A Cognitive Semantic Study of Metaphoricity in Iraqi Idioms

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Abstract

The current study draws on cognitive semantics as a framework for analyzing Iraqi idioms and finding their implicit metaphoricity. It is known that idioms might (or might not) be based on different types of figurative speech such as metaphor, metonymy, simile, and so on. Iraqi dialect is filled with many types of idioms that are deserved to be investigated. This paper is based on two questions: To what extent metaphoricity is found in Iraqi idioms? What are the images or elements on which metaphoricity is based? Cultural specific or universal? The main aims of the study are: (1) finding whether metaphoricity is a prominent feature in Iraqi dialect, and (2) illustrating the properties of the metaphoricity in question. It is hypothesized that metaphoricity is a prominent feature of Iraqi dialect and it is based on cultural specific properties. To achieve the aims of the study, 29 idioms are analyzed according to conceptual blending theory proposed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002). It has been hypothesized in the introduction that metaphoricity is a prominent feature of Iraqi dialect and it is based on cultural specific properties. In light of the gained results, the following conclusions can be delivered on the basis of the research questions: (1) Idioms are containers of meanings that are used in the form of analogy which is mainly based on metaphoricity which works in this context not as a figure of speech, but as a feature and process that structure idioms. (2) Metaphoricity of idioms have a distinctive aspect in which the analogy takes place by using two compared situations, one of them is fixed and part of the language dictionary (the first space) and the second one is unpredictable because it differs from one situation to anther. (3) Hyponymy and metonymy play a role in metaphoricity in which the compared concepts may have hyponymic relation, and some concepts are not directly mentioned but through concepts have metonymic relation with.

Key words: Iraqi idioms, Metaphor, cognitive semantics, conceptual blending.

دراسة دلالية ادراكية للاستعارة في التعبيرات الاصطلاحية العراقية

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المستخلص

تعتمد الدراسة الحالية على الدلالة الادراكية كإطار لتحليل العبارات الاصطلاحية العراقية واكتشاف مجازها الضمني. ومن المعروف أن العبارات الاصطلاحية قد تكون (أو لا تكون) مبنية على أنواع مختلفة من الكلام المجازي مثل الاستعارة والمجاز والتشبيه وما إلى ذلك. واللهجة العراقية مليئة بالعديد من أنواع العبارات التي تستحق البحث. يستند هذا البحث إلى سؤالين رئيسيين هما: (١) ما الدور الذي

تلعبه الاستعارة في تركيب العبارات الاصطلاحية العراقية؟ (٢) ما هي ابرز السمات التي تميز الاستعارات المتضمنة داخل تراكيب العبارات الاصطلاحية؟ يُفترض البحث أن الاستعارة سمة بارزة في اللهجة العراقية وأبرز الأدوات اللغوية والادراكية التي تشكل العبارات الاصطلاحية في اللهجة العراقية. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تم تحليل 29 عبارة اصطلاحية وفقًا لنظرية المزج المفاهيمي التي اقترحها فوكونير وترنر (2002). في ضوء النتائج المكتسبة، يمكن تقديم الاستنتاجات التالية على أساس أسئلة البحث: (1) التعبيرات الاصطلاحية هي حاويات للمعاني التي تُستخدم في شكل تشبيه يعتمد بشكل أساسي على الاستعارة التي تعمل في هذا السياق ليس كشكل من أشكال الكلام، ولكن كسمة وعملية تبني التعبيرات الاصطلاحية. (2) إن الاستعارة في التعبيرات الاصطلاحية لها جانب مميز حيث يتم القياس باستخدام حالتين مقارنتين أحدهما ثابت وجزء من قاموس اللغة (الفضاء الأول) والثاني غير متوقع لأنه يختلف من موقف إلى آخر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعبيرات الاصطلاحية العراقية، الاستعارة، الدلالة الادراكية، المزج المفاهيمي.

1. Introduction

Metaphoricity is a central cognitive device and process that works within many linguistic and cognitive phenomena. The word metaphoricity is used here, not metaphor, to reflect the sense of being a feature or device rather than the conventional sense of metaphor as a linguistic phenomenon. The most sophisticated approach that can be used as a framework to this study is cognitive semantics. This approach has started its journey with metaphor early with Lackoff and Johnson (1980) when they redirect metaphor studies. They looked at metaphor as a linguistic and cognitive phenomenon that is related to many faculties. It is no more as only a linguistic device used to aesthetically in language. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) provided this field with a sophisticated model within the framework of Conceptual Blending Theory to view and analyse metaphor; it is integrated with Mental Space Theory.

The current study draws on cognitive semantics as a framework for analyzing Iraqi idioms and finding their implicit metaphoricity and its different aspects. Iraqi dialect is filled with many types of idioms that deserve to be investigated. This paper is based on two questions: What is the role metaphoricity as an analogical device in structuring Iraqi idioms? What are the main aspects of metaphoricity in structuring Iraqi idioms. The main aims of the study are to find whether metaphoricity is a prominent feature in Iraqi dialect, and to illustrat the properties of the metaphoricity in question. To achieve the aims of the study, 38 idioms are analyzed in terms of conceptual blending theory proposed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002).

2. Idioms

Idioms represent one of the most problematic phenomena in linguistics. In spite of its great problematic nature, most of linguists agree that it cannot be excluded from any serious linguistic investigation. Idiomaticity is so important in understanding how form and meaning interact. In the literature of linguistics

many scholars have investigated idioms like (Hockett, 1958; Newmeyer, 1972; Strassler, 1982; and others). The core debatable feature of idiom is that the meaning of the idiomatic expression as whole does not equal its components' meanings (Katz & Postal, 1963: 275). This disagreement between meanings of the constituents and the meaning of the idiom is the basis for Healey's (1968: 71) definition of idiom as "any group of words whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meanings of the individual words".

However, giving a precise definition of idiom is not as easy as it seems. Nunberg, Sag and Wasow (1994:492–93 cited in Croft and Cruse, 2004: 230-1) propose a prototype definition based on 'conventionality' as a necessary feature and other additional features. Interpretation or use of an idiom is not based on the conventional meaning of its parts when they are used in isolation. The other properties are listed as follow:

a. Inflexibility: restricted syntax, as in *shoot the breeze* vs. **the breeze is hard to shoot*.

b. Figuration: figurative meaning, as in *take the bull by the horns, lend a hand*.

c. Proverbiality: description of social activity compared to a concrete activity, as in *climb the wall, chew the fat, spill the beans*.

d. Informality: typically associated with informal speech styles or registers.
e. Affect: usually have an evaluation or affective stance towards what they describe.

Idioms in many times are viewed as based on colloquial metaphors. They are cultural specific, therefore, they require a kind of cultural knowledge to be understood or interpreted correctly. In other words, they are part of dialect and culture at the same time. Members of a particular community cannot understand an idiom formed in another community although they know meanings of its parts. However, this view cannot be applied to idioms. In many times, idioms are based on universal metaphors or metaphors that can be decoded by any community because they are related to universal entities like those which are related to body parts (Abbas and Younis: 2009: 827). Idioms can be considered as linguistic markers of different styles, such as formal, informal, slang, and so on. For example, some everyday expressions which cannot be used in writing are linguistic markers of informal style. Such idioms are used only between friends or people have the same status. Slang idioms are characterized by their high informality and they are used commonly among young people (Manser: 1992: xv).

3. Metaphors

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Language as a communicative means is used for various social purposes and it can relate an individual to a particular community. Metaphor is one of the complex aspects that show language as unique means of communication for a specific social group. The reason behind that is its requirement of a certain shared knowledge between hearers and speakers to be understood (Searle, 1979). Metaphor is a part of language as well as culture. It manifests and carries a society's beliefs and values (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). Members of a particular society use the available images and entities in their society to construct metaphors. Such images reflect the common heritage of a particular speech community. Yu (1998) indicates that the metaphor choice is determined by the cultural model of a society. Choosing an image not related to the culture model might not manifest his and his society's worldview. Basso (1976) has emphasized that culture and language are embedded in metaphor. In metaphor, more than any other linguistic device, language and culture are displayed as inseparable parts. Lichang (2004) argues that metaphor is the best linguistic device through which the cultural and social effects on language can be studied because interpretation of metaphor is culture-based. However, some metaphors can be understood by many, if not all, communities because they are based on universal images.

The type of meaning that metaphors convey is a sociolinguistic in which interpretation of metaphors is based on sociolinguistic aspects. It is said that sociolinguistics investigates the relationship between social community and language in order to find out how the way language functions in communication (Wardhaugh, 1998: 12). The sociolinguists' duty is to investigate the way of using various aspects of language in a society and to specify the social context of these aspects. The sociolinguistic studies have illustrated the differences how people's speech differs according to different social contexts to convey various social meanings (Holmes, 2008). Some social contexts require only figurative speech to convey some sociolinguistic meanings that cannot be conveyed by literal speech. Using language in appropriate social contexts is part of communicative competence (Gumperz, 1972; Wardhaugh, 1998).

4. Conceptual Bending Theory (CBT) as a Model of Analysis

In a competition with Lakoff's model of conceptual metaphor theory, Fauconnier and Turner (2002) proposed a sophisticated model for viewing metaphor in a more complicated way. This model comes to the scene within the framework of Conceptual Blending Theory which is directed to explain the online construction of meaning. This field of meaning study is so complicated and it has no tangible features to study, however, the theory in question has provided this field with workable tools to deal with the contextual construction of meaning. This theory is comprehensive in which it proposes a unified mechanism for how human beings think and create meanings. This theory comes as a development to the

Mental Space Theory that is formulated by Fauconnier in 1985. Fauconnier and Turner (1996: 312) indicates in this theory that the on-line dynamical construction of meaning involves integrating mental structures. Pálinkás (2014:615) mentions that this theory claims that the integration of mental structures represent the basis for the way that human beings think. Clousion and Oakley (2000: 182) state that CBT proposes one mechanism for literal and metaphorical language. Unlike Lakoff who views figurative language, metaphor in specific, as a violation for the literal language with distinctive mechanism, Fauconnier and Turner see that human mind forms the figurative language by following the same processes of forming literal language. This theory has many complicated concepts, however, most of them will not be explained because they are out of the study scope.

4.1. Mental Spaces

The concept of mental space lies at the center of CBT and it has been employed in many cognitive linguistic fields and approaches. Fauconnier (1985 cited in Langacker, 2011:208) coined this concept to as a basic mental unite of thinking and meaning processing. He sees that a mental space represent "a scope of awareness" and logical consistency is not a condition in is existence. Fauconnier & Turner view mental spaces as "small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding" (1996: 83). The process of structuring a mental space is cognitive to encode a real or imaginary situation. These spaces include many elements that have no direct connection with the real world (Fauconnier, 1994: xxxvi).

Human minds create a mental space to each utterance in our daily life speaking to reflect the speaker perspective; this perspective is shared by the other participant in the speech event. This space is called the Base Space (space 0) and it is used to initiate for creating new spaces as in the following example: *I dreamt I was Marlyn Monroe and kissed me*. The first part of the sentence *I dreamt* is a space builder which works as an initiator (space 0) of another space (space1) which will be an imaginary world. Space 1 will include the second part of the sentence *I was Marlyn Monroe.* However, the pronoun I in the first space is not identical to the same pronoun in the base space. Space 1 will be a basic part of a wider framework in which Marilyn Monroe is kissed by the speaker (Dervin, 2005: 33-4).

The model of analyzing metaphor based on CBT consists of four mental spaces that are related to each other by blending operations and vital relations. The model is designed in the form of integration network which include **two input spaces** that have shared or similar properties on which mapping operation is based. The similarity or the shared properties between the two inputs differ from one situation to another; some inputs, which reflect two concepts, may have only one shares aspects and others may be similar in all the features. The shared

properties will be mapped to each other to create a new space, called a **blend** or a **blended space**. This space contains new meaning that is structured from the meanings of the two inputs but different from them (Coulson & Oakley, 2000: 178). However, the contribution of the inputs is not enough for creating the blended space, the latter has its own emergent structure which is completely different from what is found in the inputs (Ungerer & Schmid, 2006: 259).

