

How to Cite:

Sukarsih, N. N. T., Erfiani, N. M. D., Awololon, Y. O. L., Lindawati, N. P., Lee, C. S., & Dewi, N. N. A. I. (2024). Conceptual blending on hotels' websites advertisement: A cognitive semantics perspective. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 8(1), 1-16.
<https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v8n1.2295>

Conceptual blending on hotels' websites advertisement: A cognitive semantics perspective

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Abstract---Meaning construction undergoes complex processes of cognitive linguistic analysis by analyzing the subject through a mental process that is based on analysis of background knowledge and culture. The study aimed to investigate the interpretation of cognitive semantics analysis that was based on local hotels' websites in Bali by utilizing the CBT from Fauconnier & Turner. The study employed a qualitative descriptive analysis method with a non-participant observation data collecting method and a non-probability sampling method on five selected data. The study showed that CBT brought more comprehensive meaning elaboration from written messages supported by any elements of the advertisement's illustration.

Keywords---advertisements, cognitive semantics, conceptual blending, hotel website.

Introduction

The construction of perception is tremendously systematic and theoretical as it undergoes the mental perception or the cognitive aspect of the reader to analyze the meaning that lies behind any message or utterance of which process creates conceptualization of analogy based on the background knowledge and cultural aspect of the reader towards the metaphorical expressions in the given circumstance ([Ajibade, 2022](#); [Mifdal, 2019](#); [Roberts, 2018](#); [Veale, 2019](#)).

In cognitive linguistics, cognitive stylistics analysis has been developed to balance detailed stylistic analysis, which focuses on the writer's perspective, with the cognitive aspects of the reader's experience ([Abdalmughni, 2019](#); [Jensen et al., 2018](#)). This method applies to diverse forms of discourse, such as proverbs, advertisements, speeches, letters, journalism, and songs. It generates mental representations that link background knowledge with contextual interpretation through a cognitive approach ([Jensen et al., 2018](#); [Nordentoft, 2020](#); [Saragih & Mulyadi, 2020](#)).

One example pertinent to this study is advertisements, which Pandey (as cited in [Ardilla, 2018](#)) explains as an impactful communication means for selling goods, services, and ideas through information dissemination. Likewise, Juliantari (as cited in [Tambun, 2018](#)) expresses advertisements as media that distribute information with the intent to persuade people to purchase specific products or take recommended actions. Typically, advertisements can be understood as influential messages in mass media or society, presented in text or speech, designed to persuade individuals to purchase certain products or services or perform specific actions.

In analyzing advertisements through a cognitive approach, a suitable theoretical tool is essential to be utilized. [Fauconnier & Turner \(1998\)](#); [Jabłońska-Hood \(2019\)](#), developed the Conceptual Blending Theory for this purpose. This theory is based on the earlier Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson but differs by incorporating the concept of emergent structure, a distinctive feature of blending theory ([Fauconnier & Lakoff, 2009](#); [Sukarsih, 2018](#)).

Conceptual Blending Theory, as explained by Fauconnier and Turner ([Deyin, 2018](#); [Ghachem, 2022](#); [Mmadike et al., 2018](#); [Niketić, 2019](#); [Schorlemmer & Plaza, 2021](#)), utilizes mental spaces to interpret conceptualized ideas. These mental spaces are constructed through thoughts and conversations and are then mapped and connected to other mental spaces, including generic spaces, input spaces, and blended spaces, to create emergent structures. Each of these spaces has unique features that contribute to the dynamic and creative construction of meaning.

The generic space contains elements common to both input spaces, which can be general or abstract ideas linking the first input space to the second, facilitating cross-mapping between the spaces ([Niketić, 2019](#); [Zbikowski, 2018](#)). Input spaces are analogous to the source and target domains in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), which describe and are described by concepts, respectively. In Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT), based on CMT, input spaces contain different elements

that are mediated through the generic space, demonstrating the relationship between ideas despite their differences (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008; Niketić, 2019; Saeed, 2016; Zbikowski, 2018).

Furthermore, the blended space, formed by combining both input spaces, contains a new idea that doesn't necessarily resemble reality. This emergent structure is developed through the processes of composition, completion, and elaboration. Composition involves merging features from the input spaces into the blended space. Completion uses logic, background knowledge, and cultural context to add ideas that support the construction of the blend. Elaboration entails refining and expanding the emergent structure within the blend (Deyin, 2018; Ghachem, 2022; Mmadike et al., 2018; Niketić, 2019).

