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## History, multiculturalism and hybridity in Zadie Smith's novel "White Teeth": conceptual blending models

### Історія, мультикультуралізм і гібридність у романі Зейді Сміт «Білі Зуби»: моделі концептуального блендингу

***Summary.** The article discusses the key concepts: history, multiculturalism, hybridity, associated with the postcolonial novel by Zadie Smith "White Teeth", using conceptual blending methodology. The novel shows the characters from multicultural London milieu facing the challenges of the Western culture and haunted by the colonial past of their home countries. Their identities are shaped by contradictory, sometimes mutually exclusive discourses. The interpretation of history by the characters, immigrants to the UK from the former British colonies, is influenced by their individual worldview and a bond with their home country. Apparently, the policy of multiculturalism in the novel is shown as wholeheartedly supported by some, and opposed by others. Meanwhile, the process of identity search, typical for the second and third generation of immigrants, implies assimilation, resulting in hybridity, or segregation through adoption of some radical political views and socially dangerous models of behaviour. Some of the most salient examples of author's creativity are subject to detailed analysis in terms of conceptual blending methodology. A basic blend includes a generic space, two input spaces and an emergent space, though the interpretation of author's stylistic devices involves modelling manifold conceptual blending networks: single-scope, multiple-scope and mirror networks. They are meant to explain the dynamics of sense-making procedures in the most conspicuous cases of author's creativity. The processes of text interpretation are explained through compression of vital relations within the conceptual blending networks and their topology. The potential for explaining counterfactuals, compounds and complex sophisticated patterns of meaning alongside with the cases of cross-domain mapping may be regarded as one of the benefits of using conceptual blending methodology. Therefore, the combination of conceptual analysis with stylistic analysis seems to be a key to understanding complex semantics of Zadie Smith's novel.*

***Key words:** multiculturalism, history, hybridity, conceptual blending, integration network, mental space, generic space, emergent space, vital relation.*

**Анотація.** У статті проаналізовані ключові концепти: історія, мультикультуралізм, гібридність, що асоціюються з постколоніальним романом Зейді Сміт «Білі Зуби» з використанням методології концептуального блендингу. Персонажі з мультикультурного Лондонського середовища постають перед викликами існування у західній культурі, переслідувані привидами колоніального минулого країн, звідки вони походять. Їх ідентичності сформовані суперечливими, подекуди взаємовиключними дискурсами. Інтерпретація історії персонажами, іммігрантами до Великобританії з колишніх британських колоній сформована під впливом їх індивідуального світогляду та прив'язаності до країни походження. Політика мультикультуралізму у романі показана як така, що щиро сердно підтримується одними і викликає спротив у інших. Тим часом процес пошуку ідентичності, властивий для іммігрантів другого і третього покоління передбачає асиміляцію, що має наслідком гібридність, або сегрегацію через засвоєння радикальних політичних поглядів та соціально небезпечних моделей поведінки. Деякі з найбільш яскравих прикладів авторської творчості є предметом детального аналізу із застосуванням методології концептуального блендингу. Базова інтеграційна мережа включає простір-джерело, два вхідних простори та емергентний простір. Проте інтерпретація авторських стилістичних засобів вимагає моделювання інтеграційних мереж різних типів: одно- і багато-просторових, а також дзеркальних. Вони мають на меті пояснити динаміку утворення смислів у найбільш виразних випадках авторської творчості. Процеси інтерпретації тексту пояснено через компресію суттєвих зв'язків в інтеграційних мережах та їх топологію. Перевагою цього методу концептуального аналізу є можливість тлумачення, поряд із випадками метафоричного переносу значення, гіпотетичних суджень, складених іменників, а також складних смислових конструкцій. Відтак, поєднання концептуального та стилістичного аналізу є ключем до розуміння складної семантики тексту роману Зейді Сміт.

**Ключові слова:** мультикультуралізм, історія, гібридність, концептуальний блендинг, інтеграційна мережа, ментальний простір, простір-джерело, емергентний простір, суттєвий зв'язок.