The blending process does not happen on the basis of the shared features only, but it is based on the generic space which is called the "skeletal construct". This space provides the blended space with its coherence (Dancygier, 2006: 5). In the same context, it builds the connections between the countered concepts in the two inputs on the basis of the highly abstract roles of these concepts. The connections between the inputs is established through the process of matching. In other words, the generic space works to identify the countered parts on the basis of their identity, roles, etc. (Evans & Green, 2006: 409). The blending process is governed by selective projection that works to select some elements from the two spaces to be matched and inhibits the others (Oakley, 1998:338).

5. Data and Analysis

The data consists of twenty nine idioms have been collected from different websites. These idioms represent the most famous ones in Iraqi dialect. However, there are other famous idioms not tackled in this study because they are not based on metaphors. Metaphoricity has been elicited from idioms by using Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Conceptual Bending Theory (CBT) as a model of analysis. However, some aspects of metaphoricity will not be uncovered by this model.

Idiom (1): "السفينة تغرق من تكثر ملاليحها"

alsafina taghrag min tikthar malalihiha

(The ship sinks when it is led by many captains)

Intention: Any issue managed by more than one person will be failed.

Input Space 1: the first input consists of the three main concepts in the above metaphor: captain as the doer of the action in the basis space, ship as the patient that is effected by the bad leadership of the captain, and sink as the process that the patient undergoes.

Input Space 2: this space includes the analogical concepts that are not mentioned in the metaphor words, however, they are found as a background linguistic knowledge of the participants. The concepts of this space are highly abstract and they come to indicate the situations that have the same general and abstract meaning with different details.

Blended Space: this space relates the encountered concepts of the two inputs to each other and extracts the intended meaning of the metaphor. It is obvious that there is a hyponymic relation between some of the countered concepts in which the second input concepts are superordinate to the detailed concepts in the first input. For example a *captain* belongs to *person* category and *sink* is one of the *falling* forms.
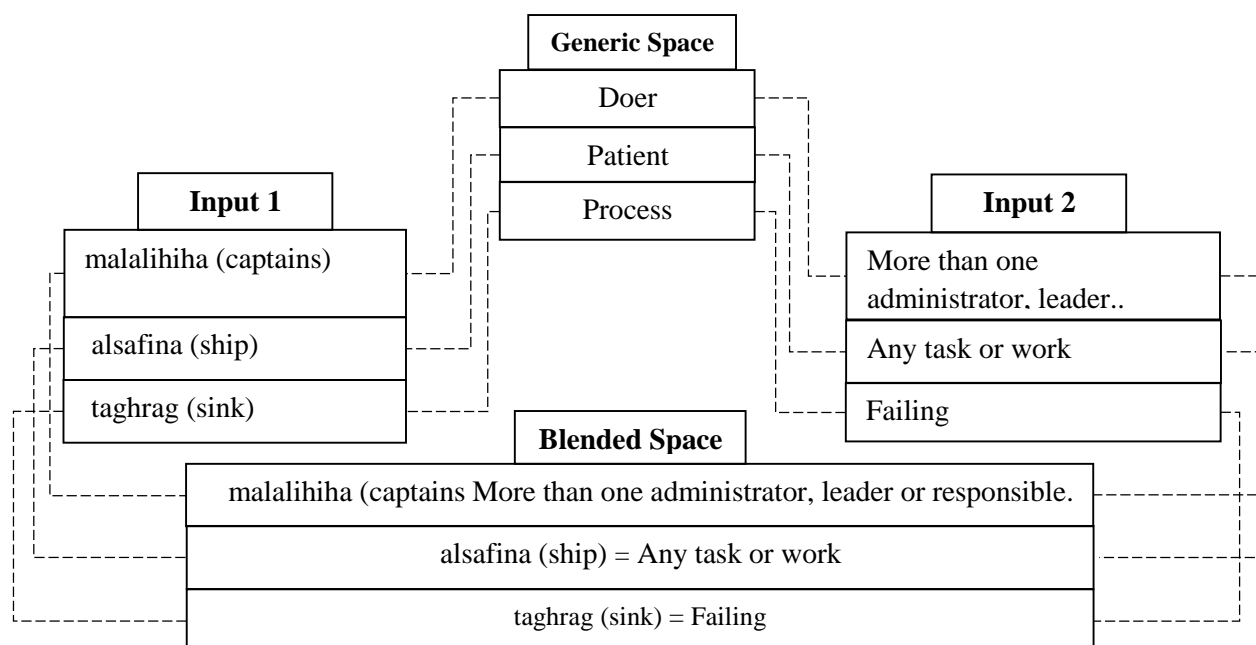
Figure (2): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (1)

Idiom (2): "أذبحها على قبلة"

adhbhha ealaa qibla

(Slaughter it toward a qiblah)

Intention: people will obey the person who does not frighten.

Input Space 1: the first space contains four main concepts, some of them are explicitly manifested like *qibla* (qiblah) as a direction and *adhbhha* (Slaughter) as a process, and others are not mentioned explicitly like *butcher* as a doer and *an animal* as a patient.

Input Space 2: while the first input includes specific and detailed concepts that indicate a specific situation, this space consists of the counter concepts that are highly abstract and general and they are applicable to unlimited number of situations because they represent the external shared framework with all these situations including that in the first input.

Blended Space: the blending between the countered concepts are based on their semantic roles and the shared features. The mapping between butcher and person is based on their semantic roles (doers) and their hyponymic relation in which person is a highly abstract or schematic meaning of the the word butcher. In the same context, the concept of ending can be viewed as a highly abstract superordinate to the process of slaughtering because the latter is a form of

ending (it causes ending a person or an animal's life). This hyponymic relation is not found between an animal and an issue.
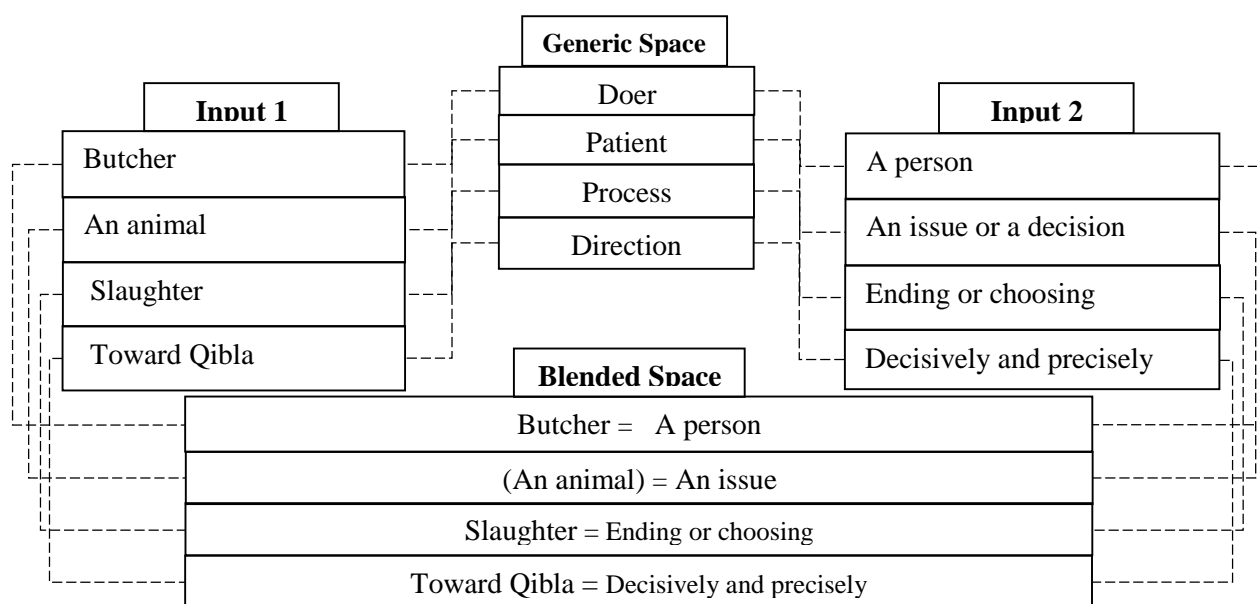

Figure (3): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (2)

Idiom (3): "ودع البزون شحمة"

wadae albuzun shahima

(He deposited a piece of flab with the cat)

Intention: Someone deposits something with a person will not return it.

Input Space-1: this input encodes a situation in which a person (doer) deposits (process) a piece of flab (patient) with a cat (receiver), and the consequence will be that the cat will eat the piece of flab (result). This situation comes to encode a meaning that can be used to show different situations with different details.

Input Space-1: it includes the counter concepts that can have various details and unpredictable situations, however, all these situations will be have the following concepts or some of them. These concepts are: a giver (doer), money or something valuable (patient), disposing (process) dishonest person (Receiver), the dishonest person will not return the money (result).

Blended Space: the counter parts or concepts in the two inputs have been selected through the selective projection (some of them may not be selected in some situations) in order to be matched. The generic space identifies the semantic roles and the identity of the parts in the two inputs to be connected according to them. It is obvious that some of the counter parts are linked by hyponymic relation as a shared identity between the two.

Idiom (4): "الامام الي مايشور محد يزوره" (*al'imam 'iilaya ma yshwr mahad yuzuruh*)

"The imam who does not cause harm (for his enemies), no one will visit (perform zyarah) him"

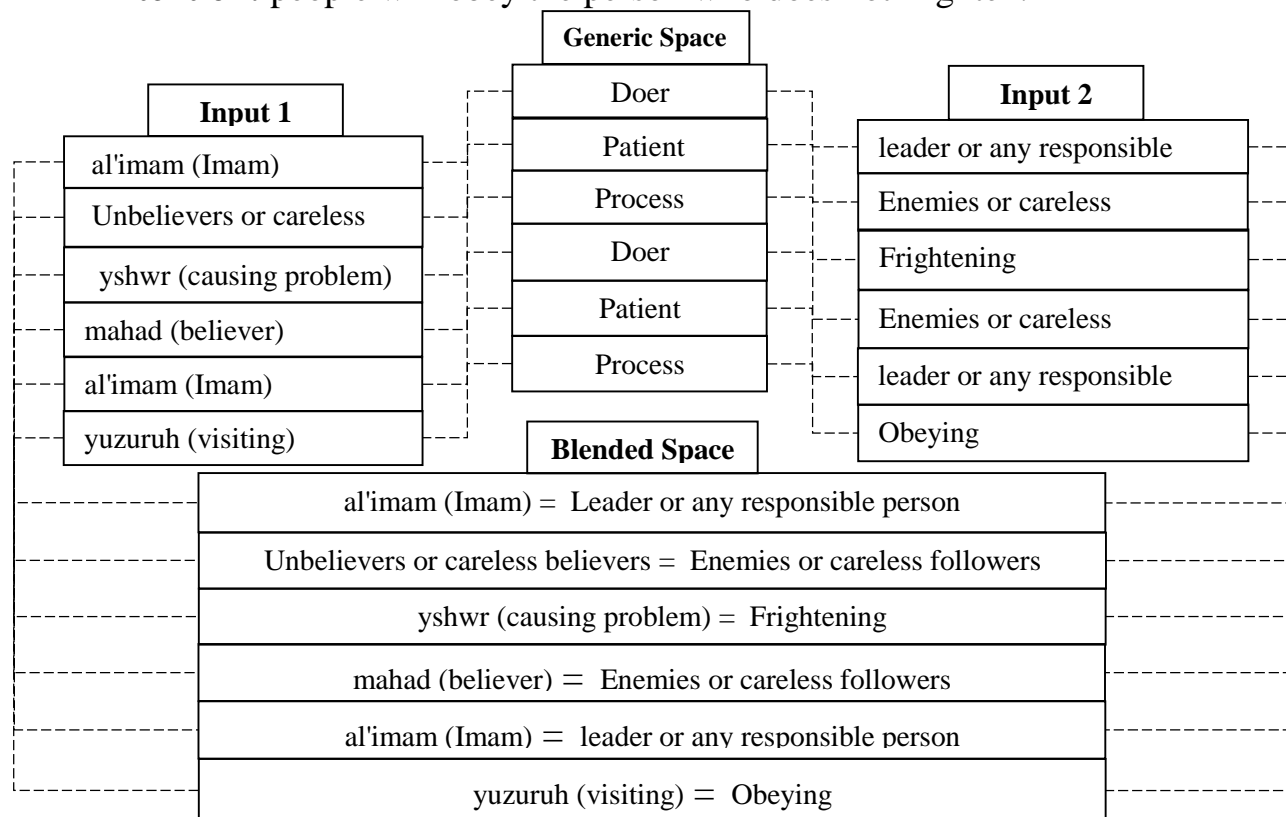**Intention:** people will obey the person who does not frighten.