Utilizing the conceptual blending theory offers broader insights into understanding the meaning intended by a writer or speaker within a specific context. This approach extends beyond mere interpretation through comparison, incorporating the reader's background knowledge. This study investigates how readers contextually perceive meaning and seeks to determine the nature and process of information perception when reading advertisements on hotel websites (Pawlowski & Koziel, 2002; Simon & Dejica-Cartis, 2015).

Prior research has similarly explored the conceptual blending theory in the advertisements analysis. Joy et al. (2009), analyzed how people perceive advertisements, revealing that various features such as visual aspects, words, colors, and the angle of the advertisements influence the cognitive processing of these ads. Additionally, the persuasive effectiveness of an advertisement is significantly impacted by the application of complex interpretations, such as the use of imagery functions for commercialization and a substantial degree of cross-cultural understanding to present the product to a broad audience.

Kshenovskaya (2017), examined the role of humor in advertisements by employing conceptual blending theory. The study found that humor enhances the advertisement's attractiveness, thereby raising consumer interest in purchasing or subscribing to products. Advertisements often employ metaphorical expressions to craft effective puns or punchlines, which can be analyzed using blending theory to gain a deeper understanding of their meaning. The examples from Kshenovskaya's study also affirmed a clear connection between cognitive analysis and the combination of background knowledge and cultural context.

Drawing from both studies, it is evident that conceptual blending theory is effective in analyzing advertisements. However, these studies focused on advertisements in general business contexts (Bourou et al., 2024; Hedblom et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2013). No research has yet explored this theory within the field of tourism, which is the focus of the current study. This study aims to analyze the language employed on tourism websites, specifically hotel websites in Bali, by applying conceptual blending theory to better understand the meaning conveyed in these advertisements.

The application of conceptual blending theory is particularly suitable for the data to be analyzed, as understanding meaning extends beyond interpreting the literal

or metaphorical content of advertisements (Jefferies, 2013; Coulson & Oakley, 2005; Smith, 2009). It also involves contextually relating to the social situation, cultural background, and other personal aspects unique to individuals. Advertisements must align with these aspects to be effective, as confirmed by both prior studies and various other research in advertising (Arora & Jain, 2021; Girsang, 2015; Joy et al., 2009; Kshenovskaya, 2017; Perić & Jevtović, 2022; Xu & Liu, 2022). For instance, an advertisement saying “Discover the 1000 temples” could be broken down into a conceptual blending diagram as follows:

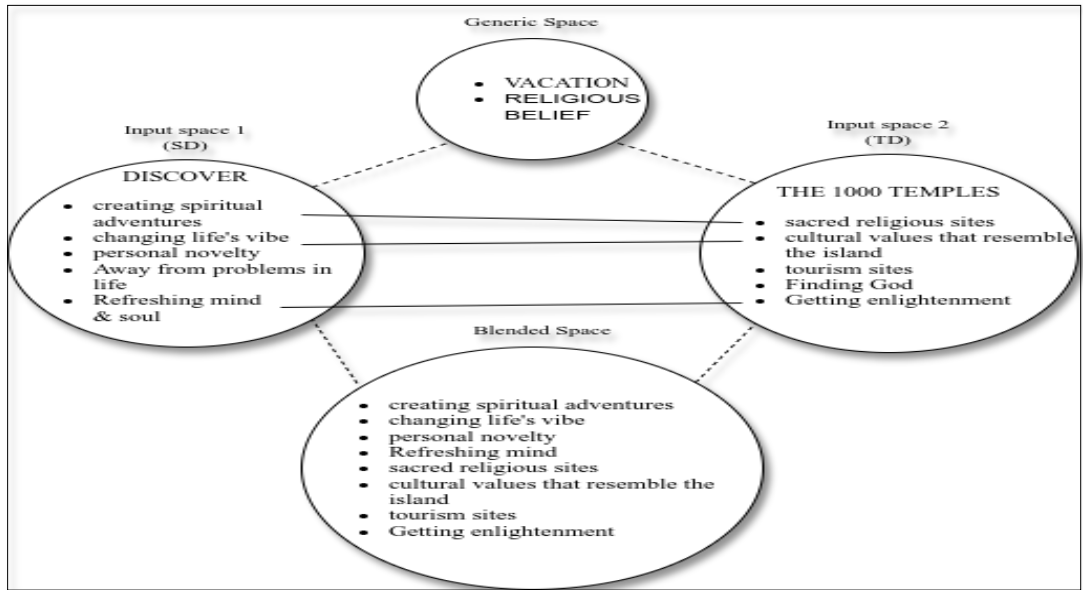


Figure 1. Example of Conceptual Blending Theory “Discovery the 1000 temples”