**Introduction.** The novel “White Teeth” written in a controversial genre of so-called hyper-realism [19] and associated with reevaluating the past of the former British Empire, immigration, ethnicity and hybridity, the policy of multiculturalism, comes into the focus of attention within cognitive linguistic approach for the first time. The conceptual blending (CB) methodology will be applied to the analysis of innovative idiosyncratic means used by the author Zadie Smith to communicate her own vision of these phenomena.

The theoretical basis of the research consists in the application of the principles and procedures of conceptual blending theory (CBT) stated in the works of S. Coulson [6], G. Fauconnier and M. Turner [8], M. Turner [18]. In the latest decades texts of different genres have become objects of cognitive analyses in the works of Ukrainian [1; 2; 4] and western scholars, the most popular trends include the application of conceptual

metaphor theory [10; 11; 17], conceptual blending theory [3; 5; 14; 16], conceptual grammar approach [9; 12].

The mechanism of sense-making will be investigated via conceptual blending methodology in combination with stylistic analysis. This implies discussing the concepts of history, multiculturalism, hybridity as indicative of the new genre of hyper-realist fiction, analyzing the topology of CB network and linguistic mechanism of their verbalization in the novel.

**The methodology** applied in this research is that of conceptual blending theory (G. Fauconnier, M. Turner). A typical CB network consists of a generic space, a common ground for the two inputs to be processed, two input spaces and an emergent space. Blending process involves three stages: 1) composition, 2) completion; 3) elaboration [8, p. 345]. The overarching goal of blending is achieving human scale [8, p. 346]. Therefore, the process of blending involves transformation of the outer-space vital relations (indicative of two inputs) of TIME, SPACE, REPRESENTATION, ANALOGY, DISANALOGY, CHANGE, ROLE-VALUE, CAUSE-EFFECT, PART-WHOLE into the inner-space vital relations: SCALED TIME, SYNCOPATED TIME, SCALED SPACE, SYNCOPATED SPACE, UNIQUENESS, IDENTITY, CATEGORY.

Presumably, CB methodology [6; 7; 8] may shed light onto the ongoing processes of text interpretation and meaning construction during reading and facilitate understanding of complex processes of meaning generation in the literary text.

Some of the blends may appear to be just another way of discussing metaphorical mappings. However, while conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) deals with stable domains of knowledge, conventionalized cross-domain mappings apparent in entrenched linguistic expressions, conceptual blending theory (CBT) makes use of dynamic mental entities created for one and single occasion in our mind [6, p. 178].

The difference between two approaches consists in the fact that CBT and CMT are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary to one another. Apart from a single-scope integration networks in CBT, which is an equivalent way of talking about cross-domain mapping, there are other types of networks which are used to explain patterns of meaning creation (e.g. compound nouns and counterfactuals): simplex, mirror, double-scope, multiple scope networks.

**Results and discussion.** Zadie Smith's novel tells a story of three families living in North London: the Jamaican-English Joneses, the Bengali Igbals and the English-Jewish Chalfens. They are part of Willesden Green multicultural milieu. The plot revolves around these three families. Their members interact with one another driven by different forces: their inner

desire to preserve their ethnicity and their past, as well as doubts about westernization of their children (Samad and Alsana Igbals); their liberal views and good will to help immigrants' children flourish (the Chalfens). Some members of the second generation, influenced by Muslim radical organization rebel against social norms (Millat Igbal), while others are mesmerized by a typical middle-class English lifestyle (Irie Jones). While Millat becomes a star of the streets, his twin brother Magid, after spending seven years in Bangladeshi private school, develops genuine interest in Mark Chalfen's daring research in genetically modified mouse, destined to open new prospects in the future of science.

The novel is, in fact, an epic connecting past and present. Although the main body of events unfold in London in the 1980s, the narrative shifts backwards and forwards, to the character's past. Such flashbacks include Archie's experience during the World War II, as a part of a tank crew in 1945; volcano eruption in Kingston, Jamaica in 1907, which coincides with the birth of Hortense Bowden (Clara Jones's mother); the story of Samad's Igbal great grandfather Mangal Pande, who was believed to have begun the Indian Mutiny of 1847. Thus, history is an indispensable part of the storyline of the novel.

