

**Ravshanova Raykhonabonu Farrukhovna**

Master's student

Uzbekistan state world languages university

Mail: [rayxonarrf@gmail.com](mailto:rayxonarrf@gmail.com)

+998901929555

## Abstract

This article examines the correlation between intertextuality and conceptual integration theory (blending theory), arguing that intertextuality should be understood not only as a structural dialogue between texts but also as a cognitive mechanism that governs meaning construction and interpretation. Drawing upon the works of M. Bakhtin, J. Kristeva, G. Fauconnier, and M. Turner, the study explores how readers engage in mental-space construction, cross-space mapping, and conceptual blending when encountering intertextual references. Examples from English and Russian literature illustrate how conceptual integration generates emergent meanings and enriches textual interpretation. The article concludes that intertextuality is fundamentally grounded in cognitive processes and that conceptual blending provides a powerful framework for analyzing the dynamics of meaning-making in literary discourse.

**Keywords:** intertextuality, conceptual integration, mental spaces, blending theory, cognitive linguistics, literary semantics, emergent meaning.

## 1. Introduction

Intertextuality has long been recognized as a central category in literary theory. Since the pioneering works of Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, it has been interpreted as the presence of other texts within a given text, forming a dialogic network of citations, allusions, reminiscences, and cultural codes. However, the rapid development of cognitive linguistics in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has opened new pathways for rethinking intertextuality from a cognitive-semantic perspective.

The theory of conceptual integration (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), also known as blending theory, offers a rich explanatory model for understanding how readers combine information from multiple conceptual domains when interpreting intertextual elements in literary texts. Intertextuality, therefore, should not be viewed merely as textual coexistence but as a process driven by cognitive mechanisms of mapping, projection, and integration.

The aim of this article is to demonstrate that intertextuality is essentially a product of conceptual blending and that the blending process serves as the foundation for the creation of new meanings in literary communication.

## 2. Intertextuality: Definitions and Theoretical Approaches

### 2.1. Classical Perspectives on Intertextuality

Early definitions of intertextuality derive from structuralist and poststructuralist paradigms. Kristeva (1980) describes every text as a “mosaic of quotations,” echoing and transforming previous texts. Bakhtin (1975) conceptualizes the phenomenon through dialogism—the idea that each utterance is connected to prior and future discourses. Genette (1997) later proposed a taxonomy of transtextual relations, including intertextuality, hypertextuality, and metatextuality.

In these perspectives, intertextuality is largely a textual-structural concept, focusing on observable relations between textual entities.

### 2.2. Cognitive Approaches to Intertextuality

Modern cognitive linguistics shifts the focus to how readers mentally reconstruct and integrate these relations. Researchers such as E. Kubryakova, E. Semino, W. Werner, and others argue that intertextuality engages cognitive mechanisms such as conceptual frames, schemas, and mental models.

In other words, intertextuality exists not only in the text but also in the mind of the reader, who activates background knowledge to interpret intertextual cues.

## 3. Conceptual Integration Theory: Key Principles

### 3.1. Mental Spaces

Fauconnier (1994) defines mental spaces as small conceptual packets constructed dynamically in thought and discourse.

They include contextual knowledge, situational elements, and conceptual structures relevant to interpretation.

### 3.2. Cross-Space Mapping

Conceptual integration relies on establishing correspondences between elements of different mental spaces. These mappings identify relationships between source and target spaces—for example, between a literary character and a mythological figure referenced in an allusion.

### 3.3. The Blended Space

The blended space is an integrated conceptual structure that contains emergent features not found directly in any of the input spaces (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). This emergent meaning is crucial for interpreting metaphor, allegory, and intertextual references.

### 3.4. Emergent Structure

The blending process produces a new conceptual structure that cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts. This is particularly important for literary interpretation, where symbolic and associative meanings dominate.