The themes from the phrase “Discover the 1000 Temples” within a generic space that shares similar elements are “vacation” and “religious belief.” In Input Space 1, the word “discovery” represents themes such as “creating spiritual adventures,” “changing life's vibe,” “personal discovery,” “escaping life's problems,” and “refreshing the mind.” In Input Space 2, the noun phrase “The 1000 Temples” metonymically refers to Bali, also known as the Island of a Thousand Temples. It represents themes such as “sacred religious sites,” “cultural values that resemble the island,” “tourism sites,” “finding God,” and “achieving enlightenment.”

The blended space represents a fusion of elements from both input spaces, tailored to the intended theme of the phrase "Discover the 1000 Temples." It encapsulates the notion of encouraging individuals to break away from everyday routines by embarking on a spiritual odyssey to the renowned religious haven of Bali, which holds the potential to transform one's mindset. Here, the concept of "discovery" transcends mere geographical exploration to encompass a profound journey of self-realization, offering respite from the complexities of daily life. However, under the selective projection feature of conceptual blending theory, not all elements seamlessly integrate into the blended space. For example, the notion of being "away from problems in life" during the process of self-discovery may not entirely eradicate life's challenges permanently. Likewise, while individuals may

engage in a spiritual quest on the island by visiting religious sites, it does not necessarily imply a direct search for God. Nevertheless, those who undertake this journey of self-discovery amidst Bali's spiritual milieu may indeed find solace and rejuvenation, leading to a revitalized mindset and soul. Through immersion in cultural experiences, individuals can emerge with enriched perspectives, transforming their once monotonous lives into dynamic and vibrant ones (Li et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2015).

In regards to creating an effective discussion throughout the study, this study limited its scope of discussions to find the elaborated meaning of the hotel advertisements on websites by applying the conceptual blending theory as what has been referred to as this study's aim.

Method

This study employed the qualitative descriptive analysis method to investigate the linguistic patterns evident in advertisements of hotels located in Bali, intending to discern nuanced meanings embedded within the content displayed on these hotels' websites. Data collection involved non-participant observation, drawing from a deliberate or non-probability sampling method, where samples were obtained from five distinct hotel websites. The data collection process followed a structured approach consisting of five key steps: identification and collection of data, data selection, formulation via diagramming, conclusion derivation, and descriptive depiction through diagrams.

The conceptual blending theory underpins the data analysis in this study and utilizes a series of methodological steps outlined within the study. Firstly, data procurement was executed by accessing and scrutinizing the hotel's website information. Subsequently, diagrams were formulated and analyzed through compositional and completion processes. Finally, the construction and interpretation of elaborated meanings were facilitated through a comprehensive elaboration process. This methodological framework enabled a systematic investigation into the linguistic strategies employed in hotel advertisements, contributing to a deeper understanding of the conveyed messages and underlying meanings within the context of hospitality marketing in Bali.

Discussion

The study found fascinating results throughout the analysis of the language use of hotels in Bali within their promotions on their websites. The ubiquitous applicable situations to the theory made the results even more varied in each of the data interpretations (Smith et al., 2018).

Data 1

Rekindle Your Romance



Figure 2. Wedding & Events Promotion of the Mulia Villas and Resorts

The advertisement features a couple in wedding attire amidst a garden-like setting, accompanied by the phrase "Rekindle Your Romance." This appeal is directed towards individuals seeking to reminisce on cherished moments, encompassing their love story, wedding day, or honeymoon voyage, which serves as the primary selling point of the above advertisement. The advertisement could be broken down into a diagram as follows:

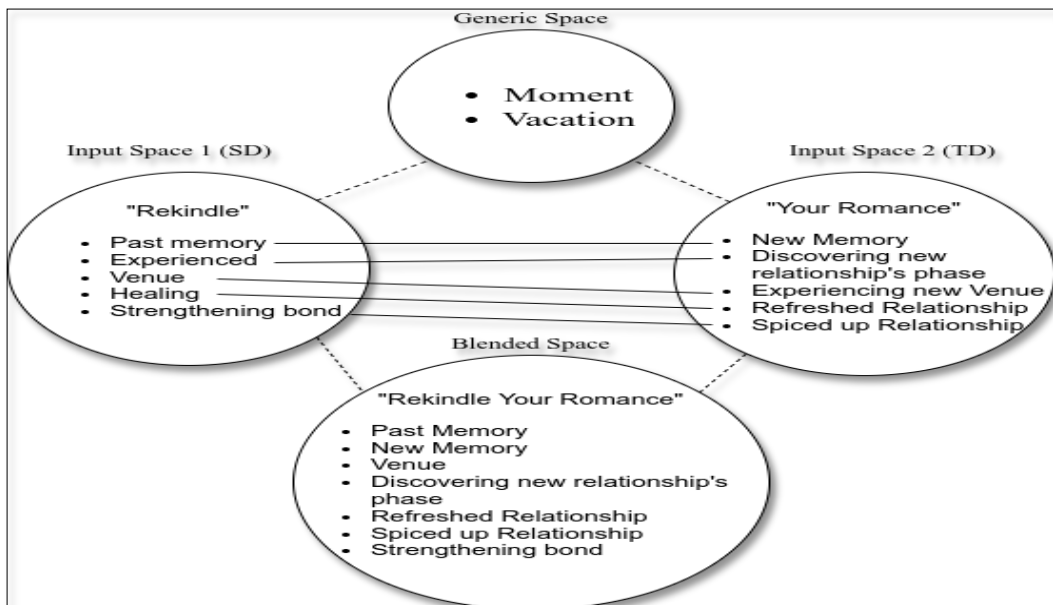


Figure 3. Diagram "Rekindle Your Romance"

The advertisement presents an opportunity to revisit cherished memories, fostering nostalgia while also cultivating novelty within the relationship. By

engaging in a vacation centered around reminiscing on past moments, couples can strengthen and heal their bond. This process of revisiting the past not only sweetens the relationship but also adds a sense of excitement and rejuvenation, ultimately revitalizing the bond between partners.

The language used in the advertisement, "Rekindle Your Romance," emphasizes facilitating opportunities for couples to replicate and fortify their bonds, thus enhancing satisfaction and fostering rewarding experiences. Leveraging nostalgia, an assertive emotional trigger, this approach resonates with individuals who are drawn to familiarity and sentimental connections. It aligns with the nostalgia marketing concept, a strategy aimed at reigniting fond memories to promote products or services, as supported by research by [Akagün Ergin & Şahin \(2019\)](#) and [Farmer \(2021\)](#).

Data 2

Lady in Red: Your Art de Vivre Ambassador



Figure 4. Lady in Red Service Promotion of Apurva Kempinski Hotel

Subsection 1

The advertisement shows three ladies in red dresses standing and making a welcoming gesture in one of the hotel's areas. The caption reads, "Lady in Red: Your Art de Vivre Ambassador," highlighting the service. This service is described as providing a host dressed in red to offer remarkable hospitality to the guests. However, the message of Lady in Red service could be broken down into a diagram as follows:

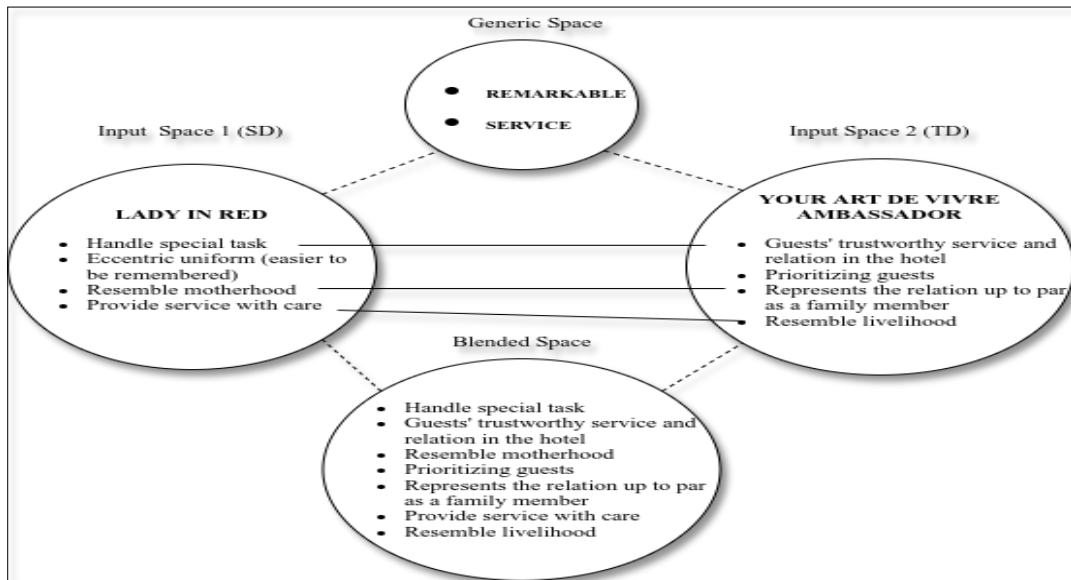


Figure 5. Diagram Lady in Red: Your Art de Vivre Ambassador

The "Lady in Red" service not only refers to the distinctive uniform but also encompasses the responsibilities assigned to the hotel employee. To guests, the "Lady in Red" embodies the care and attentiveness of a maternal figure, attending to all their needs during their stay. The service highlights creating a close, familial bond between the "Lady in Red" and the guests, fostering a sense of familiarity and trust. Guests can rely on the "Lady in Red" for exceptional service throughout their stay, as promised by the hotel.

From the aspect of the uniform, the lady in red is easily remembered by the eccentric bright red color uniform which not only shows the importance of the task but also the persona who is always suited in an appropriate and motherly characterized persona. Thus the exclusive color of choice plays the role of their existence in the hotel as the red color here resembles not only remarkable but also love which is part of human's expression of emotion that the claim is supported by [Umam & Nirmala \(2020\)](#).

Data 3

Immersive Experiences on Roads Less Traveled to Regain Your Sense of Balance



Figure 6. Wellness & Spa Promotion of Six Senses Uluwatu, Bali

The advertisement depicts a Balinese temple's Candi Bentara gate, adorned with a Penjor and a Tedung. Culturally, this image illustrates a combination of spiritual objects, each with its significance. The Tedung, for example, symbolizes a shelter that protects the universe, offering peace and honor to the Gods, and indicates that a religious ceremony will take place in the area (Narulita & Sarjani, 2019; Putri et al., 2020; Suwendra, 2020).

Penjor that represents a mountain which Balinese consider a sacred site and they also believe that Penjor resembles welfare and opulence as it takes its philosophy from the Naga Basuki, which makes Penjor symbolize a dragon snake thus the form it represents from which philosophical beliefs of the Balinese people, it represents the expression of gratitude and devotion towards the prosperous blessings that were given by Gods (Putra & Subarna, 2021).

The Candi Bentar gate serves as an entrance or boundary between the spiritual realm and the human realm. It represents the split Mount Kailash, a sacred mountain considered the abode of the God Shiva (Ekasani & Supartini, 2018; Narulita & Sarjani, 2019). The photograph was taken in the evening when the sunset marks the end of the day, signalling that people should stop working and rest. The advertisement invites the guests to have a physical rest to create a spiritual journey which more elaboration from conceptual blending theory could be elaborated through the diagram as follows:

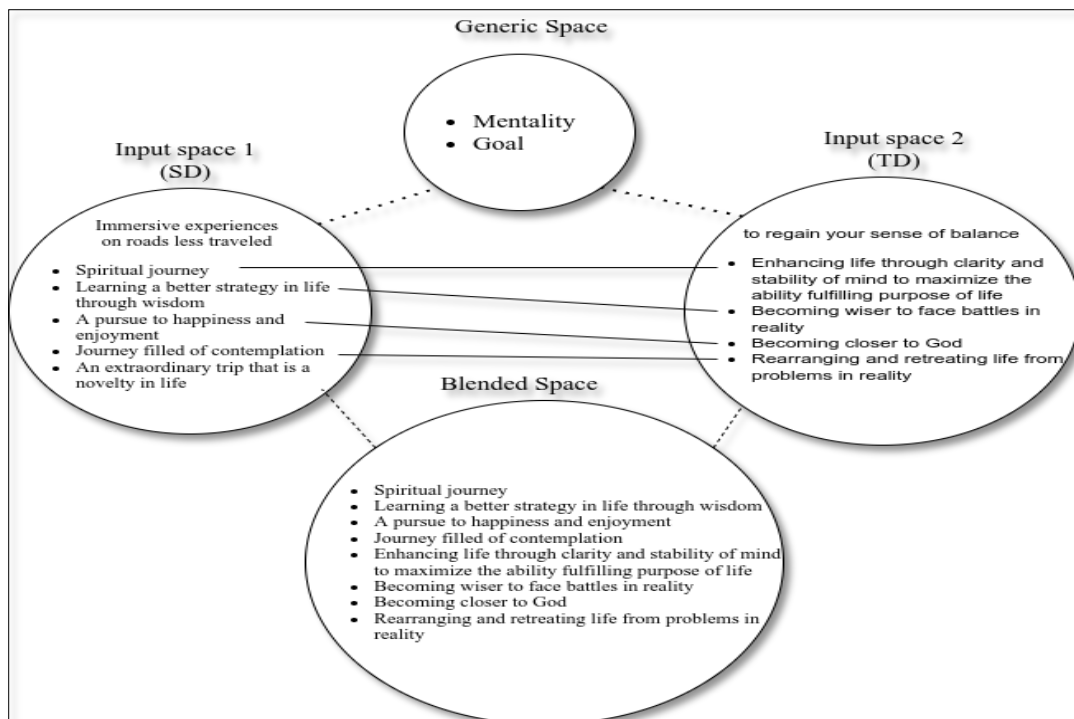


Figure 7. Diagram of Immersive Experiences on Road Less Traveled on Regain Your Sense of Balance

The detailed symbolism in the advertisement underscores its true purpose: to help guests restore balance to their lives, which may have been disrupted by the challenges and corruption of everyday problems. The depiction of less-travelled roads signifies a spiritual journey aimed at correcting and enhancing one's mental state. This journey is intended to clear and stabilize the mind, thereby unlocking the full potential of one's life.

Engaging in a spiritual journey helps individuals develop wiser strategies for handling real-life challenges. It offers the opportunity to pursue true happiness and life enjoyment, bringing them closer to God, the ultimate source of true fulfilment.

The spiritual journey aims to realign and retreat one's soul from the burdens of life. The advertisement offers a persuasive solution for those overwhelmed by life's complexities. While the concept of a spiritual journey may not be new, the hotel's approach promises a unique and extraordinary experience. Unlike regular self-meditation or listening to discourses, the hotel's program is carefully curated and monitored, providing an unparalleled opportunity for spiritual renewal through its secret formula.

Data 4

Your Key Unlocks the Ultimate Comforts here, from Suite to Penthouse

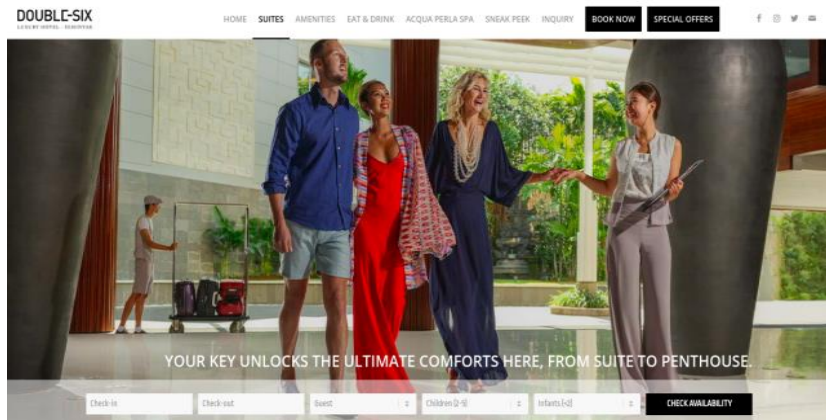


Figure 8. Suites' Promotion of Double Six Luxury Hotel, Seminyak

The advertisement features hotel staff guiding and assisting guests with directions and luggage. The guests seemed pleased and impressed with the service, indicating their trust in the hotel has been rewarded with a satisfying experience.

