THE SECRET LIFE OF CARTOONS: COGNITIVE-LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL CARTOONS
Karikatürlerin Gizli Hayatı: Siyasi Karikatürlerin Bilişsel-Dilsel Analizi

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Abstract: Applying conceptual integration theory, the paper analyses the construction of the meaning of the selected political cartoons with the reference to the Balkans. This paper examines the creation of the humorous meaning of these cartoons in conceptual blending. The humorous meaning is created in the blend space due to the unusual combination of related structures, which results in incongruity. The paper also analyses the role of idiomatic expressions in the creation of humor in this type of visual discourse, as well as the way in which artistic adaptation of idioms contributes to highlighting certain aspects of reality, and thus achieving rhetorical goals in political discourse.

Key Words: Conceptual integration theory, the Balkans, English magazines, criticism of reality

Öz: Makale, kavramsal entegrasyon teorisini uygulayarak, seçilen siyasi karikatürlerin anlam inşasını Balkanlar referansıyla analiz etmektedir. Bu makale, söz konusu karikatürlerin mizahi anlamlarının kavramsal yaratılmasını incelemektedir. Mizahi anlam, uyumsuzlukla sonuçlanan yapıların olağandışı kombinasyonu nedeniyle karışım uzayında yaratılır. Makale ayrıca, bu tür görsel söylemde mizahın yaratılmasında deyimsel ifadelerin rolünü ve ayrıca deyimlerin sanatsal uyarlamasının gerçekliğin belirli yönlerinin vurgulanmasına ve böylece siyasi söylemde retorik hedeflere ulaşılmasına nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu analiz etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kavramsal bütünleşme kuramı, Balkanlar, İngiliz dergileri, gerçeklik eleştirisi

1. Introduction

Political cartoons have always been used to express different political opinions and disagreements. The internal language of its symbols serves to critique current social phenomena and events, but it also testifies to the sense of humor of the environment that creates it. The distortion of reality is immanent to any caricature. In political caricature, it can range from a mildly moderate caricature in satire to a pre-caricatured portrayal in the grotesque. Due to their multiplicity of meanings and forms, the political cartoons have emerged as a significant medium. Political and other messages are transmitted by cultural symbols that the cartoonist interprets. Using allegories, idioms, metaphors and other cultural codes that are familiar to the reader, the cartoon portrays the meaning of reality. The multiplicity of interpretations appeals to diverse viewers because they, according to their own cultural mores, perceive the cartoon in different ways.[1]

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[1] Cf. Delibegović Džanić, Nihada. "Who was born with a silver foot in his mouth? Modified idiomatic expressions in political cartoons." *Jezikoslovlje* 14, no. 2-3 (2013): 323-336.; Delibegović Džanić, Nihada, and Sanja Berberović. "On politicians in big women's sunglasses driving buses with their feet in mouths: Late-night political humour and conceptual integration theory." *Jezikoslovlje* 11, no. 2 (2010): 197-214.; Delibegović Džanić, Nihada, and Sanja Berberović. "Hot cakes: The use of idioms in political cartoons." *Phraseology and Culture, Bielsko-Biala, Budapest, Kansas, Maribor* (2014): 339-353.; Delibegović Džanić, Nihada, Adisa Imamović *Cognitive-Linguistic Analysis of the Ottoman Empire Cartoons from English Magazines*. u Osmanlı Dönemi Balkan Şehirleri 1, Gölen Z. and Temizer A. (ed.), Gece Kitapligi, (2016): 61-78.

The primary aim of political cartoons is to use imaginative, unforgettable, and sometimes humorous pictorial and verbal representation of various aspects of political, cultural and social reality to convey a political or social commentary. Political cartoons, often focused on the interaction of visual and verbal elements, present interpretative puzzles for viewers who have to trigger different facets of encyclopedic information, such as cultural, political, historical knowledge, in order to solve them.

This paper examines the creation of the humorous meaning of these cartoons in conceptual blending. The humorous meaning is created in the blend space due to the unusual combination of related structures, which results in incongruity. The paper also analyses the role of idiomatic expressions in the creation of humor in this type of visual discourse, as well as how artistic adaptation of idioms contributes to highlighting certain aspects of reality, and thus achieving rhetorical goals in political discourse.