#### 1. History. Past and Postcolonial present.

The very title of the novel "White Teeth" refers to colonial past. S. Rushdie's influence may be traced as an intertextual link to his "Midnight's Children". Describing his first love, Saleem Sinai mentioned the American girl's awful teeth: "*I permit myself this one generalization: Americans have mastered the universe, but have no dominion over their mouths; whereas India is impotent, but her children tend to have excellent teeth*" [13, p. 251]. Teeth have roots and roots are connected to history. The Chapter titles of the novel develop the topic further: Chapter 2 "The teething trouble" refers to the problems of Clara Bowden's coming of age, breaking free from her mother's ties (her religion). "The Molars" (the teeth we use for chewing) and "Canines: The Rippling Teeth" tell about the mature members of the family, while "The Root Canals of Mangal Pande", as well as "The Root Canals of Hortense Bowden" deal the main characters' ancestors who resided in the former parts of the British Empire (East Pakistan, now Bangladesh and Jamaica):

It is possible to build a conceptual blending network (CBN) with a generic space as its basis containing (subjects/entities, stages of development), with the first input space which includes people as subjects, their life stages being youth, coming of age, developing connection with ancestors, while the second input space contains the information about teeth and stages in tooth development: teething; canines, molars, root canals. An emergent space will suggest the following correspondences: people/

teeth; youth/the stage of teething; coming of age/ the stage of developing canines and molars, past / root canals. Thus, this kind of network may be considered a single-scope network, where the second input space yields its structure to the blend. The vital outer-space relation which is compressed during the blending operation is that of REPRESENTATION (connecting representation “teeth” to what they symbolically represent, in our case “people”) [8, p. 315]. Such kind of compression results in the inner-space vital relation of UNIQUENESS.

Speaking about history, it is worth mentioning Samad Igbal’s battle with himself over his own moral scruples and the right way to bring up his children. Feeling alien to the Western culture after decades of living in London, Samad fights his own battle against his temptations [15, p. 105] and tends to put a blame for his own moral decay on Western culture surrounding him: *“Can’t you see? What is done is done. I am hell-bound, I see that now. So I must concentrate on saving my sons. I have a choice to make, a choice of morality”* [15, c. 158].

Involved in extramarital affair with a young music teacher Poppy Burt-Jones, Samad Igbal is doing his best to reconcile with his religion, Islam. He also tries to prevent his children from a similar downfall due to the influence of Western society. Therefore, he decides to send at least one of them back to his home country to be educated, in order to save him from moral degradation: *“To Samad, as to the people of Thailand, tradition was culture, and culture led to roots, and these were good, these were untainted principles. That didn’t mean he could live by them, abide by them or grow in the manner they demanded, but roots were roots and roots were good. You would get nowhere telling him that weeds too have tubers, or that the first sign of loose teeth is something rotten, something degenerate, deep within the gums. Roots were what saved, the ropes one throws out to rescue drowning men, to Save Their Souls. And the further Samad himself floated out to sea, pulled down to the depths by a siren named Poppy Burt-Jones, the more determined he became to create for his boys roots on shore, deep roots that no storm or gale could displace”* [15, p. 161].

In this case we may consider a multiple scope conceptual blending network [8, p. 279], where **the generic space** contains a person who becomes an object of influence; a force, equipment for staying alive. The completion stage involves collection of selected information from 2 inputs. **Input 1** contains person: Samad Igbal; force: his desire towards Poppy Burt-Jones, no equipment (no moral scruples to prevent him from this); result: he fails to adhere to his religious principles; **input 2** contains a person drowning in the sea; the sea itself as an undefeatable force; no ropes to bind him to the shore; result: he drowns. The completion stage involves the activation of the schema of a drowning man. The elaboration

stage results in Samad who is drowning morally, because he fails to adhere to the principles of Islam (although he stays alive in the story).