Generic Space

	Input 1		Generic Space		Input 2	

Generic Space:
- Doer
- Patient
- Process
- Doer
- Patient
- Process

Input 1:
- al'imam (Imam)
- Unbelievers or careless
- yshwr (causing problem)
- mahad (believer)
- al'imam (Imam)
- yuzuruh (visiting)

Input 2:
- leader or any responsible
- Enemies or careless
- Frightening
- Enemies or careless
- leader or any responsible
- Obeying

Blended Space

- al'imam (Imam) = Leader or any responsible person
- Unbelievers or careless believers = Enemies or careless followers
- yshwr (causing problem) = Frightening
- mahad (believer) = Enemies or careless followers
- al'imam (Imam) = leader or any responsible person
- yuzuruh (visiting) = Obeying

Figure (5): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (4)

Idiom (5): "خله دمي يفور"

khalh damiy yafur

(He made my blood be boiling)
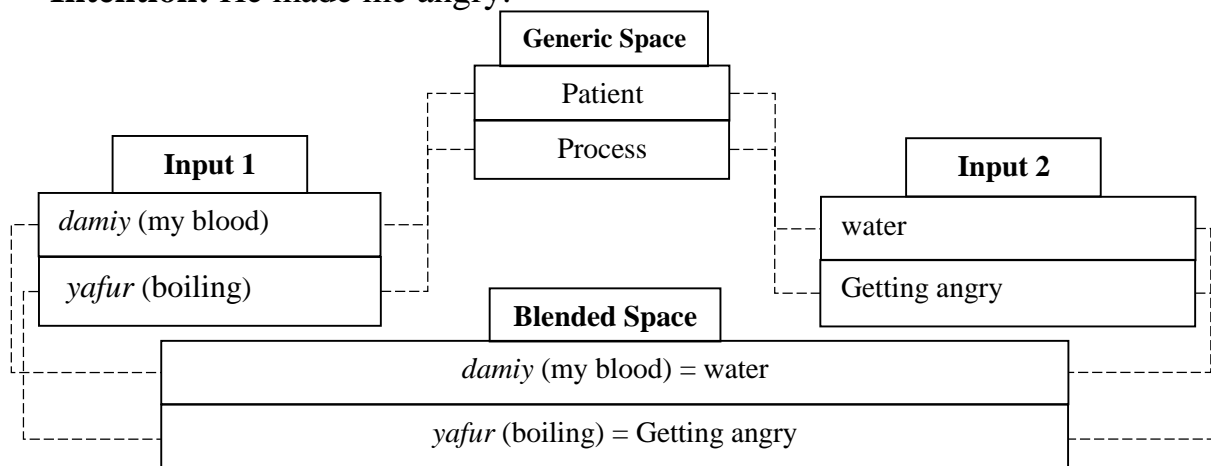
Intention: He made me angry.

Generic Space
- Patient
- Process

Input 1
- *damiy* (my blood)
- *yafur* (boiling)

Input 2
- water
- Getting angry

Blended Space
- *damiy* (my blood) = water
- *yafur* (boiling) = Getting angry

Figure (6): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (5)

Generic Space

| Doer |
| Patient |
| Receiver |
| Process |
| Result |

Input 1

| A person |
| albuzun (cat) |
| shahima (flap) |
| wadae (disposed) |
| cat will eat the piece of flap |

Input 2

| A giver |
| Dishonest person |
| Money or anything of value |
| Disposing |
| person will not return the money |

Blended Space

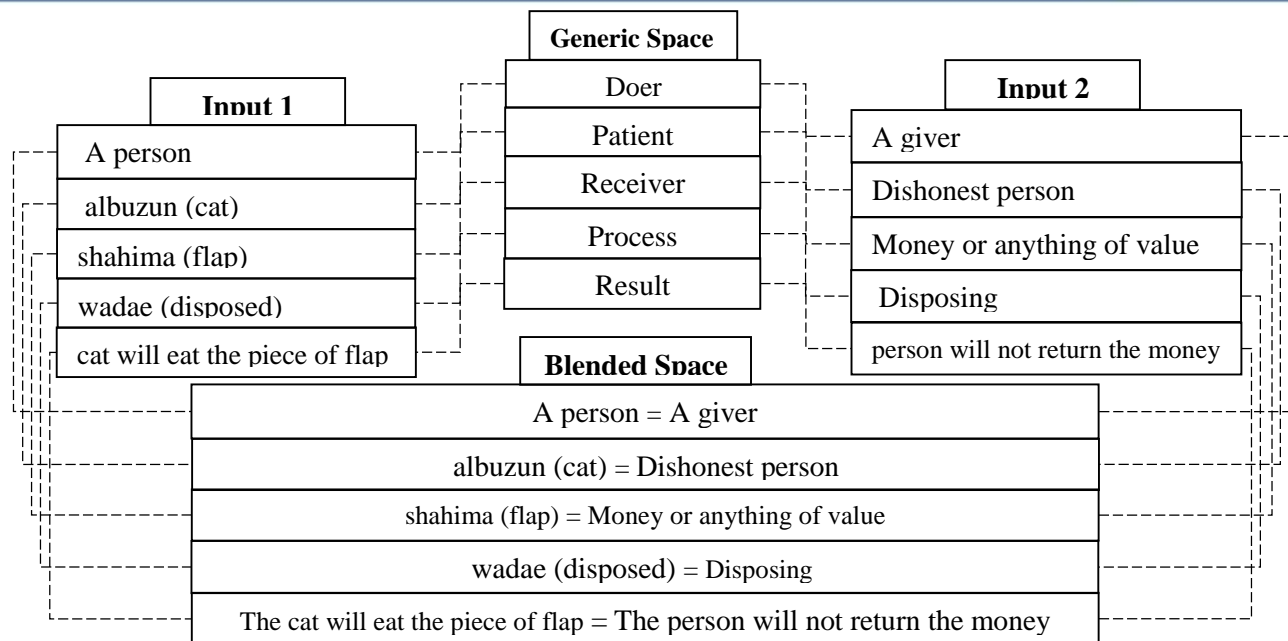| A person = A giver |
| albuzun (cat) = Dishonest person |
| shahima (flap) = Money or anything of value |
| wadae (disposed) = Disposing |
| The cat will eat the piece of flap = The person will not return the money |

Figure (4): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (3)

Idiom (6): "خلي عينك مفتحه" (Open your eyes)

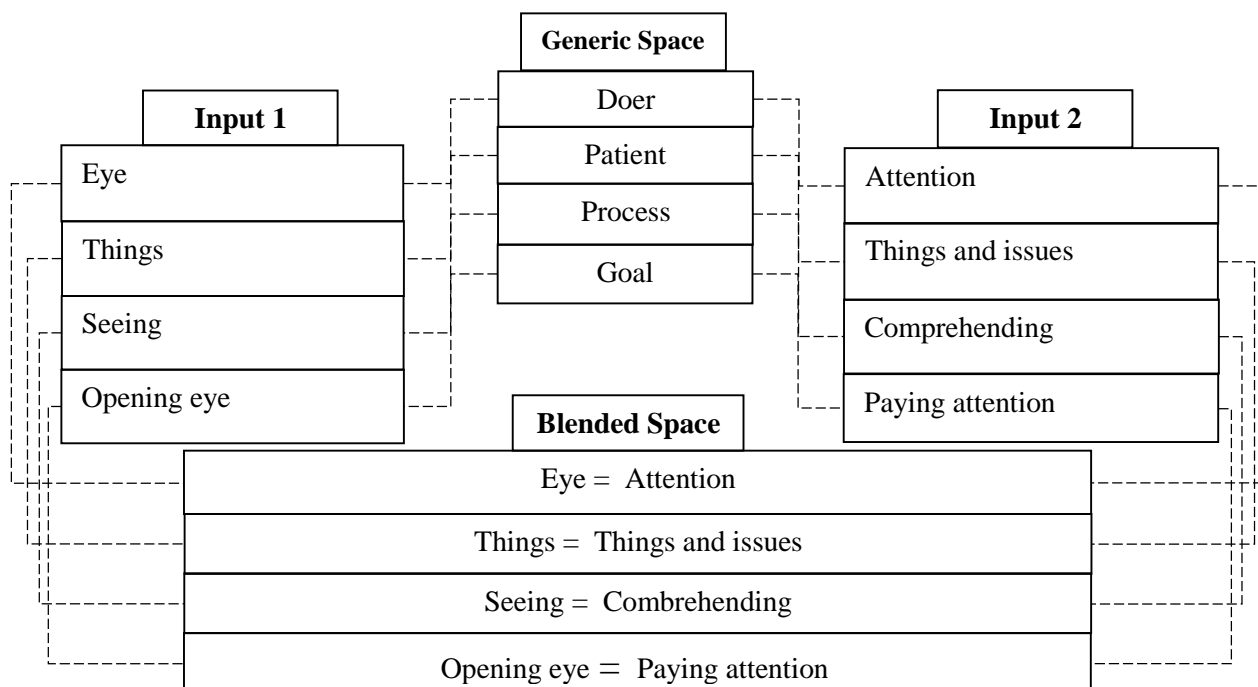*' khali eaynak muftahah*

Intention: Pay attention to something.