2. Conceptual Blending

Conceptual integration theory or blending theory, proposed by Fauconnier and Turner, has found its application in a wide range of phenomena. The theory highlights the fact that blending is present in even the simplest forms of human thought. The main postulates of this theory are elaborated in Fauconnier and Turner,[2] Turner and Fauconnier,[3] Coulson and Oakley,[4] and Grady et al..[5] All these papers elaborate on the inseparability of conceptual integration and human existence.

Turner,[6] on the other hand, says that he does not think that everything in human thought is blending, nor that blending is a huge step forward. Blending depends on the mental and physical activities that precede it and, compared to them, it is almost powerless. It is quite clear that life existed even before we became aware of the existence of advanced blending and that nothing would jeopardize its existence even if we did not discover advanced blending, but still, when it originated, or rather - when we became aware of its existence, it changed our view of everything that preceded it. Turner[7] further argues that advanced blending is inseparable from the way we think and it is like the human brain to unconsciously create blends, most of which never come to life, possibly because they are not true blends or burst like soap bubbles before they come out of the subconsciousness. As it is not inherent in the human mind to peek into itself, we must embark on a journey through a territory known to our subconsciousness, but almost completely unknown to our consciousness, where we will encounter known and unknown things, become aware that human beings are capable of much more than cognition from perceptions and connecting ideas. Human beings create blends from what they already know and thus create new creations.

Blends as such are small and compact enough that we can keep them within the boundaries of our mind, where we can later look for them to understand phenomena we could not otherwise understand. The main idea behind conceptual integration as a basic cognitive

[2] Fauconnier, Gilles, and Mark Turner. "Compression and global insight." (2001): 283-304.; Fauconnier, Gilles, and Mark Turner. *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities*. Basic books, 2002.; Fauconnier, Gilles, and Mark Turner. "Mental spaces: conceptual integration networks." *Cognitive linguistics: basic readings* (2006): 303-371.

[3] Turner, Mark, and Gilles Fauconnier. "Conceptual integration and formal expression." *Metaphor and Symbol* 10, no. 3 (1995): 183-204.; Turner, Mark, and Gilles Fauconnier. "A mechanism of creativity." *Alternation* 6, no. 2 (1999): 273-292.; Turner, Mark, and Gilles Fauconnier. "Metaphor, metonymy, and binding." In *Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads*, pp. 133-146. De Gruyter Mouton, 2012.

[4] Coulson, Seana, and Todd Oakley. "Blending basics (linguistic aspects of conceptual blending theory and conceptual integration)." *Cognitive Linguistics* 11, no. 3-4 (2000): 175-196.

[5] Grady, Joseph, Todd Oakley, and Seana Coulson. "Blending and metaphor." *Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science Series 4* (1999): 101-124.

[6] Turner, Mark. *The origin of ideas: Blending, creativity, and the human spark*. Oxford University Press, 2014. p.10

[7] Ibid.

Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi / Journal of Ottoman Legacy Studies
Cilt 8, Sayı 22, Kasım 2021 / Volume 8, Issue 22, November 2021

426

operation is that it operates through an integration network consisting of metal spaces and the relations between them. "Building an integration network involves setting up mental spaces, matching across spaces, projecting selectively to a blend, locating shared structures, projecting backward to inputs, recruiting new structure to the inputs or the blend, and running various operations in the blend itself".[8] All these processes represent the constitutive principles on which conceptual integration is based. Conceptual integration is a dynamic process that occurs as we think and speak, so that these processes can happen at any time, but also at the same time. Accordingly, the diagrams illustrating integration networks are in fact representations of only one of the phases of this dynamic and complex mental operation, and by no means of the whole process. Accordingly, diagrams illustrating integration networks are in fact representations of only one of the phases of this dynamic and complex mental operation, and by no means of the whole process.