Additional **input 3** contains hypothetical information: person/people: Samad's twin sons Millat and Magid; undefeatable force: Western culture surrounding them; equipment: strong religious beliefs, traditional Bengali upbringing (Islam). In this case the result of blending operation, the changed object of influence (Millat/Magid) is projected backwards onto initial **input 1** and, when compared, results in DISANALOGY: he remains afloat /survives in the deep sea/ preserves his identity/ remains intact to the Western influence.

The expression "the siren Poppy Burt-Jones" is itself a blend: **the generic space** includes an agent; the properties ascribed to it; **input 1**: a siren; the ability to lure men with her singing; the result: seamen go astray from the route; **input 2** contains: a young woman (a school music teacher), ability to play music; ability to flirt; the result: men become attracted.

There occurs the compression of ROLE (siren) – VALUE (Poppy Burt-Jones) outer-space vital relation into inner-space vital relation of UNIQUENESS. This multiple scope network underpinning stylistic imagery reflects Samad Iqbal's idiosyncratic interpretation of the fact that he sees his native culture, traditions and religion as an antidote to Western influence.

## 2. Multiculturalism.

Often seen as the only means to ensure the development of the country's economy, multicultural state policy has its supporters and opponents. Apparently, there are certain benefits from intercultural exchange, as well as challenges connected with the need to integrate vast number of people from different backgrounds into homogeneous and well-functioning society.

The Chalfens in the novel represent a left-wing middle-class British family. They are dedicated proponents of liberal values: "... *the Chalfens had sent their kids to Glenard Oak, daring to take the ideological gamble their peers guiltily avoided, those nervous liberals who shrugged their shoulders and coughed up the cash for a private education*" [15, p. 261].

Joyce Chalfen is a horticulturalist, who also prides herself on being happily married to her distinguished husband and being a mother of four bright children. Z. Smith uses a stylistic device, a quotation from the character's book to expose her views: "*The fact is, cross-pollination produces more varied offspring that are better able to cope with a changed environment.... If my one-year-old son is anything to go by (a cross-pollination between a lapsed-Catholic horticulturalist feminist, and an intellectual Jew!), then I can certainly vouch for the truth of this. ... If we wish to provide happy*

*playgrounds for our children, and corners of contemplation for our husbands, we need to create gardens of diversity and interest.*

– Joyce Chalfen, from *The New Flower Power* pub. 1976, Caterpillar Press” [15, p. 258]. Being quite self-complacent about their intellect and perfection the Chalfens felt it was their mission to influence other people, they longed for someone to educate, to improve, to console: “*They were like wild-eyed passengers of The Mayflower with no rock in sight. Pilgrims and prophets with no strange land*” [15, p. 262]. “*Mice and men, genes and germs, that was Marcus’s corner. Seedlings, light sources, growth, nurture, the buried heart of things – that was hers. As on any missionary vessel, tasks were delegated. Marcus on the prow, looking for the storm. Joyce beneath deck, checking the linen for bedbugs*” [15, p. 269]. The information from the novel suggests the following CB network. There is a common ground which is actually a hidden metaphorical comparison between the family and the ship. Not only the father in the blend appears to be the captain of the ship, mother being a chief mate, and children – the crew, but also the ship is the Mayflower, the ship with pilgrims, prophets, which set off from the British shore in 1620 in search of the New World. The ship requires steering just like the family needs to be directed along the certain route. Therefore, the tasks are divided and delegated. The CBN which is possible here contains two inputs:

**Input 1:** family (the Chalfens), father (Mark Chalfen), mother (Joyce Chalfen), the Children.

**Input 2:** ship; captain; chief mate; crew. Input 2 yields its structure to the emergent space, making this integration network a typical single-scope network. Composition stage involves projection of the elements from both inputs into the emergent space. Completion stage draws upon the background frame of the Mayflower (the ship caring the first pilgrims into the New World in 1620). Elaboration stage results in compression of the outer-space vital relations of TIME (1620–1980s), SPACE (the New World / the USA – London, REPRESENTATION (family-ship, father-the captain etc.) resulting in inner space relationship like SCALED TIME, SCALED SPACE, UNIQUENESS.