## 4. Intertextuality as Conceptual Blending

### 4.1. Cognitive Nature of Intertextual Connections

Intertextuality functions through the integration of at least two mental spaces:

1. the current textual space,
2. the intertextual (referenced) space.

The reader constructs a blended space where elements from both inputs interact, producing an enriched interpretation.

Example

“He was a modern Don Quixote.”

Here the reader blends:

- the character of Don Quixote (idealism, naivety, romantic struggle),
- the modern context of the protagonist,
- the cultural model of “quixotism.”

The blended space produces the emergent meaning: a dreamer fighting unrealistic battles in a contemporary world.

### 4.2. Allusion as a Trigger for Cognitive Integration

Allusions activate background knowledge and invite the reader to map elements between the textual situation and a known text or cultural model.

Example:

“She carried her cross with silent dignity.”

This invokes:

- Biblical conceptual space (the burden of sacrifice),
- the protagonist's personal suffering,
- cultural models of endurance.

### 4.3. Quotation and Hypertextuality

A direct quotation not only refers to a source but also triggers a blending process. The quoted material interacts with the surrounding text, generating new implications and reinterpretations.

Example:

Nabokov's reference to "the shadow of Hamlet's father" creates a conceptual blend involving:

- Shakespeare's mythological plot,
- European cultural memory,
- philosophical reflections on doubt and legacy.

### 4.4. Reminiscence as Compression of Meaning

Reminiscence relies on associative activation rather than explicit reference. The implicit nature of reminiscence intensifies cognitive effort, prompting the reader to reconstruct the missing intertextual links.

## 5. Conceptual Integration in Literary Practice: Case Studies

### 5.1. English Literature

James Joyce's *Ulysses* is a paradigmatic example of monumental blending. The entire novel is an intertextual blend of:

- Homer's *Odyssey*,
- Dublin of 1904,
- Joyce's autobiographical and cultural codes.

The emergent blended space frames Leopold Bloom as a modern *Odysseus*, creating a rich interpretive network.

### 5.2. Russian Literature

Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* blends:

- Biblical narratives,
- Soviet Moscow,
- satirical grotesque,
- philosophical motifs.

The reader constructs a multi-layered blended space where morality, power, truth, and artistic freedom are intertwined.

### 5.3. Shakespeare in Modern Adaptations

Modern reinterpretations of Shakespeare often rely on blending. For example, the frequent re-imagining of Hamlet in contemporary cinema blends:

- Shakespearean tragic structure,
- modern existential dilemmas,
- psychological discourse.

This layered blending creates new meanings while preserving the archetypal structure.

## 6. Cognitive Mechanisms in Reader Interpretation

### 6.1. Four-Space Model

Fauconnier & Turner's model distinguishes:

1. Input Space 1 – the current narrative;
2. Input Space 2 – the intertextual source;
3. Generic Space – shared cultural frames;
4. Blended Space – new emergent meanings.

### 6.2. Cognitive Resonance

Intertextuality gains communicative power when the reader's background knowledge resonates with the intertextual cue, creating emotional and intellectual engagement.

### 6.3. Emergent Meaning

The interpretive richness of intertextuality lies in emergent meaning—conceptual qualities produced exclusively in the blend and not contained in the original texts.

## 7. Conclusion

Intertextuality, traditionally viewed as a structural relationship between texts, must also be interpreted through the lens of cognitive linguistics. Conceptual integration theory provides a comprehensive explanatory model for how readers perceive, process, and interpret intertextual references.

Key conclusions of the study:

- Intertextuality relies on mental-space construction and conceptual blending.
- Cognitive mechanisms play a central role in generating new meanings.
- Emergent structures formed through blending deepen the semantic and emotional complexity of literary texts.
- Conceptual integration explains how readers participate in meaning-making, transforming intertextual connections into dynamic interpretive experiences.

Thus, conceptual integration is not simply an auxiliary framework but a fundamental theoretical foundation for understanding intertextuality.

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