As the diagram below shows, a conceptual integration network is composed of at least two input spaces, a generic space, and a blended space, although a single network can be composed of several inputs, as well as blended spaces. The generic space captures the shared elements of both inputs and these elements from the generic space are in turn mapped onto the counterpart elements in the input spaces. The structure from the input spaces is projected into the blend, a new mental space. "Blends contain generic structure captured in the generic space but also contain more specific structure, and they can contain a structure that is impossible for the inputs, […]".[9]
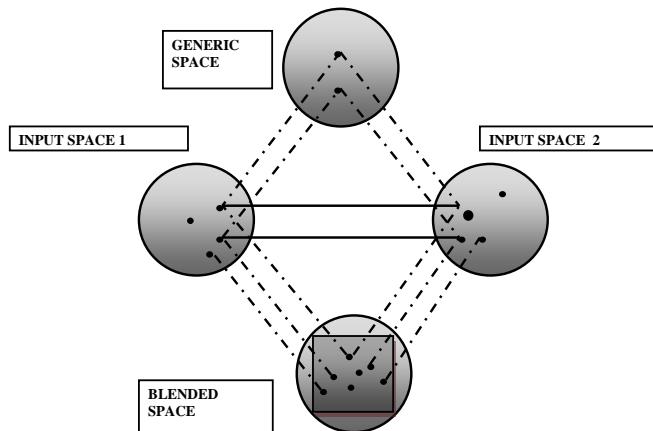

Figure 1. The basic diagram presenting a conceptual integration network[10]

However, not all elements from the inputs are projected into the blend, which means that projections from the input spaces to the blend are partial. The emergent structure in the blended space is not copied from either input. Rather, the new structure within the blend is generated in three ways, namely through the processes of composition, completion, and elaboration, all of which operate unconsciously.

Behind the possibilities for conceptual blending, there is an entire system of interacting principles. To explain one of the products of this system, it is necessary to grasp the entire

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[8] Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities, Basic Books, New York 2002, p. 46.
[9] Ibid. p. 47.
[10] Ibid. p. 46.

system. This system stands on conceptual compression, effects a set of relations strongly influenced by shared social experience and fundamental human neurobiology.[11] These relations are also referred to as 'vital relations'. Vital relations include: Change, Identity, Time, Space, Cause-Effect, Part-Whole, Representation, Role, Analogy, Disanalogy, Property, Similarity, Category, Intentionality and Uniqueness. In addition to vital relations, Fauconnier and Turner[12] propose a set of governing principles that further clarify the relations within the conceptual integration network. These principles are: Borrowing for compression, Single-relation compression by scaling, Single-relation compression by syncopation, Compression of one vital relation into another, Scalability, Creation by compression, Highlights compression, the Topology Principle, the Pattern Completion Principle, The Integration Principle, the Maximization of Vital Relations Principle, the Intensification of Vital Relations Principle, the Web Principle, the Unpacking Principle and the Relevance Principle. They claim that under these principles, blends function most efficiently, but also point out that satisfying one of these principles does not automatically involve satisfying the others. Schmid[13] concludes that "both governing principles and vital relations do not always converge in their effects but may conflict in given cases, with one or several of them getting the upper hand over others."

3. The Role of Culture in Political Cartoons

Before we embark on the discussion of the specific role that culture plays in political cartoons we have to define the term culture. According to Hudson[14] culture is something that every single individual has, as it involves certain features and qualities that members of one community have in common and that distinguish them from other communities. Goodenough[15] claims that '…a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe to operate in a manner acceptable to its members…. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end-product of learning: knowledge, in a most general… sense of the term'.

However, it is an extremely difficult task to determine the cultural knowledge of members of a certain community, since it is possible to find relevant facts about individual members, but it difficult to claim that they apply to the community in general. Therefore, anthropologists distinguish lay people's knowledge of common-sense knowledge from specialist knowledge and study their relations.

Hudson points out that we also must draw a distinction between cultural and non-cultural knowledge and says that 'one of the most interesting things about cultural knowledge is the extent to which people can interpret each other's behavior and arrive at more or less the same concepts or propositions'.[16] He also points out that it does not necessarily mean that different people must have different non-cultural knowledge, because 'different people can arrive at similar conclusions based on similar experiences of the universe or similar genetic predispositions'.[17] He exemplifies his claim with the fact that all human beings share the concept of 'vertical dimension', as we all live in a world controlled by gravity. Therefore, Hudson[18] argues that we actually have to distinguish three kinds of knowledge: '(1) cultural

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[11] Ibid. p.xiii

[12] Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities, Basic Books, New York 2002

[13] Schmid, Hans-Jörg. "Conceptual blending, relevance and novel N+ N-compounds." In *Windows to the Mind*, pp. 219-246. De Gruyter Mouton, 2011. p.228.

