

ABSTRACT

Conceptual blending is a theory developed by Fauconnier and Turner (1994). This theory mainly helps explain how we are able to understand one thing represented fused with something else. Because the theory is one of imagination, there has been a lot of focus on the creative aspects and how far this creativity can be stretched. However, the less creative aspects from which imagination arises have received little attention. In particular, the role of the context as a constrain to creativity has not been emphasized enough in this theory.

This research focuses on how and which aspects of context are used in political cartoons in order to present the cartoon message.

The data used for the analysis is four sets of four cartoons each. These cartoons have been selected on the basis of a shared context as well as a shared aspect of that context used to present the cartoon's message. Two of these groups are defined by the use of topic, one group is defined by time and the last group is defined by the place of the context. An example of a cartoon where the topic is used in order to present this topic, is one in which US President Obama is presented as an athlete tripping over a hurdle, representing the failed nomination of Chicago for the Olympics. There are also other hurdles representing political issues such as the health care reform and Afghanistan. The message of the context of the cartoon is that Obama lost the bid for the summer Olympics in Chicago in 2016. Hurdle running is a sport exercised at the summer Olympics, and is thus an element of the topic, which shows that the cartoonist has used this aspect of the topic of the context to present the topic in the cartoon.