when I was alive, master. (*The Last Continent:* 58)

The conceptual blend, in which the land in question is both unknown and terrifying is accompanied by the formal integration based on the graphological and phonetic mimicry of Latin *terra* by *terror* in the casual phrase. I suggest to represent this in the form of a diagram (Figure 1), where the input space on

the left (Input space 1) is a set collocation consisting of at least two lexical units (X+A) while the input space on the right (Input space 2) contains a component (B) representing a new situation, which the set collocation does not fit entirely. The modification is visible in the blended space (X+B).
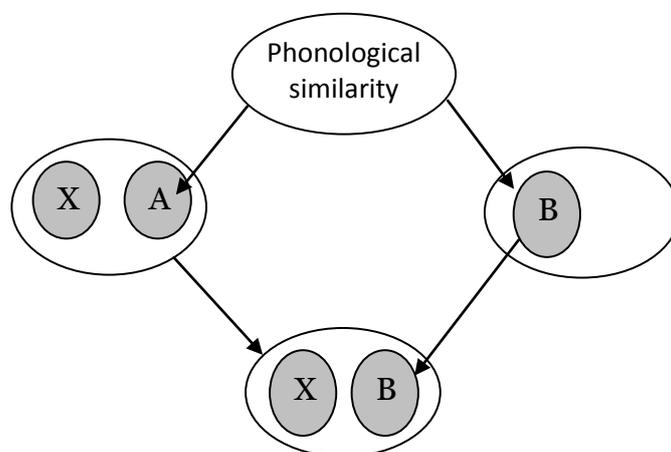

Figure 1. Schematic representation of phraseological mimes

Similarly, in the next example, the last expected component has been substituted by its proper homophone:

(4)   It was a voice you could have used to open a bottle of whine. (*The Last Continent:* 288)

The voice in question is defined as one having a sort of complaining wheedle in it and belongs to an Australian equivalent of Mr. Dibbler, the purveyor of absolutely anything that can be sold hurriedly from an open suitcase in a busy street (Pratchett and Briggs 2001: 130).

The title of the third Discworld novel, *Equal Rites,* is, again, a remake of a fixed phrase and a two-word summary of the main theme of the book in which Eskarina Smith is the first girl to be admitted to Unseen University, the Disc's premier college of magic attended only by wizards, that is men. The analyses conducted within Blending Theory here account for the fact that the outcomes are not just about components B (*terror, whine* and *rites*) but, since they inherit the structural character of Input space 1 and the links are always active, they project component B in terms of A: *whine* becomes a liquid, the *rites* are about *rights* while it is *terra* that is *horrifying*.

3.2 Connotative Shifts

Each of the examples in this section contains a fixed phrase evoking a certain frame, which becomes one of the inputs. The other input is the current situation in which the characters find themselves, at least one aspect of which contrasts with the frame from the first input. The blend inherits the

organising structure of the frame evoked by the phrase and exchanges one of its aspects, which is reflected in the formal expression.

In the first example, Susan, Death's granddaughter, not terrified by the risk of death as such, warns her companion:

(5) 'Don't go near it,' said Susan. 'It's uncertain death, believe me. Do pay attention.' (*Thief of Time:* 292)

"Certain death" with its pejorative colouring is replaced by its opposite, creating an interesting situation in which certain death would be something almost desirable, at least in comparison with *uncertain death*. Interestingly, the blend retains the axiologically negative value of the input phrase, despite the substitution of one of its elements by its opposite. It is the result of a relatively complex matrix of conceptual integration operations, the simplified graphical representation of which is put forward in Figure 2:
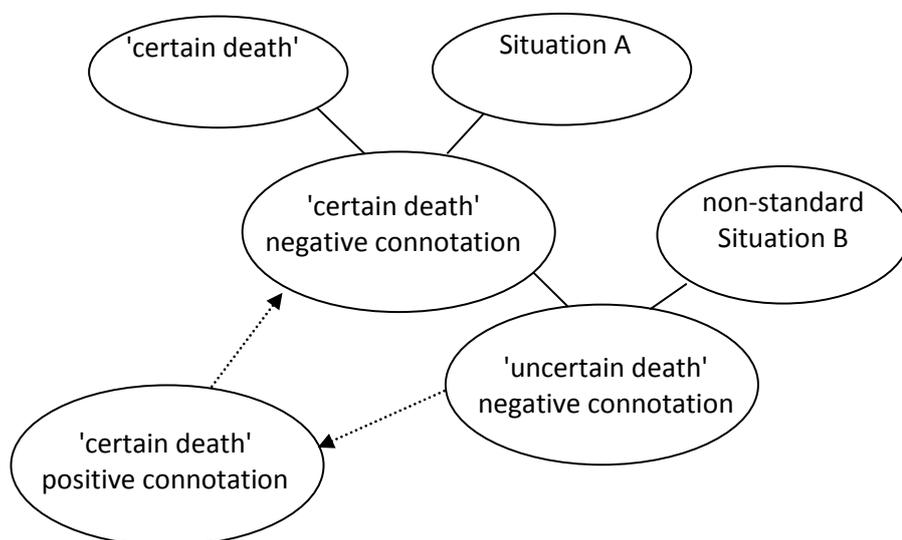