[14] Hudson, Richard Anthony. *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge university press, 1996.

[15] Goodenough, Ward. "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics, Report of the Seventh Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Study." *Monograph Series on Language and Linguistics* 9 (1957), qouted in Hudson, Richard Anthony. *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge university press, 1996. p.71.

[16] Hudson, Richard Anthony. *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge university press, 1996. p.73.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid. p. 74.

knowledge, which is learned from other people; (2) shared-cultural knowledge, which is shared by people within the same community or the world over but is not learned from each other; (3) non-shared non-cultural knowledge, which is unique to the individual'.

It is almost unnecessary to point out that culture plays an important role in understanding humor. As Davies[19] puts it '…humor is deeply embedded in cultural context…, a partially submerged structure of sociocultural knowledge in the form of schemas, associations, assumptions, and presuppositions linked to discourse, the tip of which is a carefully crafted utterance'. According to Gulas and Wienberger[20] 'humor is very closely tied into the culture, experiences, and points of reference that are shared between the humor originator and the humor receiver'. We think that humor is not only tied into the culture, but it is completely dependent on the shared cultural knowledge. Since it is assumed that humor fails if there is no shared knowledge.

Humor is a universal phenomenon, but people from different cultures may find different things funny, and as Gulas and Wienberger[21] put it, 'whether or not something is humorous depends on numerous factors, not the least of which is the nature of the audience'. And they further point out that 'the perception of humor may also vary by gender, educational level, ethnic or age group, and by many psychological factors'. It is also important to mention humor research has shown that those people that have different cultural backgrounds will respond to humor differently even if they live in the same country, Gulas and Wienberger point out that for example Israeli Jews of Eastern and Western descent have a completely different response to humor.

It is also important to point out that there are certain people or groups of people who are not able to understand humor because of 'different points of reference, different cognitive abilities, or other differences'.[22] Since their research primarily deals with the use of humor in advertising they claim the fact that certain people are not able to understand humor is of great importance, because 'if an ad intended as humorous is not perceived as humorous, its effectiveness at influencing attitudes and purchases can be seriously harmed'.[23]

Gulas and Wienberger[24] conclude that in addition to cultural differences, gender, and education, the perception of humor is also influenced by 'level personality variables such as the need for cognition, level of self-monitoring, and need for levity…. These factors may interact with each other in complex ways. Each of these audience factors also interacts with source factors'.

Bell[25] argues that 'the use and understanding of humor in intercultural interaction might be expected to be one aspect of sociolinguistic competence that could be especially prone to misinterpretation'. Marlos Varonis and Gass have conducted various experiments in the research of communication between native and non-native speakers of English and have found out that both native and non-native speakers are handicapped in the communication, because 'often they may not share a world view or cultural assumptions, one or both of which may lead to misunderstanding'.[26] Boxer and Cortés-Conde analyzed jokes from different cultures and have

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[19] Davies, Catherine Evans. "How English-learners joke with native speakers: An interactional sociolinguistic perspective on humor as collaborative discourse across cultures." *Journal of pragmatics* 35, no. 9 (2003): 1361-1385, p. 1363-1364.

[20] Gulas, Charles S., and Marc G. Weinberger. "Humor in advertising: A comprehensive analysis." (2006). p. 45.

[21] Ibid. p. 38.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid. p. 194.

[25] Bell, Nancy D. "How native and non-native English speakers adapt to humor in intercultural interaction." (2007): 27-48, p.28.

[26] Varonis, Evangeline Marlos, and Susan M. Gass. "Miscommunication in native/nonnative conversation." *Language in society* 14, no. 3 (1985): 327-343, p. 340.

Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi / Journal of Ottoman Legacy Studies
Cilt 8, Sayı 22, Kasım 2021 / Volume 8, Issue 22, November 2021

429

shown that jokes usually have similar structures, but the differences lie in the exploitation of taboos, specific themes, and also in ways in which bonds are established. As they put it 'members of one community might engage in more teasing that bonds while the other do more teasing that bites'.[27] Palmer also claims that certain background knowledge that both the joke teller and listener have in common is required to understand a joke. He further argues 'to share something like a joke or a metaphor, something whose presence in a culture is by no means predetermined, and which is not shared by others, no doubt creates an even greater degree of intimacy, especially if those who do not share it are the butt of it as well as not understanding what is going on'.[28] Since humor is completely dependent on the shared knowledge between the joke teller and listener, it is not possible to claim that there are jokes that all cultures find funny. We can say that there might be jokes that are widespread and perceived as humorous in different cultures, but that does not necessarily mean that that type of humor can be viewed as universal, it only means that certain concepts or certain background knowledge is widespread.

The selected cartoons we analyzed are related to the period of Turkish national struggle, which implies that certain background knowledge is required for one to understand and appreciate them. However, not all cartoons require the same amount of this background knowledge. Our second case study alludes to certain concepts and phenomena that are known to a wide audience and it is easier to comprehend. On the other hand, the etymology of the modified idiomatic expression as the key element for the appreciation of the cartoon involves information that is not known to a wide audience. Palmer[29] points out that the background knowledge must be available in advance, because 'its explanation afterward will never make up the deficit'. He also adds that 'the information in question must be part of the culture of the individual who responds to the joke'.[30] This argument is completely applicable to cartoons as well. However, we are not concerned about whether we have appreciated them instantly, but we try to explain which mechanisms are triggered to create a cartoon.

It can be concluded that 'what makes for a good laugh differs across societies',[31] but that does not prevent us from analyzing and striving to understand cartoons from cultures other than our own.

4. Conceptual Blending in Political Cartoons

According to Lewis[32] "humor embodies values not by virtue of its content alone but as a consequence of what it does with its materials. To get a joke we must resolve its incongruity by retrieving or discovering an image or idea that can connect its oddly associated ideas or images." Coulson further points out that understanding the joke represents a challenge for the listener and similarly appreciating a cartoon represents a jigsaw that a viewer must solve. As Coulson[33] puts it 'the challenge, it seems, is to activate the appropriate information in response to the imagery and the verbal cues, and to integrate it with abstract narrative structure. Unpacking the blend and structuring the input spaces allows the viewer to solve the puzzle, and the cartoonist to make his point'.

The viewer must have a certain background knowledge to understand the cartoon and to form the conceptual integration network created in the cartoon. Coulson[34] argues that

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[27] Boxer, Diana, and Florencia Cortés-Conde. "From bonding to biting: Conversational joking and identity display." *Journal of pragmatics* 27, no. 3 (1997): 275-294, p. 293.

[28] Palmer, Jerry. *Taking humour seriously*. Routledge, 1993. p.153.

[29] Ibid. 149.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Boxer, Diana, and Florencia Cortés-Conde. "From bonding to biting: Conversational joking and identity display." *Journal of pragmatics* 27, no. 3 (1997): 275-294, p. 293.

[32] Lewis, Paul. *Comic effects: Interdisciplinary approaches to humor in literature*. SUNY Press, 1989, p.34.

[33] Coulson, Seana. "What's so funny: Conceptual blending in humorous examples." *The poetics of cognition: studies of cognitive linguistics and the verbal arts* (2002).

[34] Ibid.

'knowledge of entrenched metaphoric and metonymic mappings is routinely exploited in the comprehension of political cartoons'. The process of the appreciation of the cartoon recruits blending processes of completion and elaboration. As it has been pointed out before completion is a blending process that takes place when information in long-term memory is matched to the structure in the blend. According to Fauconnier and Turner,[35] completion raises additional structure to the blend and when this structure is added the blend is integrated. Elaboration is closely related to completion. Running of the blend or its elaboration modifies the blend. During the elaboration, links to the inputs are preserved, and Fauconnier and Turner[36] add that '…all these 'sameness' connections across spaces seem to pop out automatically, yielding to a flash of comprehension…' They further claim that this flash will take place only if counterpart links are unconsciously preserved. Elaboration usually entails mental or physical stimulation of the event in the blend. For instance, the interactive frame that is formed in the blended space enables us to compare the scenario we have in input spaces, i.e. brain surgery, and the analysis of military operations and plans in input space two. Conceptual integration networks that are created in the cartoons we selected for the analysis belong to two-sided networks in which the blend inherits frame structure from both input spaces, as a result in the blended space we have a hybrid model that does not exist in either domain.