Generic Space

| Doer |
| Patient |
| Process |
| Goal |

Input 1

| Eye |
| Things |
| Seeing |
| Opening eye |

Input 2

| Attention |
| Things and issues |
| Comprehending |
| Paying attention |

Blended Space

| Eye = Attention |
| Things = Things and issues |
| Seeing = Combrehending |
| Opening eye = Paying attention |

Figure (7): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (6)

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Idiom (7): "النوم سلطان" (Sleep is a sultan)

alnuwm sultan

The meaning: No one can resist sleep

Generic Space
Doer
Patient
Process

Input 1
Sultan
People
Ruling or controlling

Input 2
alnuwm (sleep)
Person's consciousness
Forcing

Blended Space
Sultan = alnuwm (sleep)
People = Person's consciousness
Ruling or controlling = Forcing
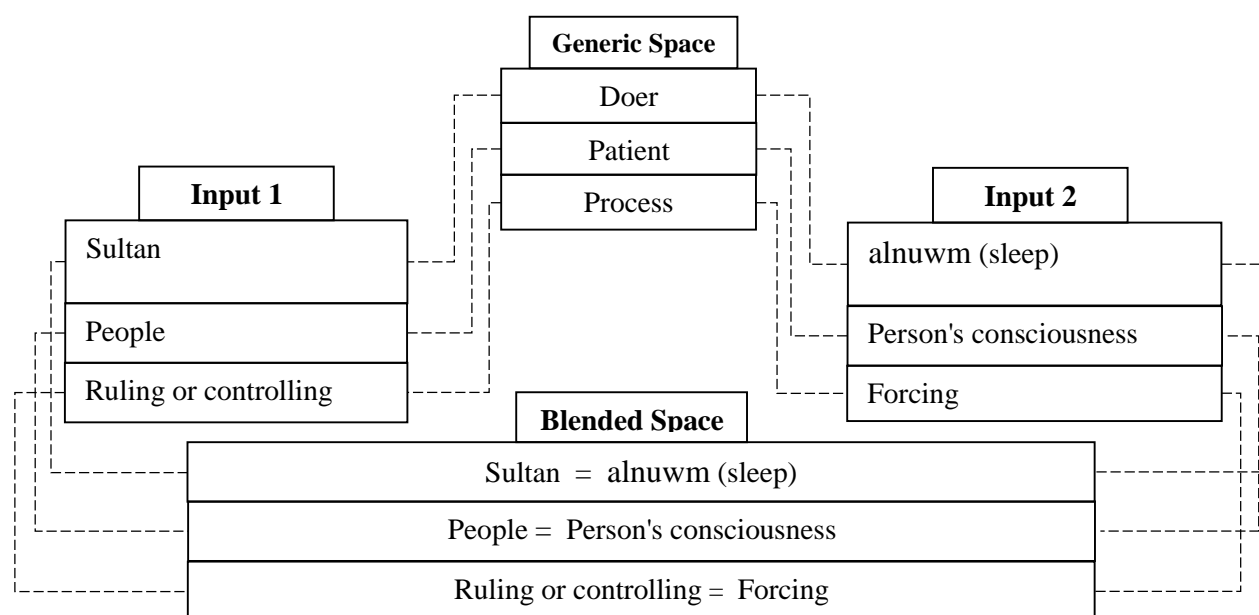
Figure (8): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (7)

Idiom (8): "يسد ضوه الشمس بمنخل" (The man obscures the sunlight with sieve)

yasid duah alshams bmenkhul

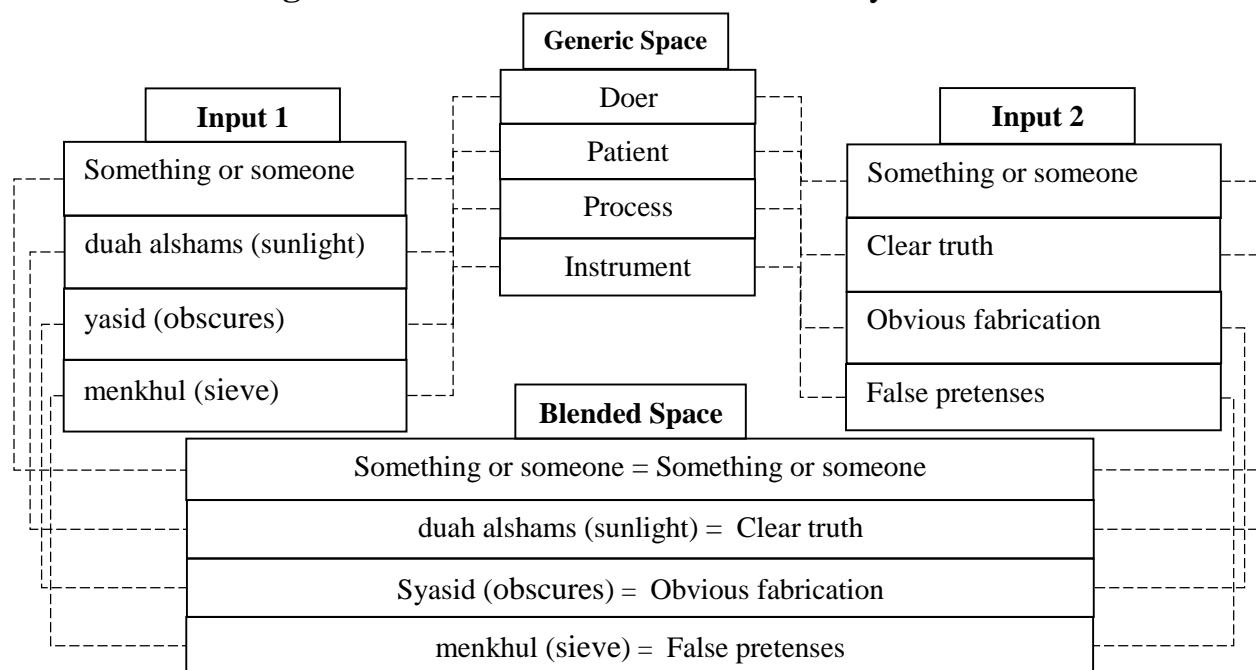**The meaning:** No one can refute an obvious truth by weak evidences or claims.

Generic Space
Doer
Patient
Process
Instrument

Input 1
Something or someone
duah alshams (sunlight)
yasid (obscures)
menkhul (sieve)

Input 2
Something or someone
Clear truth
Obvious fabrication
False pretenses

Blended Space
Something or someone = Something or someone
duah alshams (sunlight) = Clear truth
Syasid (obscures) = Obvious fabrication
menkhul (sieve) = False pretenses

Figure (9): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (8)

Idiom (9): "جلدك يحكك" (Your skin is rubbing)

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jildak yuhikak

Intention: You deserve punishment because of your wrong behavior.

Idiom (10): "غسلت ايدي منك" (I washed my hands from you)

ghasalat 'aydi minak

Intention: I lost my trust in you.

Figure (10): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (9)
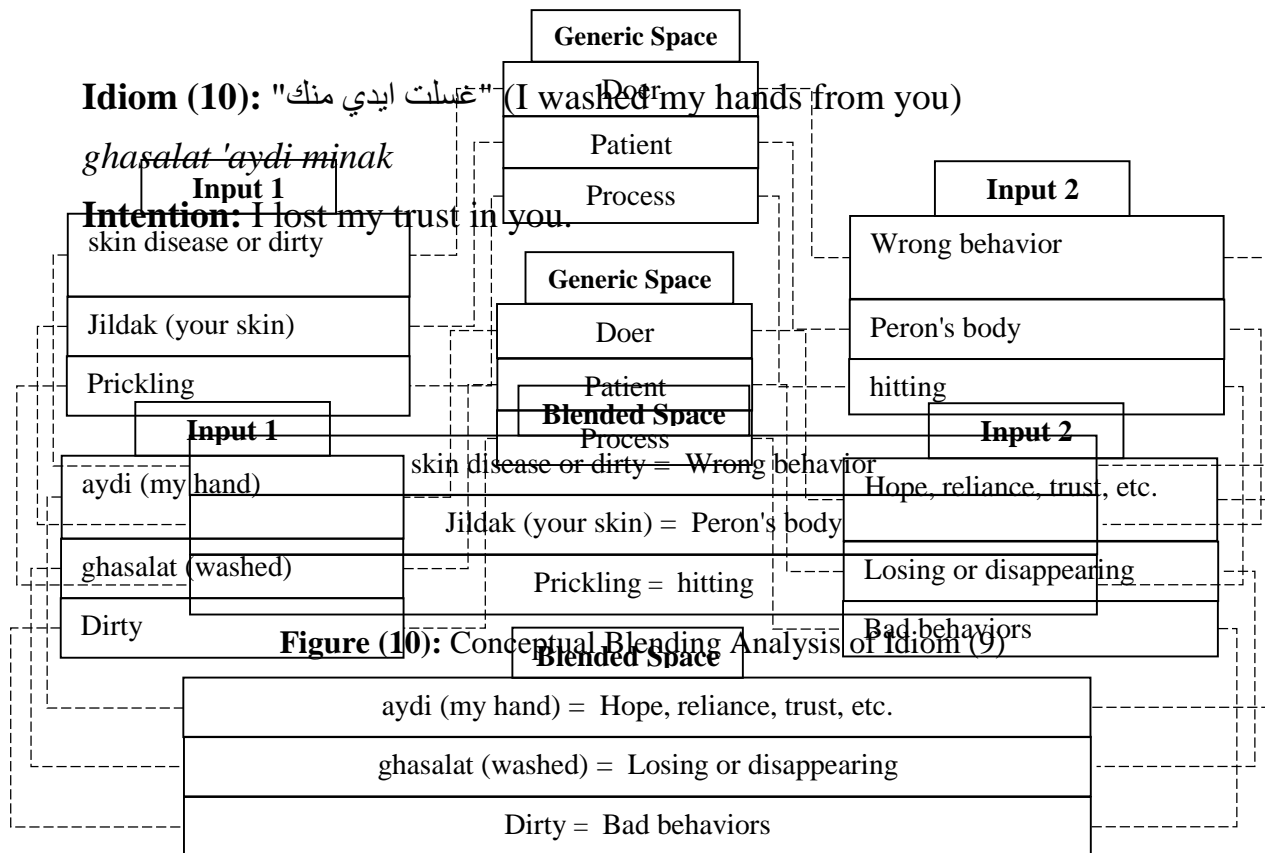
Figure (11): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (10)

Idiom (11): "كلبي نار" (My heart is fire)

galbi naar

Intention: I am so warried/sad/angry.
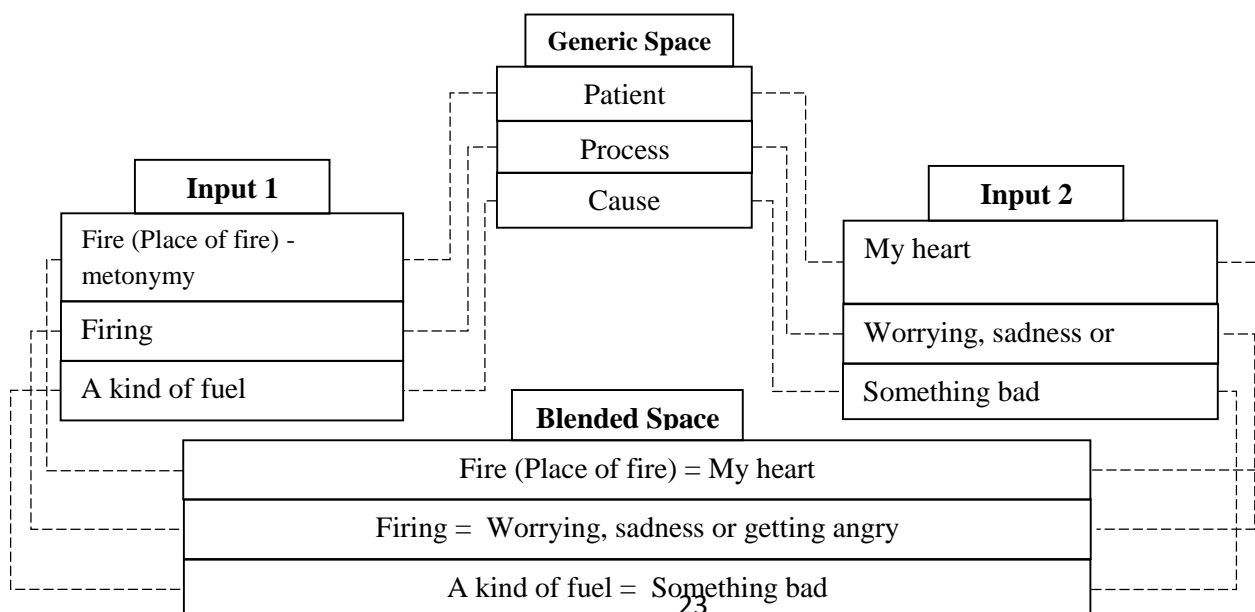
Figure (12): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (11)

Idiom (12): "عيونه شبعانه" (His eyes are full)

euyunah shabeanah

Intention: S/he is contented.