Figure 2. Schematic representation of connotative shifts

In its canonical use, "certain death" refers to a high risk situation and therefore has a clearly negative connotation. However, in the novel, since the characters are not ordinary human beings, death is not the main concern. Susan and Lobsang Ludd, a young apprentice of the History Monks, try to save the world, fighting against the Auditors of Reality and what terrifies them is that no-one knows how the Auditors, the supreme beings, may terminate their opponents, thus it is *uncertain death* that they try to avoid in the same way we try to avoid the certain one. As already mentioned, the negative reading of *uncertain death* affects the axiological connotation of its direct opposite, changing it into a positive one.

Similarly, the phrase "buying somebody's interest" is typically used within the frame of money-oriented acquaintances, where a rich person buys the interest

of an insincere friend. However, the replacement of "interest" by its antonym **un**interest is a formal result of the conceptual blend, in which we are guided to perceive the situation being described as one in which a rich person uses his resources to avoid any form of popularity.

(6)   Money could buy a lot of uninterest. (*Thief of Time:* 182)

"Providing moral support", an input in the next example, evokes a mental space in which one of its participants is involved in an attempt to achieve a formidable goal and is supported in this by a friend. However, in the situation described below, the participants are three criminals trying to mug Mort, and therefore indulging in an **im**moral activity:

(7)   He advanced slowly towards Mort, while the other two hung back to provide immoral support. (*Mort:* 61)

Again, the formal blend establishes the links between the set expression and individuals in the current situation being described.

4. Blends at Word Level

4.1 Neologisms

The *Discworld* series could be said to consist of some sub-series, narrating the adventures of e.g. Rincewind, three witches, or the City Watch. The three witches: Granny Weatherwax, Nanny Ogg and Magrat, being women, are not admitted into the Unseen University and thus, unlike wizards, cannot indulge in the formal study of magic. What they practice is called *headology*.

(8)   'There's no need for any dramatic stuff. Most magic goes on in the head. It's headology.' (*Wyrd Sisters:* 306)

Unpacking the blend, we are aware of the references to common-sense reasoning in one of the inputs and in the other to the space of formal studies in psychology. In the blend the common-sense reasoning gains an academic status. As in "McJobs" quoted by Turner and Fauconnier, its power and efficiency seem to derive from its conceptual status as an integrated blend with homogenous internal structure and its corresponding formal integration into a single word. Neologisms are characteristic for science-fiction and fantasy texts, and in my analyses, they make a fine group of terms embodying lexical as well as conceptual blends.

When some wizards at the Unseen University took up the habit of spending hours in front of the computer and even fell asleep at the keyboard,

(9)   their seniors called it technomancy. (*The Last Continent:* 29)

Here, the formal blend again reflects the conceptual integration of the prefix *techno–,*   usually attached to words concerning some developments in the

field of technology (as in "technocratic", "technofreaks" etc.) and the suffix

–*ancy* (as in "necromancy") which evokes the space of magic and wizardry. *Technomancy* is a blend in which technology functions as a form of magic: obscure, mysterious and attainable only by the gifted few.

The next two examples mirror in form the conceptual analogy between the earth we live on and the disk on which the action of *Discworld* is situated. A hermit's scant clothing showed his

(10) disdain of **discly** things (*Soul Music:* 23)

while

(11) **disc**quakes (*The Light Fantastic:* 86)

are among Discworld's natural disasters. In the first of the examples, the merger of the fictional-space element *disc* and an adjective/adverb-forming suffix "–ly", which, in the collocation with *disdain* brings "earth" into play, integrates our reality space and the fictional space through the analogy of form. *Discquakes* works in a similar fashion, modelling the blended compound on "earthquakes" from the reality space.