In our conceptual integration networks, we have input spaces that describe bizarre scenarios in comparison to those that are compatible with the world of politics. It is the combination of those scenarios that creates incongruity within the blended space. These opposite scenarios are incompatible in the sense that one is real, while the other one is bizarre and absurd. These two opposite scenarios clash within the blended space and create 'unexpected inferential and emotional effects which contribute to humor appreciation'.[37] For instance, in our first case study the combination of a prominent political figure, playing cards, and modified idiomatic expression with a fantastic etymology create incongruity in the blend. Incongruity is essential for the creation of humorous blends. Coulson[38] and Marín-Arrese[39] point out that it is also restricted to these types of blends. However, projections from the blend back to input spaces are not the only characteristic of these types of blends, but in humorous examples, as Marín-Arrese[40] puts it, 'the problem solving or resolution of the incongruity is realized by projecting backward to these input spaces ...'

The effect that incongruity creates within the blended space is a successful emphasis on the bizarre scenarios found in the real world as well. The projections from the blend back to input spaces yield emphasis on certain facts in the light of the structure created within the blend. We can say that the emergent structure within the blended space not only enables the conceptualization of a certain scenario but also highlights certain frames within input spaces. Coulson[41] concludes that 'conceptual integration processes allow us to construct bizarre, disposable concepts which in turn promote particular construals of their input domains'. The humors effect within the emergent structure is usually the result of the clash of two opposite scenarios from input spaces. This clash yields incongruity that is characteristic of humorous blends. The theory of conceptual integration successfully explains the creation of humor and

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[35] Fauconnier, Gilles, and Mark Turner. *The way we think: Conceptual blending and the mind's hidden complexities.* Basic books, 2002, p. 43.

[36] Ibid. p. 44.

[37] Marín-Arrese, Juana I. "Humour as ideological struggle: The view from cognitive linguistics." In *8th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference. Logroño*, pp. 20-25. 2003.

[38] Coulson, Seana. "What's so funny: Conceptual blending in humorous examples." *The poetics of cognition: studies of cognitive linguistics and the verbal arts* (2002).

[39] Marín-Arrese, Juana I. "Humour as ideological struggle: The view from cognitive linguistics." In *8th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference. Logroño*, pp. 20-25. 2003.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Coulson, Seana. "What's so funny: Conceptual blending in humorous examples." *The poetics of cognition: studies of cognitive linguistics and the verbal arts* (2002).

Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi / Journal of Ottoman Legacy Studies
Cilt 8, Sayı 22, Kasım 2021 / Volume 8, Issue 22, November 2021

431

provides the answer to the question of why people use humor as a criticism of reality. Projections from the blend to input spaces highlight the scenarios within inputs, as a result of which we view scenarios in input spaces from a different perspective i.e. in the light of the comic effect created within the emergent structure. This enables us to view reality from another perspective and see the absurdity of the world around us. Coulson[42] concludes that 'in exploiting the fortuitous structure that arises in blended spaces, humorous examples allow us to test the flexibility of our conceptual system, navigate the space of possible construals, and explore the radically different social and emotional consequences they can trigger'.

4. Case studies

The Balkans has always been the point of interest of world great powers. Relations between countries in the region of the Balkans served as inspiration for cartoonist not only from the Balkans regions, but also from other parts of the world. The example that we will analyze in this paper is taken from Punch, British weekly magazine of humor and satire.