Generic Space
- Doer
- Patient
- Process
- Result

Input 1
- Stomach
- Food
- Eating
- Fill

Input 2
- euyunah (his eyes) -- He
- Views
- Seeing many things
- Satisfied

Blended Space
- Stomach = euyunah (his eyes) -- He
- Food = Views
- Eating = Seeing many things
- Fill = Satisfied
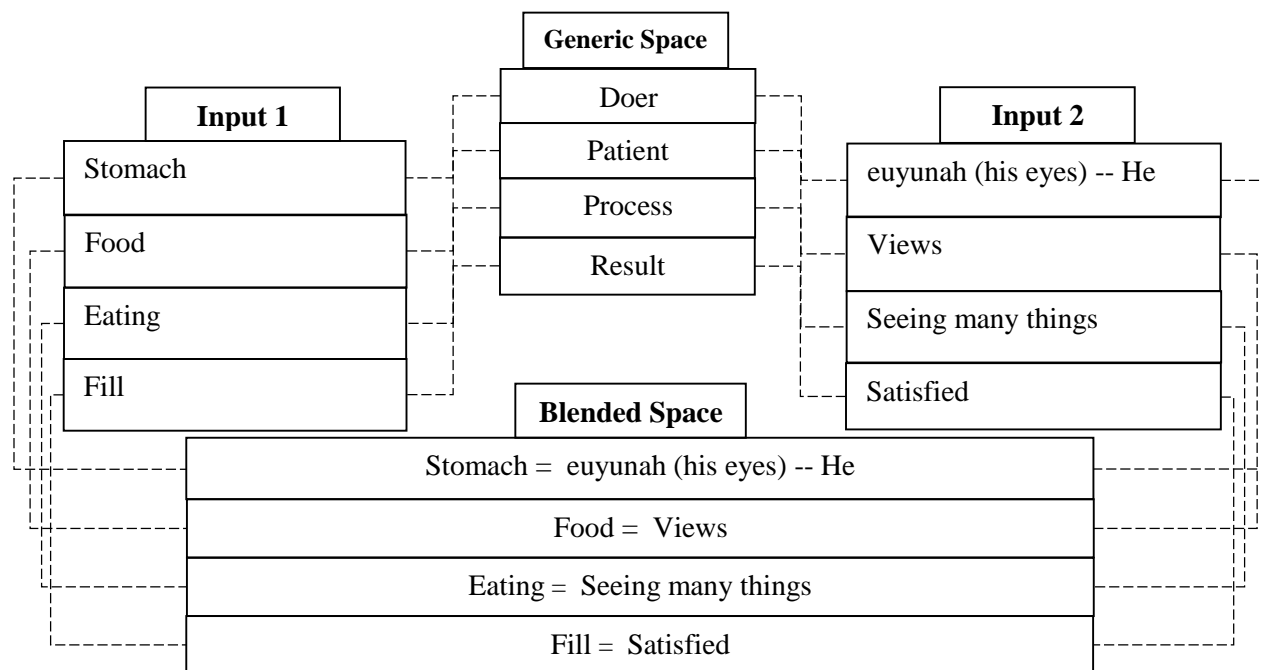
Figure (13): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (12)

Idiom (13): "لا تزرعني هنا" (Do not plant me here)

la tazraeni hna

The meaning: Do not make wait for a long time.

Generic Space
- Doer
- Patient
- Process
- Place & Time

Input 1
- Farmer
- Plant
- azrae (planting)
- Unchangeable place

Input 2
- You
- Me
- Making me waite
- Particular place for a long time

Blended Space
- Farmer = You
- Plant = Me
- azrae (planting) = Making me wait
- Unchangeable place = Particular place for a long time
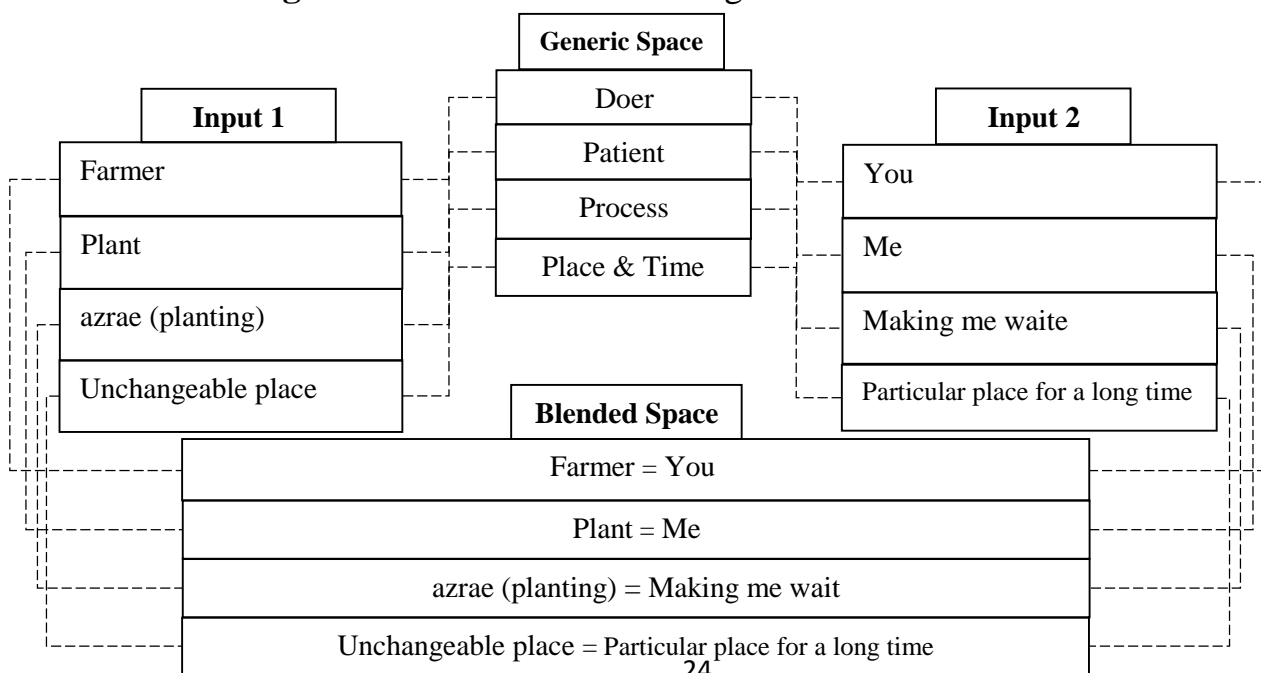
Figure (14): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (13)

Idiom (14): "حجيه يسم البدن" (His speech poisons the body)

hajih ysim albadan

The meaning: His speech is irritating.
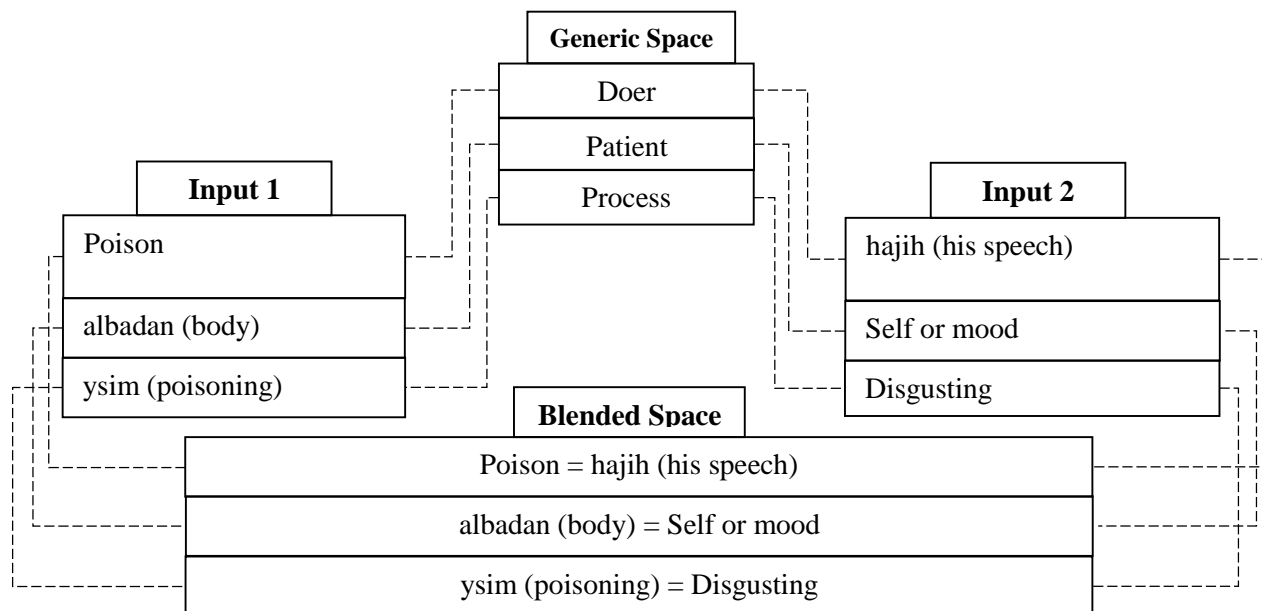
Figure (15): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (14)

Idiom (15): "البير التشرب منه مي لتذب بيها حجارة" (The well from which you drink water, do not throw stones inside)

albayr altashrub minah may lathib byh hijar

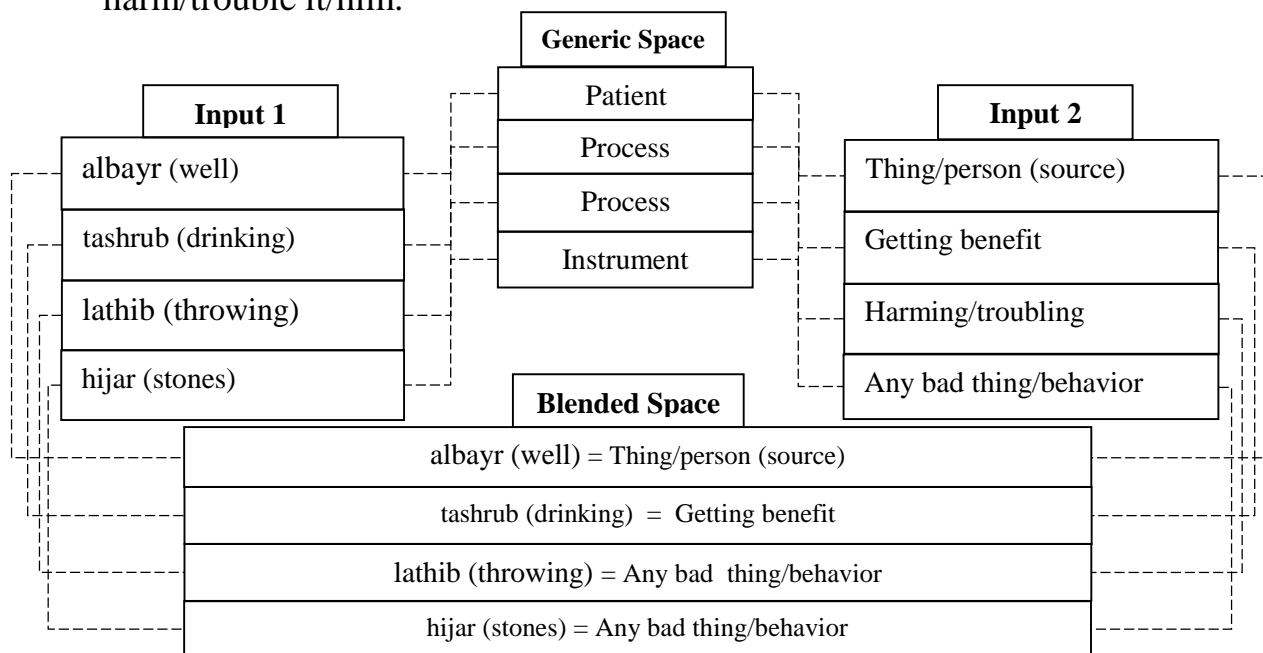**Intention:** The thing/person (source) from which you get benefit, do not harm/trouble it/him.