The next example seems self-explanatory:

(12) 'What exactly is the Apocralypse?' [...] 'It's just that no two seers have ever agreed about it. There have been all kinds of vague predictions. Quite mad, some of them. So it was called the Apocralypse.' He looked embarrassed. 'It's a sort of apocryphal Apocalypse. A kind of pun, you see.' (*Sourcery:* 80)

The formal blend *apocralypse* echoes the conceptual merger of the frame of the expected end of the world as foretold by the prophets, with another space, in which the prophecies are questioned.

The integration of familiar constitutional elements to make up a new word is also reflected in the names of some characters. The name of the monk-inventor Qu sounds exactly the same as Q (the name of the inventor in James Bond films), but it also employs one of the ways of creating "monkish" names in *Discworld*. Lu-Tze, the name of one of the Time monks, old, humble, inconspicuous and very intelligent, triggers the evocation of a real-world character – the Chinese wise man and philosopher Lao-Tze. The name of the computer Hex combines references to the famous computer from the film *Space Odyssey* – Hal – and the hexametric system. Leonard da Quirm, with his famous portrait of Mona Ogg, leaves no doubts that the character is based on Leonardo da Vinci. Quirm is one of the cities on Discworld (thus the preposition "da" retains its function), while Ogg is a popular family name (also the name of one of the witches).

4.2 Neosemes

The context-dependent two-word compounds quoted by Turner and Fauconnier (1995), illustrate the role of convention in the use of linguistic expressions. The traditional reading of a compound blurs the individual character of its compositional elements. However, re-contextualisation alters the understanding of an expression. After all, the role of the juxtaposition of elements from two different spaces in a compound linguistic form is just to evoke the two different frames. The rest – the ways in which we should integrate elements from the two spaces into a relevant scenario – is deduced from the context. If the context changes, the character of the conceptual integration changes too. Neosemy is a natural phenomenon operating on all words in the language, but in SF and fantasy literature, where new worlds are created, the shift in meaning can be particularly noticeable. The new readings are, of course, as logical the outcomes of the linguistic merger as the conventional ones.

In the first example, Qu, the already mentioned inventor, asks Lu-Tze:

(13) 'Are you sure you wouldn't prefer some time bombs?' said Qu hopefully. 'Drop one on the floor and time will slow … (*Thief of Time:* 173)

The blend *time bomb* has its established reading of a bomb which is activated by a mechanism causing an explosion at a particular time. There is also a metaphorical meaning of the expression, as in *This proposal is a political time bomb.* None of them, however, is activated in this context. The reader is guided to interpret *time* not as an instrumental component, as in e.g. *nuclear, hydrogen* or *car bomb,* but as analogical to the first element in such compound expressions as *sun glasses* or *rain coat*, specifying what we use the object against.

Schematically, as shown in a diagram (Figure 3), there is a symbolic linguistic unit with its conventional meaning. The meaning falls within a certain generic type, e.g. as already mentioned, *time bomb* conventionally evokes the generic frame in which *time* functions as an instrument, the actual working mechanism of a bomb. In Pratchett's writing, the same expression, *time bomb*, acquires different meaning because the writer chooses another generic type to which the unit may belong: in our example it is the generic frame in which *time* functions as an adversary against whom the second component, bomb, is used. The novel use is justified by the existence of compounds like *rain coat* or *sun glasses,* in which the second component is supposed to protect us from the danger identified by the first. In fact, Pratchett goes one step further since we do not actually expect the coat or glasses to incapacitate the adversary.
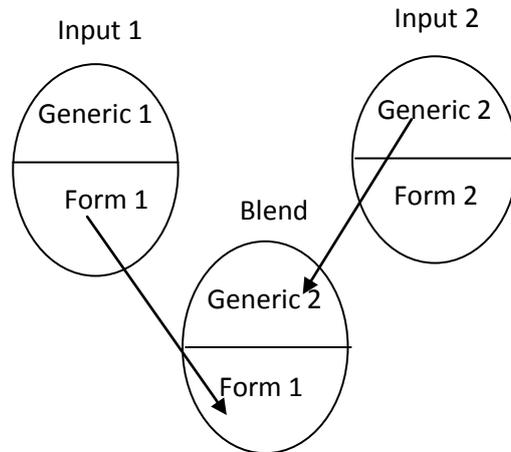
Figure 3. Schematic representation of the creation of neosemes

In the next example, *autobiography,* in which the component *auto* is traditionally interpreted "by oneself" (as in "autograph" or "autonomous"*)*, gains another meaning of "without man's help" (cf. "automatic", "automobile") in the context of the books at Death's house.