When two Joshua Chalfen’s teenage classmates, Irie and Millat, appear at Joyce’s garden gate she is busy pruning her delphinium. The plant was affected by a parasite – thrip, and the only way to get rid of it was to cut off the sick branches ruthlessly. Prior to the event, we find out that the school authorities’ initiative was to connect some children from unprivileged backgrounds and some enthusiastic parents, knowledgeable in certain subject areas to prepare together for GSCE exams. The juxtaposition of the two events in the novel immediately triggers associations between the teenagers and the sick plant. This link is further reinforced by a stylistic

device: Joyce mentally gives Latin-like names to children similar to the names of plants. Joyce is a fervent gardener and a Mother Earth type woman, who relishes nurturing plants and children: “*Joyce paused and looked at Irie and Millat the way she had looked at her Garter Knight delphinium. She was a quick and experienced detector of illness, and there was damage here. There was a quiet pain in the first one (Irieanthus negressium marcusilia), a lack of a father figure perhaps, an intellect untapped, a low self-esteem; and in the second (Millaturea brandolidia joyculatus) there was a deeper sadness, a terrible loss, a gaping wound. A hole that needed more than education or money. That needed love. Joyce longed to touch the site with the tip of her Chalfen greenfinger, close the gap, knit the skin*” [15, p. 270].

A CBN in this case will be built around the following mental spaces:

**Generic space:** object; problems indicated; measures needed; results achieved.

**Input 1:** Garter Knight delphinium, problems: affected by thrip; measures: pruning, cutting off the infested branches, result: healing.

**Input 2:** Irie Jones, problems: a lack of a father figure, an intellect untapped, a low self-esteem; measures: education, attention, money; result: psychological healing, intellectual growth.

**Input 3:** Millat Igbal; problems: a terrible loss (separation with a twin brother), a gaping wound, tensions between him and his father; measures: attention, love; result: psychological healing.

*Irieanthus negressium marcusilia* and *Millaturea brandolidia joyculatus* are themselves the results of blending, as plants share some of the characters’ features (e.g. Irie’s black complexion).

**Emergent space** contains the following information: objects (Irie / *Irieanthus negressium marcusilia*, Millat / *Millaturea brandolidia joyculatus*); action: measures taken education, attention, love; result: healing. Just as pruning provides cure for the delphinium, the psychological support and attention, supposedly, will heal the teenagers having problems with smoking marijuana and poor performance at school. The compression of vital relationship of REPRESENTATION results in the inner space vital relation of UNIQUENESS.

Horticultural theme seems to be used by the author as a convenient way of talking about multiculturalism, especially about its benefits to society. Actually, Z. Smith’s novel is inhabited by cross-cultural hybrids.

### 3. Hybridity.

The novel exposes certain tensions between the immigrants and their children. The immigrants of the first generation (Samad Igbal, Hortense Bowden) psychologically reject their new homeland and, while enjoying the benefits of higher living standards, safety, and freedom, constantly



strive not to forget their past. They are involved in harsh arguments with their children, in case they notice any signs of assimilation, like developing close relationship with the English (Clara, Irie, Millat). Their religion serves as an anchor to their home culture [15, p. 272]. Meanwhile the second generation of immigrants strive to merge with the culture which is also their own, rather than keep ties with the far unknown homeland of their parents.

When Alsana Igbal finds out about her son Millat calling himself Mark Smith among his schoolfriends, she is flabbergasted [15, p. 126]. The reason for such identification is Millat's desire to live a lifestyle typical for some of his classmates.

His arguments may be reflected by the following mirror network:

**Generic space:** boy; his father; possessions; activities.

**Input 1:** Millat Igbal; father: one-handed waiter; possessions: cockroaches, a broken door of his cousin's car in the hallway; worn carpet on his bedroom floor taken from the restaurant; activities: mother's sewing; making day-trips to Blackpool to visit aunts.