Figure (16): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (15)

Idiom (16): "طلعها من حلك السبع" (He took her out of the lion's mouth)

taleiaha min halg alsabia

Intention: He rescued her from an inevitable problem.
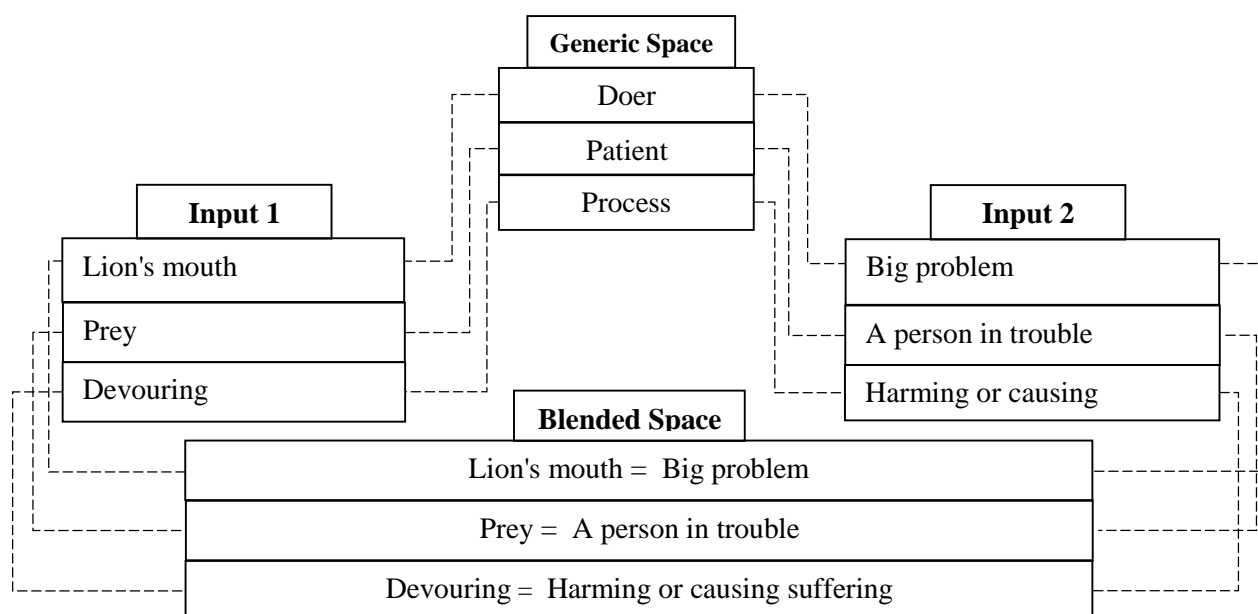
Figure (17): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (16)

Idiom (17): "الي مايعرف الصقر يشويه"

ally mayerf alsagr yashwih

"The person who does not know falcon, barbecues it"

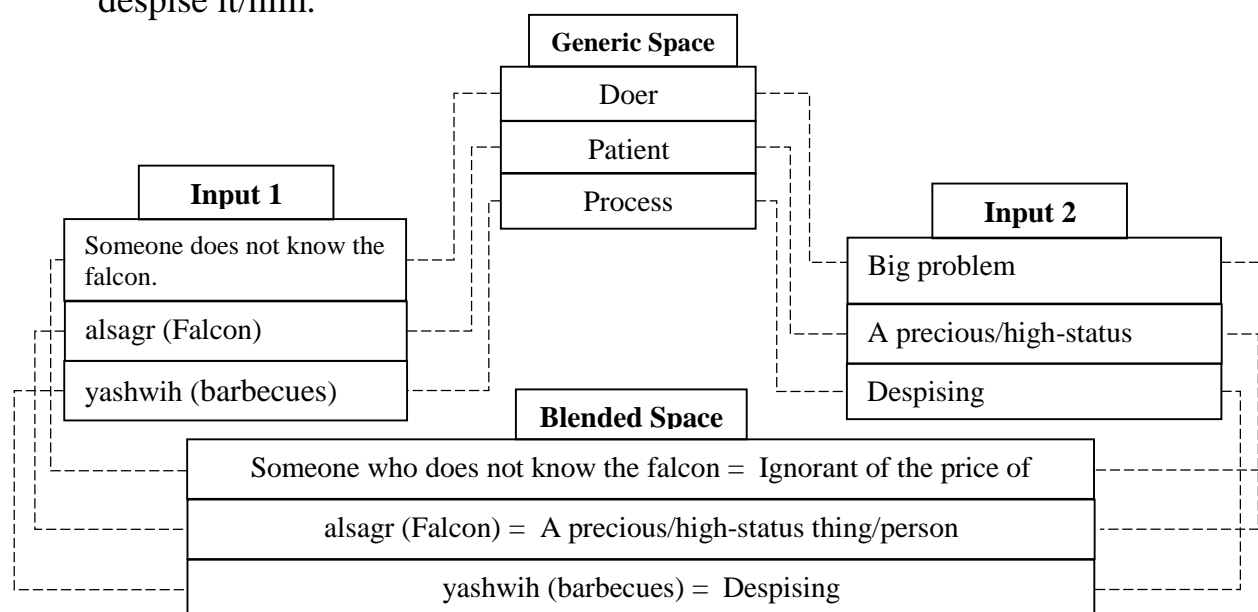**Intention:** The person who does not know a precious/high-status thing/person, despise it/him.

Figure (18): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (17)

Idiom (18): "اليد الما تكدر تلويها بوسها" (The arm that you cannot flex, kiss it)

alayd 'almatigder tlawiha busha

Intention: The person that you cannot confront, treat him friendly.

Figure (19): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (18)
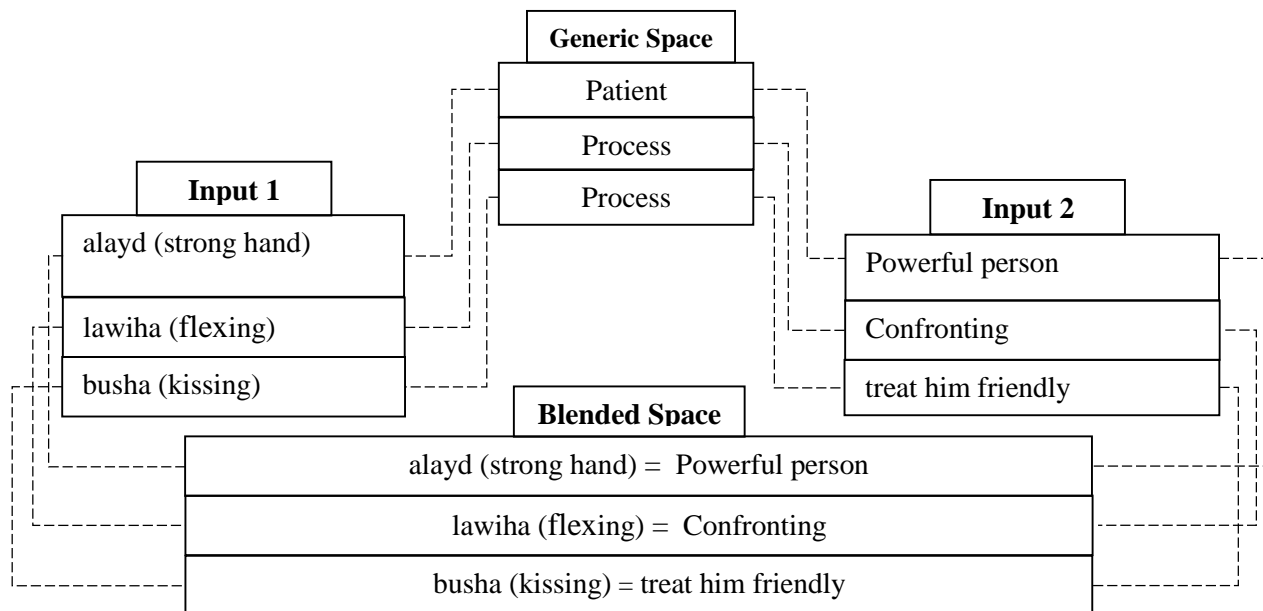
Idiom (19): الباب اللي يجيك منه ريح سده واستريح (The door through which wind pass, close it to be comfortable.)

albab ally yjiik minh rih sidah waistarih
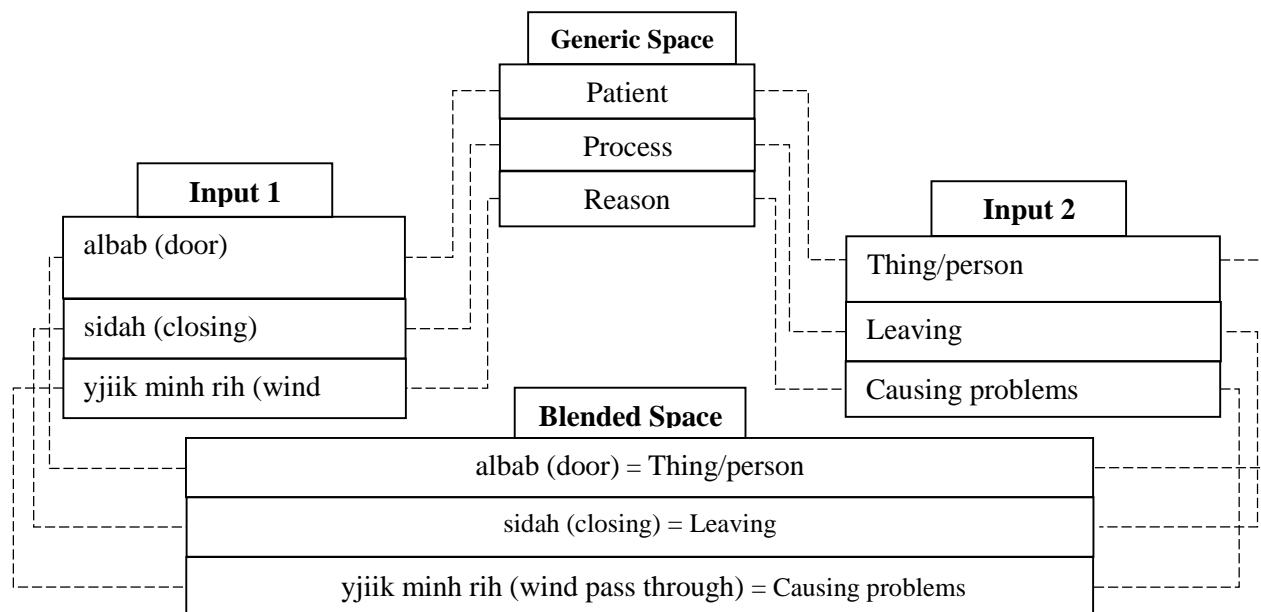
Intention: The thing/person causes you problem, leave it/him.