(14) 'The autobiography. Everyone has one. It writes down your life as you go along.' (*Hogfather:* 273)

The last of the examples illustrating the creative use of neosemy alludes to Rincewind's ignorance and lack of proper education:

(15) Rincewind had always been happy to think of himself as a racist. The One Hundred Meters, the Mile, the Marathon – he had run them all. (*The Last Continent:* 53)

Rincewind misinterprets the word *racist,* because he unwraps the blend incorrectly. The conventional meaning of the head noun "race" is not derived here from the domain of sports events, but from the domain of the taxonomy of human races. Consequently, the compound *racist* has been coined as referring to someone prejudiced against people of different races, and not, as Rincewind thinks, to someone taking part in races.

5. Blending and Metaphor

Originally, Blending Theory has addressed itself to the favourite object of cognitive research – metaphor, and is often compared and contrasted with the main framework in the field – Conceptual Metaphor Theory originated by Lakoff and Johnson's 1980 work:

"In the research on this topic [blending] that Mark Turner and I started in 1993, the initial motivation was internal to metaphor theory – what we called a refinement of the theory from the two-domain (source/target) model to a four space model in order to accommodate richer inferential schemes. But quickly, other examples showed that metaphor was only one of many cognitive phenomena involving blending" (Fauconnier 1999: 104).

The two theories are similar in many respects. Grady, Oakley and Coulson (1999) sum up the approaches in their *Blending and Metaphor* as both treating metaphor as a conceptual, not just linguistic, phenomenon, as well as involving systematic mapping of language, imagery and structural relations between conceptual domains, and proposing constraints on this projection. The main appeal of Blending Theory seems to lie in the fact that it allows for the unification of the analysis of metaphor with the analysis of a variety of other linguistic phenomena.

Blending Theory does not try to build its own systems of metaphorical concepts, because it is strongly grounded in the findings of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, but as a "refinement" of CMT, it tries to account for the cases which do not fall nicely into the system built by mainly conventional and well-established mappings. The advocates of the theory claim that it is also particularly well-equipped to describe complex examples of composite metaphorical concepts, since it explicitly allows for multiple spaces and multiple interactions of the integration process. In the four-space model, the material in the blend is mapped from both the input target space and the input source space. Grady et al. (1999) point out that "this arrangement contrasts with the simple, unidirectional projection posited by CMT, in which mappings are from source to target" (p. 103). Although, in contrast with other types of blends, metaphorical blends do seem to retain the asymmetric topicality and directionality of the mapping, both input spaces contributing to the structure in the blend are easily traceable in such idiosyncratic metaphorical mappings as the one in the example to follow. Rincewind watches Cohen the Barbarian, a legendary hero, save a young virgin from being sacrificed by the Druids.

(16) The druids that hadn't fled the circle, generally the younger and more muscular ones, had congregated around the old man [Cohen] in order to discuss the whole subject of sacrilege as it pertained to stone circles, but judging by the cackling and sounds of gristle he was carrying the debate. (*The Light Fantastic:* 100)

In the context in which it is evident that Cohen the Barbarian has no intention whatsoever to discuss the problem verbally, but immediately springs into physical fight, there is a reversal of the conventional mapping ARGUMENT IS WAR, which changes direction to become WAR (FIGHTING) IS ARGUMENT. Both input spaces share the image schema of an activity in which two opposing sides are involved. Both have a goal, a specific means of achieving it, and a characteristic activity space. The metaphorical outcome creates a blended space in which Cohen and his opponents from the space of fight take on the roles of a leader of a debate and his opponents respectively. But Cohen carries