**Input 2:** Mark Smith (imaginary boy, collective image of a middle-class English boy); father: a doctor; possessions: cats; trellis of flowers; piano; shiny wooden floor; activities: mother playing the cello; making trips to France.

**Emergent space:** Millat/Mark Smith having the possession of Mark Smith and his lifestyle. The compression of the vital relations of PLACE, DISANALOGY, CHANGE (Millat wants to turn into Mark Smith) results in SCALED SPACE, UNIQUENESS.

The quest for identity in the novel spreads over numerous members of younger generation: an Irish pub O'Connell's, which is "*neither Irish, nor a pool house*" [15, p. 151] in "White Teeth" is actually run by an Arab, Mickey, who strictly adheres to Islamic traditions, for instance, he never serves bacon with his four versions of English breakfast. With a view to teach his offsprings Islamic humility, understanding that God created everyone equally fragile to God's will, the father Mickey gave them the same names Abdul. Mickey's sons instead, choose to be called by double names: Abdul-Colin, Abdul-Mickey, Abdul-Jimmy.

As an act of rebellion against his father's ruthless separation of him and his twin brother Magid, Millat resorts to anti-social behaviour: "*In the language of the street Millat was a rudeboy, a badman*"... *He was "the BIGGEST and the BADDEST, living his young life in CAPITALS"* [15, p. 224]. His popularity among youngsters of Willesden can not be overestimated: "*Ringo Starr once said of the Beatles that they were never bigger than they were in Liverpool, late 1962. They just got more countries. And that's how it was for Millat. He was so big in Cricklewood,*

*in Willesden, in West Hampstead, the summer of 1990, that nothing he did later in his life could top it. From his first Raggastani crowd, he had expanded and developed tribes throughout the school, throughout North London.*" [15, p. 224].

The following CB mirror network suggests itself:

**Generic space:** agent; place; time; the scope of popularity among people.

**Input 1.** The Beatles; Liverpool, 1962; the scope of popularity among fans.

**Input 2.** Millat Iqbal; Cricklewood, Willesden, West Hampstead; late 1980s; popularity among teenagers.

**Emergent space** includes compression of the outer space vital relations of ANALOGY Millat; PLACE (Liverpool – Willesden); TIME (1962–1980s) into IDENTITY, SCALED TIME, SCALED SPACE. It is a typical mirror network in which two inputs are built around the same frame. Purpose of this CBN is achieving human scale, showing the reader the grandeur of Millat's popularity.

Irie Jones, a third-generation immigrant is inclined to benefit from this opportunity to get to know the Chalfens better. She is truly enchanted with their liberal views, attitude to life and their middle-class lifestyle, so dissimilar to her parent' and her friends' parents'. *"Irie tried her hardest to imagine Mr. Iqbal playing the right hand of Scott Joplin with his dead grey digits. Or Mr. Jones turning anything into bite-size chunks. She felt her cheeks flush with the warm heat of Chalfenist revelation. So there existed fathers who dealt in the present, who didn't drag ancient history around like a chain and ball. So there were men who were not neck-high and sinking in the quagmire of the past"*[15, p. 271].

There is a possibility for creating a CBN representing a hypothetical statement, a counterfactual, with the following mental spaces:

**Generic space:** a parent; activity performed.

**Input space 1:** Mr. Iqbal (Magid and Millat's father); usual free time activity: spending time in O'Connell pub; took out his anger on Millat.

**Input space 2:** Mr. Jones; usual free time activity – spending time in O'Connell pub; ignoring his daughter, spending little time with her.

**Input space 3:** Mr. Chalfen; playing Scott Joplin; turning biology into bite-size chunks".

This type of network may be classified as a double-scope network. The information imported from input space 1 (Mr. Iqbal), from input space 2 (Mr. Jones) goes to the emergent space. While information about the action being performed (playing Scott Joplin, turning biology into bite-size chunks) is taken from the input 3. The blend completion stage involves recruiting middle-class lifestyle frame: like the fact that there are

fathers who spend time with their children playing musical instruments or explaining school subjects.