Figure (20): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (19)

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Idiom (20): "باب النجار مخلع" (Carpenter's door is disjoined)

bab alnajar mukhlae

The meaning: A professional fixes broken/non-working objects while his objects are broken/ non-working.
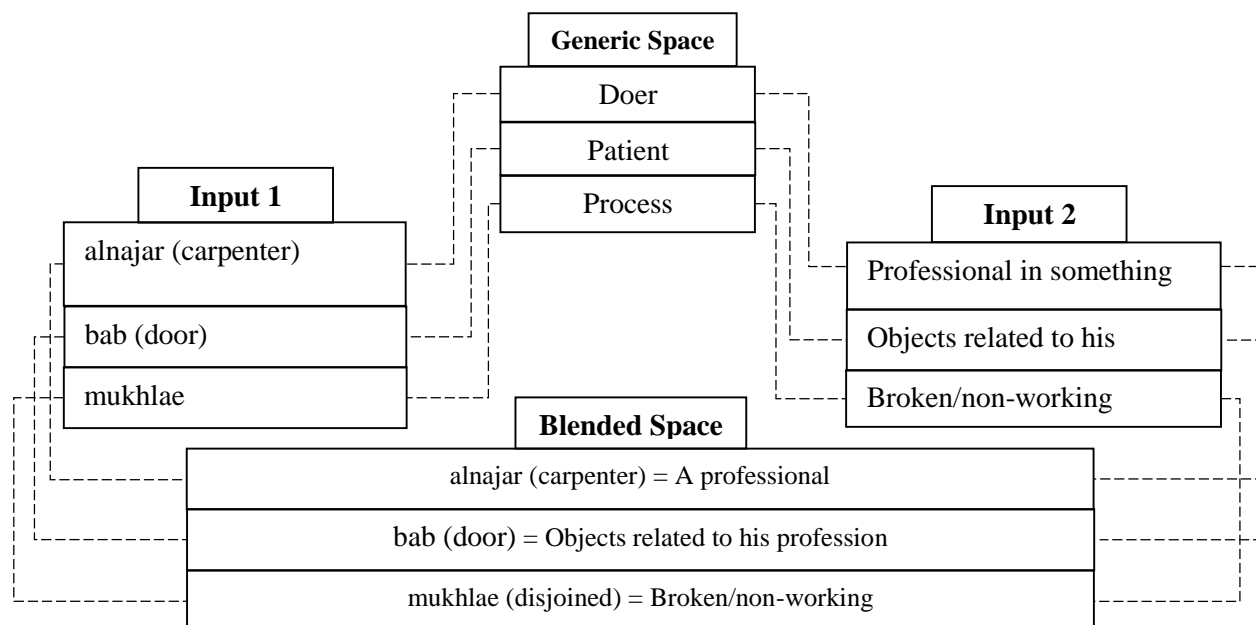
Generic Space
- Doer
- Patient
- Process

Input 1
- alnajar (carpenter)
- bab (door)
- mukhlae

Input 2
- Professional in something
- Objects related to his
- Broken/non-working

Blended Space
- alnajar (carpenter) = A professional
- bab (door) = Objects related to his profession
- mukhlae (disjoined) = Broken/non-working

Figure (21): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (20)

Idiom (21): "الحجارة الي ماتعجبك تفشخك" (The stone you do not like injure your head)

alhijara 'iilayi mataeajbak tfiishkhak

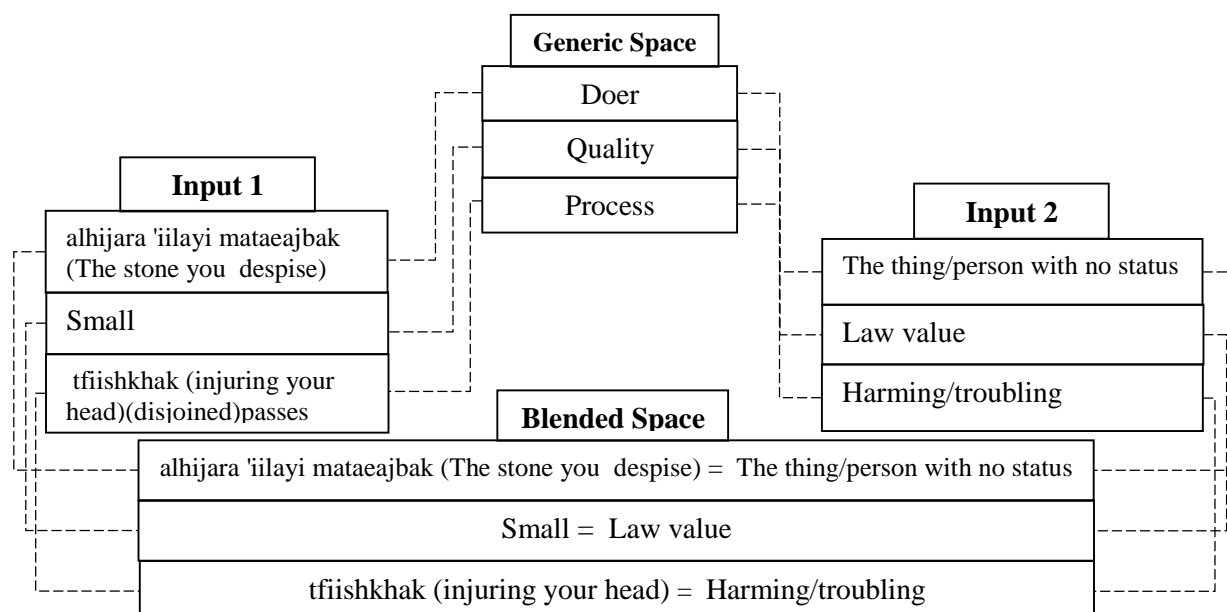**Intention:** The thing/person that you despise, it may harm/trouble you.

Generic Space
- Doer
- Quality
- Process

Input 1
- alhijara 'iilayi mataeajbak (The stone you despise)
- Small
- tfiishkhak (injuring your head)(disjoined)passes

Input 2
- The thing/person with no status
- Law value
- Harming/troubling

Blended Space
- alhijara 'iilayi mataeajbak (The stone you despise) = The thing/person with no status
- Small = Law value
- tfiishkhak (injuring your head) = Harming/troubling

Figure (22): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (21)

Idiom (22): "المبلل ميخاف من المطر" (The wet person does not care for rain)

almubalal maikhaf min almatar

Intention: The person who suffers from or has many problems/responsibilities will not fear additional problems/responsibilities.
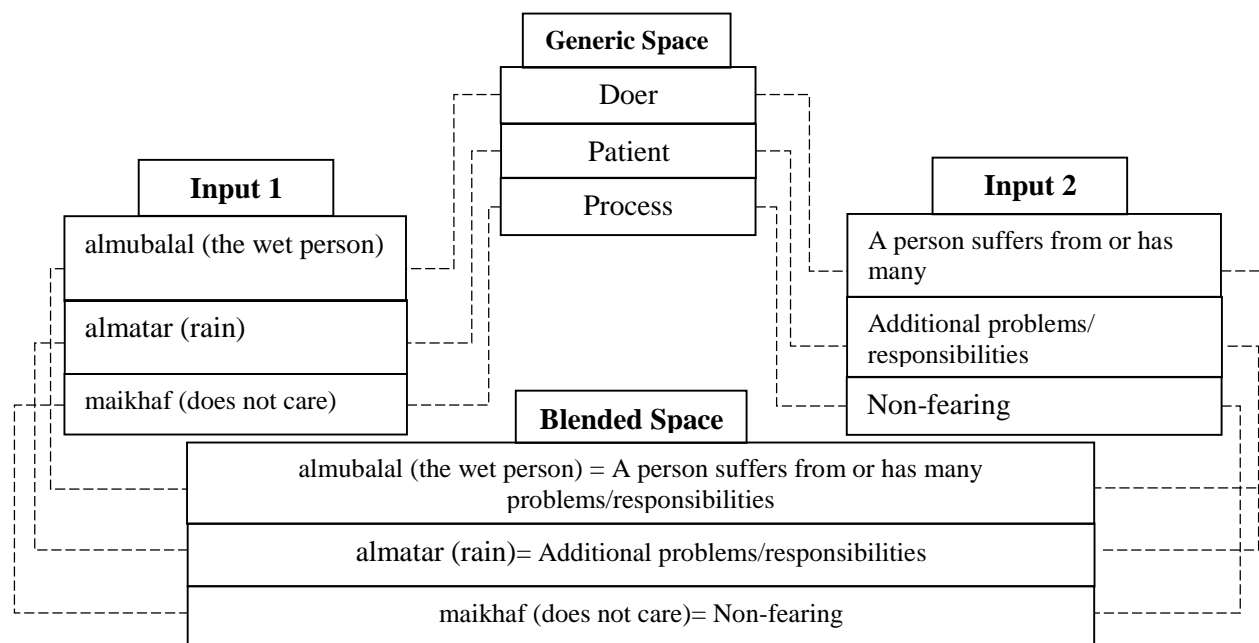

Figure (23): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (22)

Idiom (23): "المينوش العنب يكول عنه حامض" (The person who cannot pick grapes claims that it is acid)

almaynwsh alenb yakul eanah hamid

Intention: The person who is unable to get a desired thing dispraises it.
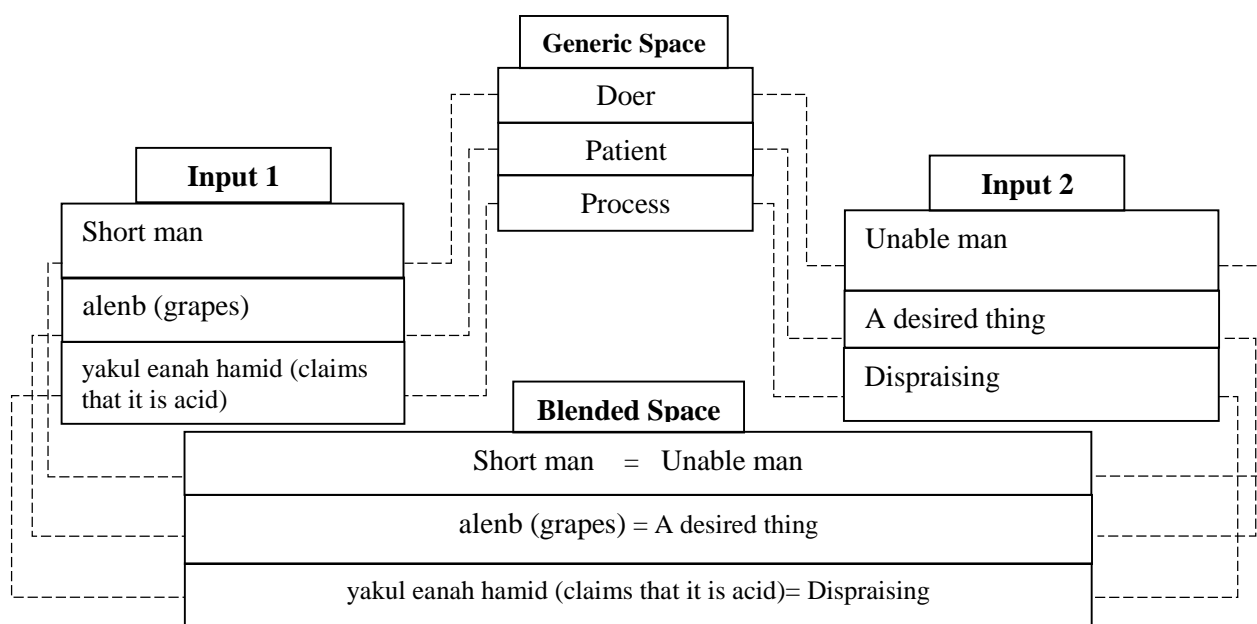
Figure (24): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (23)

Idiom (24): "إذا غاب القط العب يا فار" (If the cat is absent, the mouse plays)