the debate on the fighting ground, and although the goal of his action is mapped from the space of the debate, he achieves it in direct physical combat. The incongruity of the nature of the activity and the activity space as well as the incongruity of the means used to achieve the goal triggers the humour in the fragment. The diagram of this conceptual integration network (Figure 4) is presented below.
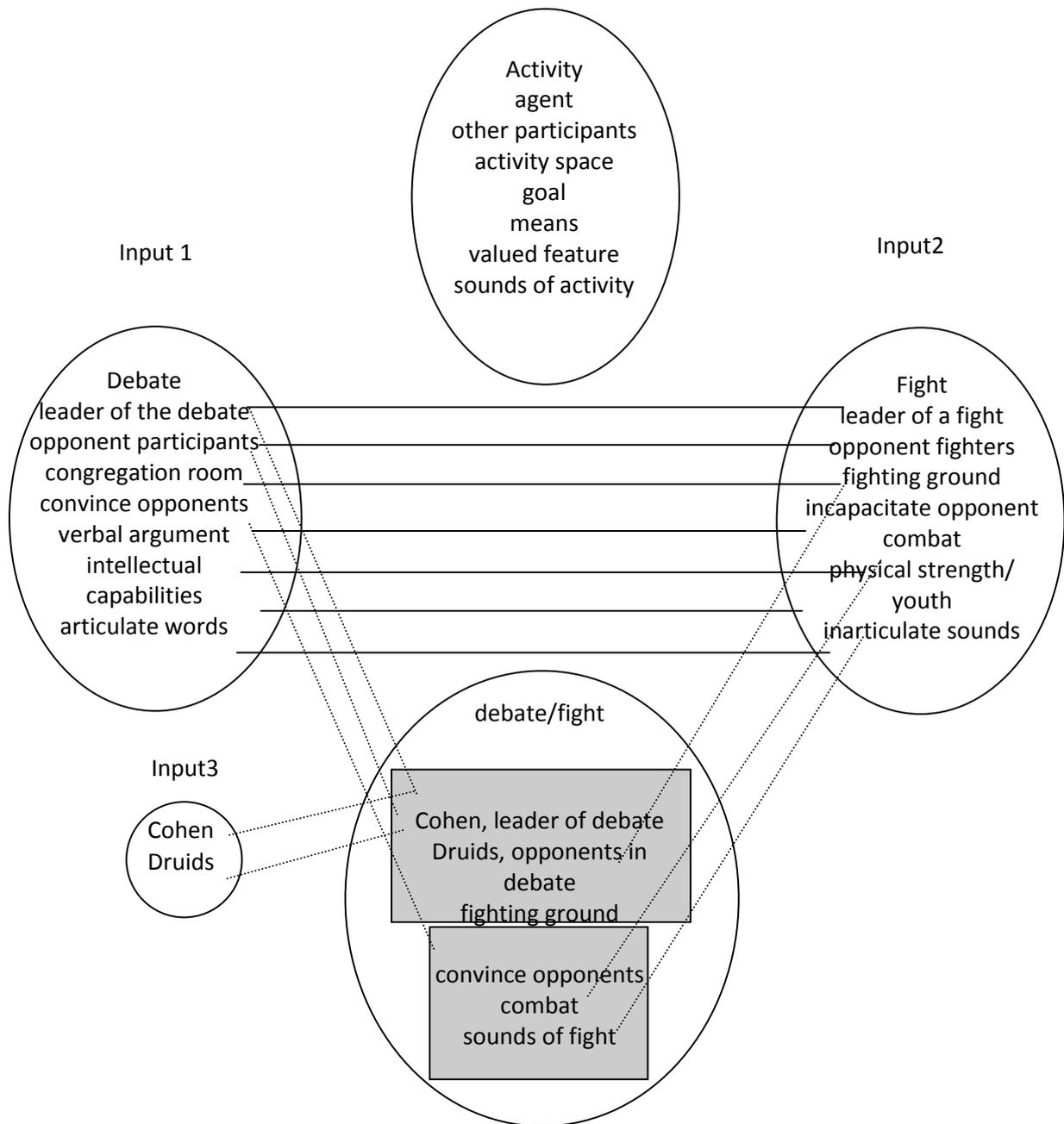
Figure 4. Conceptual integration network: Fight is argument

6. Conclusion

The aim of the paper was to present the analysis of unconventional units of different degrees of linguistic complexity. The framework adopted, Blending Theory, was able to account for the phenomenon of intertextuality, the remakes of set collocations, the creations of new words and the formation of new linguistic symbols by attaching new meanings to the already existing items. Not limited by the conventional directionality of metaphorical concepts or the number of domains exploited, the framework just as easily explains the workings of metaphorical mapping and pinpoints the source of humour in it. The analyses highlight the basic cognitive linguists' assumptions about the way that language reflects a 'mediating mental representation' of reality and that different levels of linguistic complexity form a continuum of symbolic units, where the conceptual and formal sides are inextricably linked.

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