The compression of the vital relationship of ANALOGY results in UNIQUENESS in the emergent space. Imagining her father and her classmates' father doing things like that results in backward projection of the changed subjects (Samad, Archie Jones) into initial input spaces 1 and 2, and has an effect of DISANALOGY.

The chapter entitled "Canines: The Rippling Teeth" suggests connection to some carnivorous animals who have especially visible canines. Far from being grateful for their support in Magid's exam preparation, Alsana Igbal blames the Chalfens for stealing Millat away from her family: "*these people are taking my son away from me! ... They're Englishifying him completely!*" [15, p. 285]. She compared the Chalfens, who offer her son psychological support and math classes, to scavenging birds: "*I'll call them Chaffinches – little scavenging English birds pecking at all the best seeds! Those birds do the same to my bay leaves as these people do to my boy. But they are worse; they are like birds with teeth, with sharp little canines – they don't just steal, they rip apart! What do you know about them?*" [15, p. 285]. The text of the novel suggests a multiple scope network, based on one generic space and three input spaces:

**Generic space** contains the following constituents: the agents; object of influence; action taken by the agents.

**Input 1** contains: the Chalfens; Millat; offering education and support.

**Input 2** contains birds; seeds; pecking at the best seeds, stealing, ripping somebody else's offsprings apart.

**Emergent space** contains the Chalfens, who behave as aggressively as "carnivorous birds", stealing best seeds/children from their parents. The result of compression of the outer-space vital relation of REPRESENTATION (The Chalfens – birds) is the inner space vital relation of UNIQUENESS.

Carnivorous birds from the input 2 are the result of blending themselves, because they are no average birds, but rather imaginary carnivorous ones, they are birds with sharp canines. In this case the **generic space** will consist of a subject; its properties.

**Input 1:** average birds, beaks, ridges on their bills (no teeth).

**Input 2:** carnivorous animals; teeth.

**Emergent space:** birds having sharp teeth/canines, thus such birds are able to rip apart even more aggressively. The new meaning – the negative evaluation of such birds appears, because they are equipped with an unusual property, teeth. This negative evaluation is present in neither of the inputs 1 or 2. It becomes evident only in case we identify the Chalfens with scavenging birds with teeth, which behave like parasites, because they intentionally take someone's best seeds away.

**Conclusions.** The operations of conceptual blending (of identity, integration, imagination) are “the key to everyday meaning and exceptional human creativity” [8, p. 6]. Complex blending is always at work in any human thought or action, but is often hard to see [8, p. 25]. Notwithstanding the fact that it is practically impossible to account for even a small amount of cases of conceptual blending in the novel, the attempt was made to discuss some the most conspicuous examples of authors creativity, which reveal the concepts of history, multiculturalism, hybridity as indicative of the novel “White Teeth”, written in the genre of “hysterical realism” [19].

The process of sense-making activities in the novel may be schematically explained by the single-scope networks (with only one input space yielding the structuring frame to emergent space): *people / teeth* (structuring the whole novel), *Poppy Burt-Jones / siren, the Chalfens / the Mayflower crew*; multiple scope networks: *Samad Igbal / the drowning person, Irie Jones, Millat Igbal / the plants*; mirror network (both inputs are structured by the same frame): *Millat/Mark Smith, Millat/The Beatles*; a counterfactual resulting from Irie’s imagining her father in the role of Mr. Chalfen. The compression of outer-space vital relation, which is the most frequent is REPRESENTATION into UNIQUENESS, less frequent are ROLE-VALUE into UNIQUENESS, DISANALOGY into UNIQUENESS.

The potential for application of CBN is tremendous: this method of cognitive analysis may be applicable for investigation of the peculiarities of fictional and non-fictional texts of different genres, shedding light onto the nature of textual semantics.

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