4.1. Case study 1

The cartoon forms a four space network in which the first input embraces a typical child play with toys and bricks. In the second input spaces resides the political situation in the Balkans during the First Balkan War. The blend inherits its frame from the first input space, as well as salient projections from the second input. From the second input is projected the information that Montenegro participated in the First Balkan War of 1912–13. And the peace in Bucharest in 1913 gained Berane, Bijelo Polje, Gusinje, Pljevlja, Plav, Tuzi and part of Shkodër Lake. It is important to point out that the siege of Shkodër became the central operation of the Montenegrin army in the First Balkan War. This long siege, which engaged almost all Montenegrin potentials, lasted 186 days and cost Montenegro great losses. Although Esad Pasha handed over the keys of the city of Shkodër to Crown Prince Danilo, Shkodër could not be formally and legally annexed to the Kingdom of Montenegro, because the European superpowers had already decided to assign this city to Albania. As a result, Austro-Hungary blocked the Montenegrin coast and required the withdrawal of Montenegrin troops from Shkodër. Other Western superpowers agreed with the position of Austro-Hungary. Russia and Serbia also advised King Nikola to give in and hand over Shkodër to the great powers for administrative administration. Under pressure from the great powers, the king decided to evacuate Montenegrin troops from Shkodër. This decision was opposed by the government and the Minister of War Mitar Martinović that decided to resign. However, in May 1913 the agreement between the Kingdom of Montenegro and the representatives of the European superpowers was signed and Shkodër had to handed over to the management of international troops. Montenegrin troops left Shkodër in May 1913.[43]

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[42] Ibid.
[43] http://dacg.me/crna-gora-u-prvom-balkanskom-ratu/
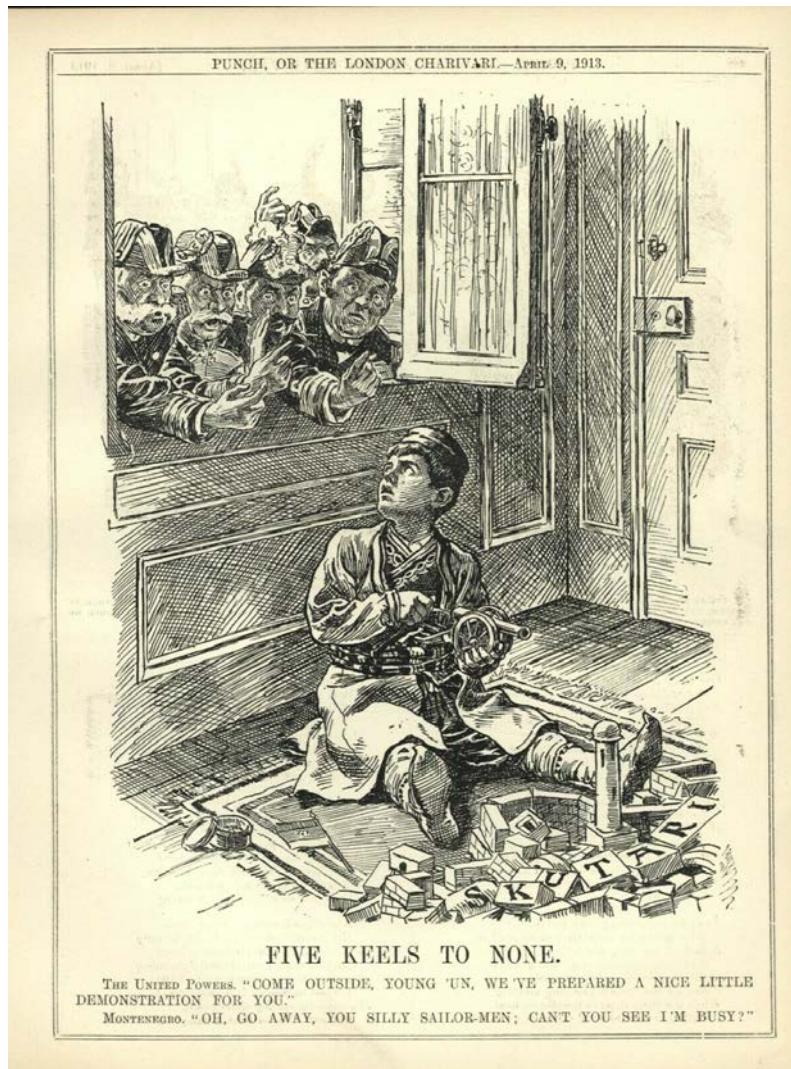
Figure 2. Punch cartoon from 9 April 1913

In the unreal scenario in the blend the Montenegro is represented as a young boy playing with his toys. He is holding a cannon pointing at the buildings made of toy bricks on Skutari inscription is written. Skutari is another name of Shkodër. A group of people representing the United Powers is watching the boy through the open window and calling him to go out. The boy replied to these sailormen that he has other plans. The bend projects back to the second input space as Montenegro stubbornly kept Shkodër under siege despite the naval blockade of the European superpowers. Input spaces are connected with the vital relation of Similarity as we know that the child play will finish when the adults decide, so this happens in this one. Children sometimes feel that they are mature enough to make all decisions, but adults are usually those who set the limits and decide what is of the best interest for children. The vital relation of intentionality connects the input spaces as both the child in the input space one and Montenegro from the second input space are very persistent and show the strong intention to continue with the play and military operations in Shkodër.