The expressions of impression and amusement on the guests' faces imply that their choices have indeed met their expectations. One guest even verbally expressed happiness towards the hotel staff. Notably, a casually dressed employee helps with the guests' luggage, exuding friendliness through their outfit choice and thereby removing any sense of awkwardness from the interaction with strangers. The hotel aims to cultivate a casual style of hospitality, creating a

welcoming atmosphere akin to home. This approach emphasizes the hotel's features and facilities as elements that contribute to a comfortable and familiar environment for guests. The caption that supports the claim could be broken down into diagrams as follows:

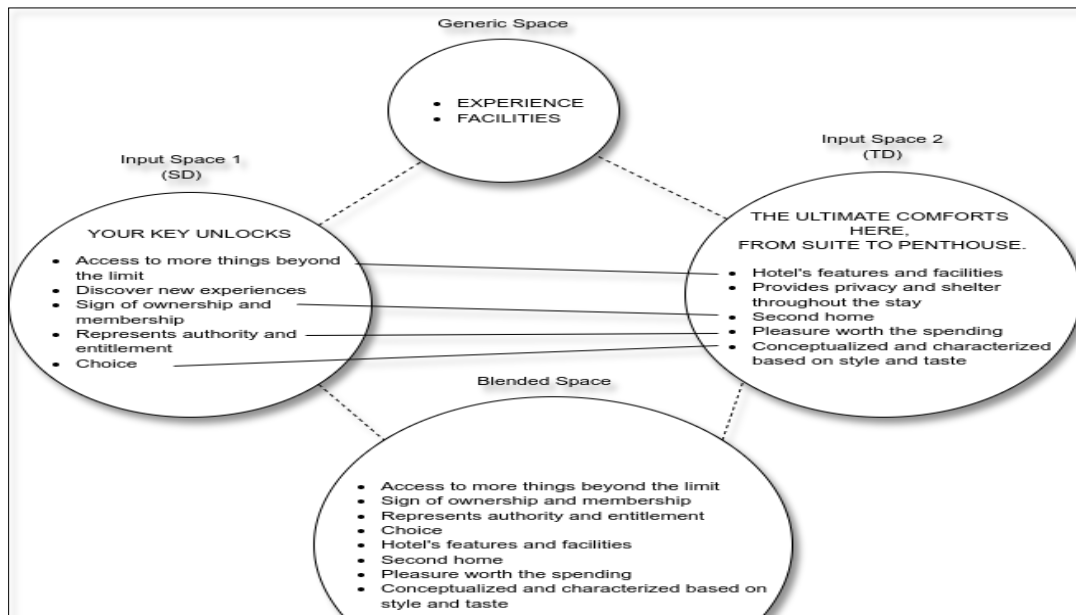


Figure 9. Diagram of Your Key Unlocks the Ultimate Comforts here, from Suite to Penthouse

The caption “Your Key Unlocks the Ultimate Comforts here, from Suite to Penthouse” doesn’t resemble a simple action of unlocking a particular room or experience provided by the hotel, but it represents the choice and style of the guests that resemble their taste and expression of expectations that they have awaited that should be worth spending.

A key serves as a symbol of ownership and membership, granting access to specific features, facilities, or clubs exclusively to those who own it. It embodies authority and entitlement, signifying that eligible guests have the right to enjoy the amenities and services provided by the hotel. The hotel is obligated to meet the expectations of its guests, ensuring that the value they receive corresponds to the cost they have paid.

Regardless of the variety of facilities and features available, the hotel is committed to delivering the level of expected satisfaction by its guests. While the amenities may vary between different types of suites or penthouses, the standard of service remains consistent. The hotel ensures that every guest receives the maximum comfort and personalized attention, fulfilling its commitment to exceptional hospitality to all.

Data 5

Take the Hassle out of Your Vacation with all Meals Taken Care of



GOURMET GETAWAY
TAKE THE HASSLE OUT OF YOUR VACATION WITH ALL MEALS TAKEN CARE OF.

Figure 10. Dining Promotion of Capella Ubud, Bali

The advertisement is depicted with the hotel's scenery on the 2nd floor of the restaurant which shows a table for two and all the food wares entirely prepared. The advertisement "GOURMET GETAWAY" signifies that the offer is available for two guests based on the picture that is used. The scenery of the hotel creates a depiction that the offer itself secures quality time for the couple as dining time is part of the vacation which must also be enjoyable.

The simplicity of the table at which the couple would, as depicted in the picture, enjoy their meal contrasts the complex beauty of the scenery that the couple would look at. The concept of the offer "GOURMET GETAWAY" revolves around a culinary-themed vacation which means throughout the stay guests would be introduced to a plethora kinds of culinary that the hotel could offer. The caption of the service itself indicates its value of existing which could be made into a diagram as follows:

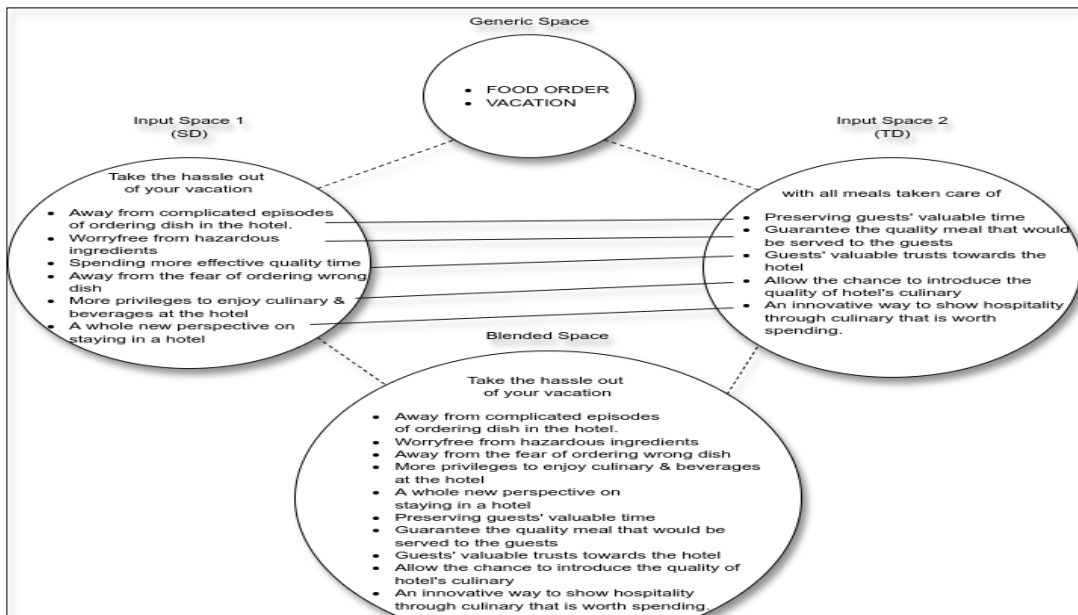


Figure 11. Diagram of Take the Hassle out of Your Vacation with all Meals Taken Care of

The diagram highlights the significant value of the "GOURMET GETAWAY" concept, illustrating how it enhances guests' trust in the hotel by offering comprehensive meal packages. From another perspective, this concept proves beneficial for both the hotel and the guests, as it enables the hotel to manage guests' meals efficiently while providing guests with an enriching culinary experience. This symbiotic relationship fosters mutual satisfaction and profitability for both parties within the realm of culinary delights.

Besides relieving guests of the hassle of finding restaurants, the "GOURMET GETAWAY" saves time and transportation costs while enhancing vacation efficiency and enjoyment. It also addresses potential health and safety concerns associated with unfamiliar dining options. Simultaneously, the hotel benefits from the opportunity to showcase its culinary excellence, ensuring quality and safety, boosting guest satisfaction, and fostering positive recommendations. This symbiotic relationship strengthens the hotel's reputation and instills greater confidence and loyalty among guests.

On certain occasions, particularly for local guests, staying in a hotel is not solely about sightseeing but rather about indulging in comfort, being pampered, and enjoying the facilities and features of the hotel. This preference underscores the relevance and appeal of the "GOURMET GETAWAY" concept, as it offers guests a unique vacation experience centered around culinary themes. By embracing this concept, guests can enjoy a distinctly different vacation, focusing on culinary delights and the luxurious amenities provided by the hotel.

Conclusion

Conceptual Blending Theory reveals how effective cognitive stylistics analysis towards discourses could be as the analysis does not just refer to the language use based on the writer aspect of the discourse but also combines the cognitive aspect that triggers the philosophical and metaphorical analysis of the mental process that is based on the background of knowledge and culture.

The application of the theory elaborates not only the written subject analysis but also the entire use of images, colors, and cultural aspects of certain tribes that match the claim of prior studies regarding cognitive linguistics. From the gender of choice, color of choice, and illustrations of cultural buildings that resemble the services that would be promoted by the hotels. Everything could be analyzed by utilizing cognitive interpretations towards the advertisements with elaboration of meanings by analytical thinking through conceptual blending application to interpret the aim and true meaning of the advertisements.

The philosophical approach of understanding the true meaning behind hotels' advertisements opens a broader chance for research that can be done by the application of conceptual blending which is part of the hope of the current study towards future studies.

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