The blend project back from the blended space to the inputs. The European powers let the Montenegro play war for some time, but in the ended they put an end to it. Eventually Montenegrin troops were forced to leave Shkodër and sign the Agreement with the European

powers and act in accordance with the conditions set by the European powers. The whole process did not go smoothly and just like children object when the adults tell them to finish the game Montenegrin government objected to the proposal offered by the European powers, but it was unable to stop the process.

4.2. Case study 2

Our second example is also from the period of Balkan Wars. The cartoon forms a four space network in which the first input space involves political situation in the Balkans during the Balkan wars. As we can see the cartoon was on June 4 1913, immediately after a peace treaty was signed in London and in accordance with this treaty the Ottoman Empire lost also Macedonia and Albania.[44] However, the Greeks had their aspirations for the territories that were decided to be the part of the independent Albania and requested additional negotiations. The political situation in the Balkans during the Balkan wars forms input space one. In the second input space we have a typical classroom scenario with the dominant teacher figure, misbehaving boys and one boy sent to the quiet corner for punishment. It is evident that this input projects the frame to the newly created blended space. The vital relations of Role and Intentionality connect the inputs as the both the teacher from the second input space and the Europe from the first one wants to control the unruly class and Balkans, which is always trouble brewing.

In the imaginary scenario created in the blended space Europe is a teacher reproaching the misbehaving boy dressed in a traditional Greek clothing, while the European powers are also mad at Greece. The blend projects back to the first input space. The Ottoman Empire lost almost all its European territories during the Balkan wars and from the quite corner is politely explaining its position and lack of power. To appreciate the humorous scenario created in the blend one must activate the background knowledge about the European history. The cartoon provides excellent pictorial solutions as the reader can easily identify all the protagonist involved.

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[44] https://www.britannica.com/topic/Balkan-Wars

Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi / Journal of Ottoman Legacy Studies
Cilt 8, Sayı 22, Kasım 2021 / Volume 8, Issue 22, November 2021

434

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—June 4, 1913.

THE GOOD BOY OF THE EAST.

Turkey (*from the corner in which Europa has put him*). "I FEAR, MADAM, THAT OUR YOUNG FRIENDS ARE CAUSING YOU SOME EMBARRASSMENT. BUT, WHILE GREATLY DE-PLORING THEIR INSUBORDINATION, I REGRET THAT I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO RENDER ANY APPRECIABLE ASSISTANCE TO YOUR AUTHORITY."

Figure 3. Punch cartoon from 4 June 1913

5. Conclusion

By applying conceptual integration theory to political cartoons, we tried to show how humor is created as well as how it is understood. In addition, using the same theory, we also addressed the question of why humor seems to be an effective means of critically observing political reality. The selected cartoons we analyzed are related to the period of Balkan wars, which implies that certain background knowledge is required for one to understand and appreciate them. It is known that cartoons of all eras are self-referencing and ever-changing forms. To appreciate cartoons the one must have a certain degree of visual literacy and familiarity with the context described in the cartoon.

In both case studies the construction of the meaning of political cartoons involves the construction of a blended space which results in an incongruity that is characteristic of humorous blends.[45] Projections from the blend to input spaces highlight the scenarios within inputs, and as a result we view scenarios in the input spaces from a different perspective.[46] Therefore, one can argue that the emergent structure in the blend not only helps us conceptualize a certain scenario but it also reinforces a certain construal in the input spaces.

The analysis has also shown that very often, in order to understand the message of these cartoon, the viewers must activate their knowledge of phraseological units and fixed expressions, which are exploited in political cartoons, both verbally and visually, creating imaginary scenarios of political affairs.

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[45] Coulson, Seana. "What's so funny: Conceptual blending in humorous examples." *The poetics of cognition: studies of cognitive linguistics and the verbal arts* (2002).

[46] Ibid.

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