'iidha ghab alqit aleab ya far

Intention: If the powerful/strong person is absent, the powerless/weak person will control or be free.
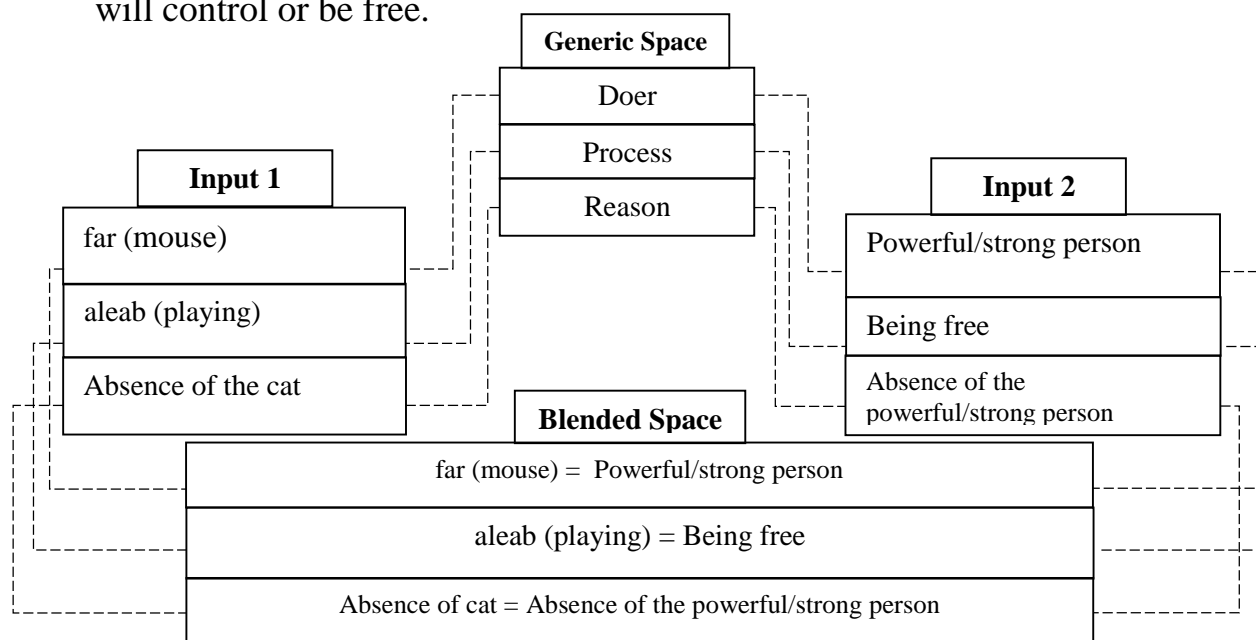

Figure (25): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (24)

Idiom (25): "اليثرد يدري والياكل ما يدري" (The person who feeds knows and the person who eats does not know)

alyathrid yadri walyakil ma yadri

Intention: The responsible for providing things (money, food, etc.) knows their value while those who take these things do not know their value.
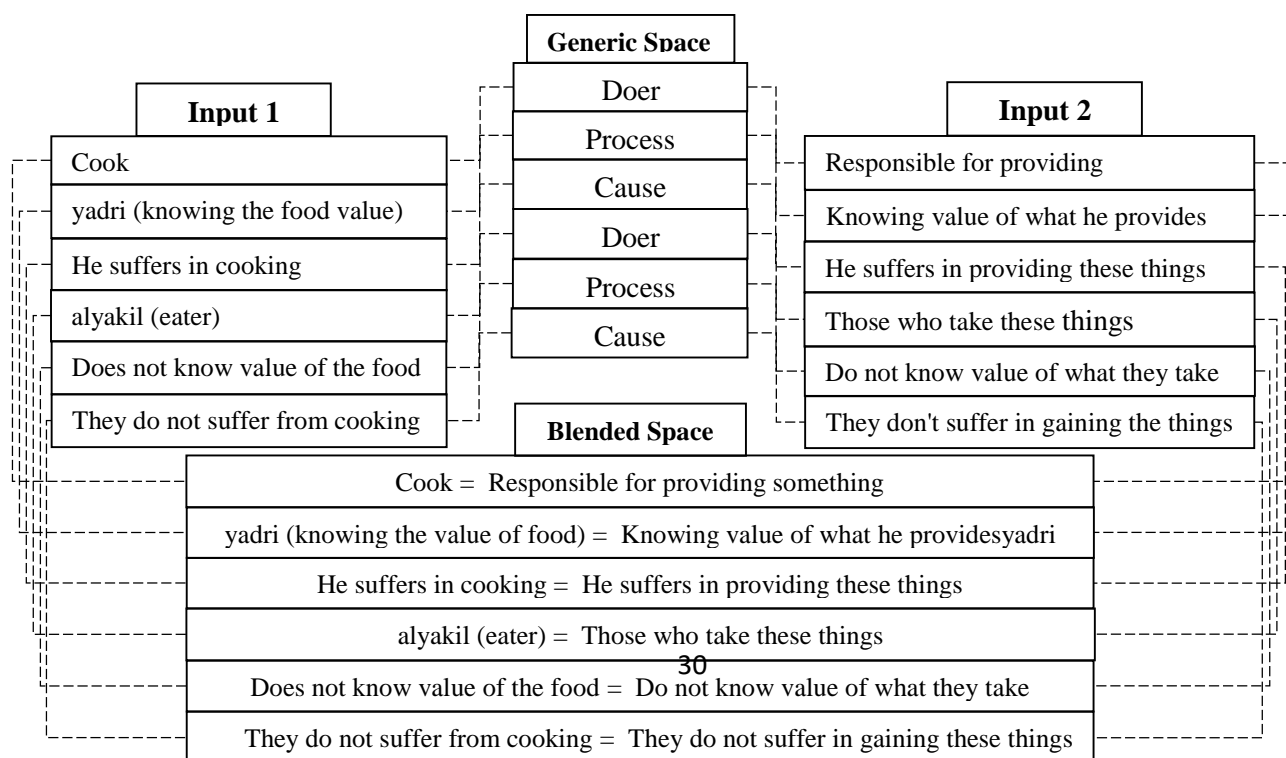

Figure (26): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (25)

Idiom (26): "الغركان ايچلب بكشاية" (The drown person clings to a straw)

alghrgan aychalib ibgishayah

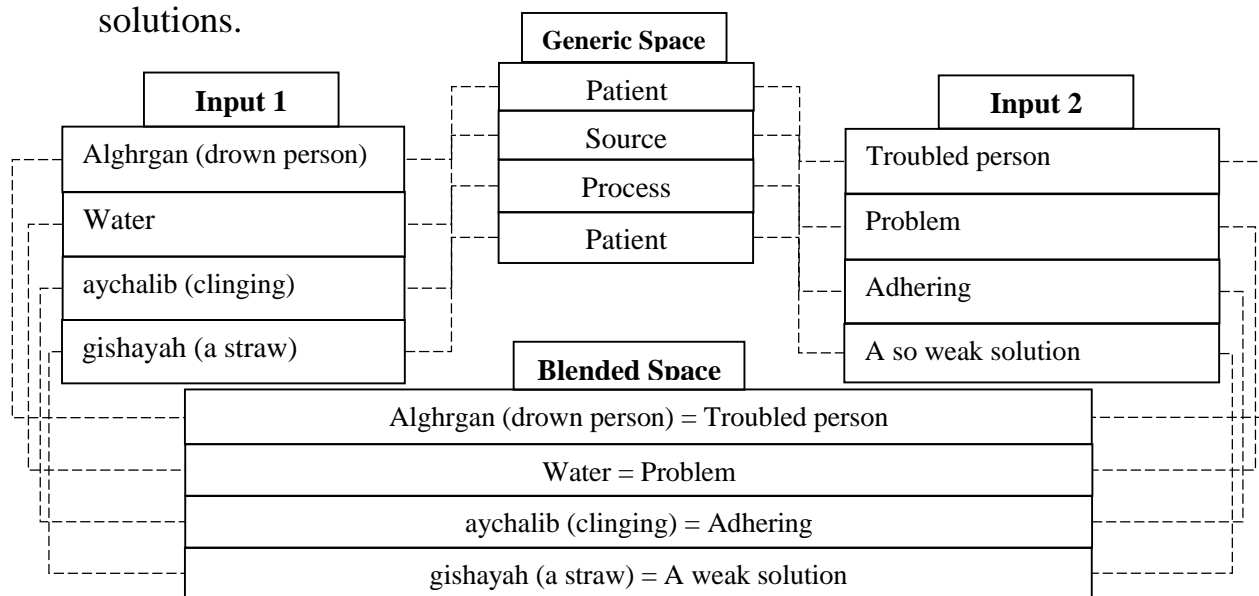**The meaning:** The person who has a big problem adheres even to the weakest solutions.

Generic Space
Patient
Source
Process
Patient

Input 1
Alghrgan (drown person)
Water
aychalib (clinging)
gishayah (a straw)

Input 2
Troubled person
Problem
Adhering
A so weak solution

Blended Space
Alghrgan (drown person) = Troubled person
Water = Problem
aychalib (clinging) = Adhering
gishayah (a straw) = A weak solution

Figure (27): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (26)

Idiom (26): "درب الچلب علكصاب" (The dog's path is to the butcher)

darab alchalib ealgasab

Intention: The person (A) who denies someone's (B) favor or refuses to help someone helped him will need that man in the future.
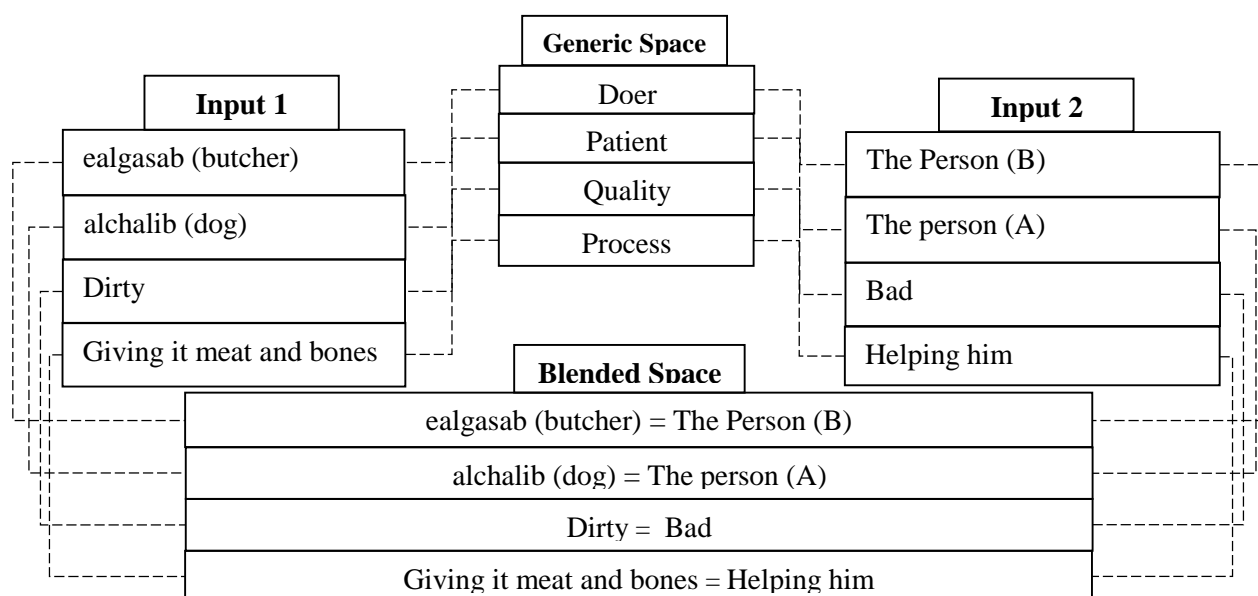
Generic Space
Doer
Patient
Quality
Process

Input 1
ealgasab (butcher)
alchalib (dog)
Dirty
Giving it meat and bones

Input 2
The Person (B)
The person (A)
Bad
Helping him

Blended Space
ealgasab (butcher) = The Person (B)
alchalib (dog) = The person (A)
Dirty = Bad
Giving it meat and bones = Helping him

Figure (27): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (26)

Idiom (27): "كثر الدك يفك اللحيم" (The more knocking disassembles the weld)

kathur aldak yafuk allahim

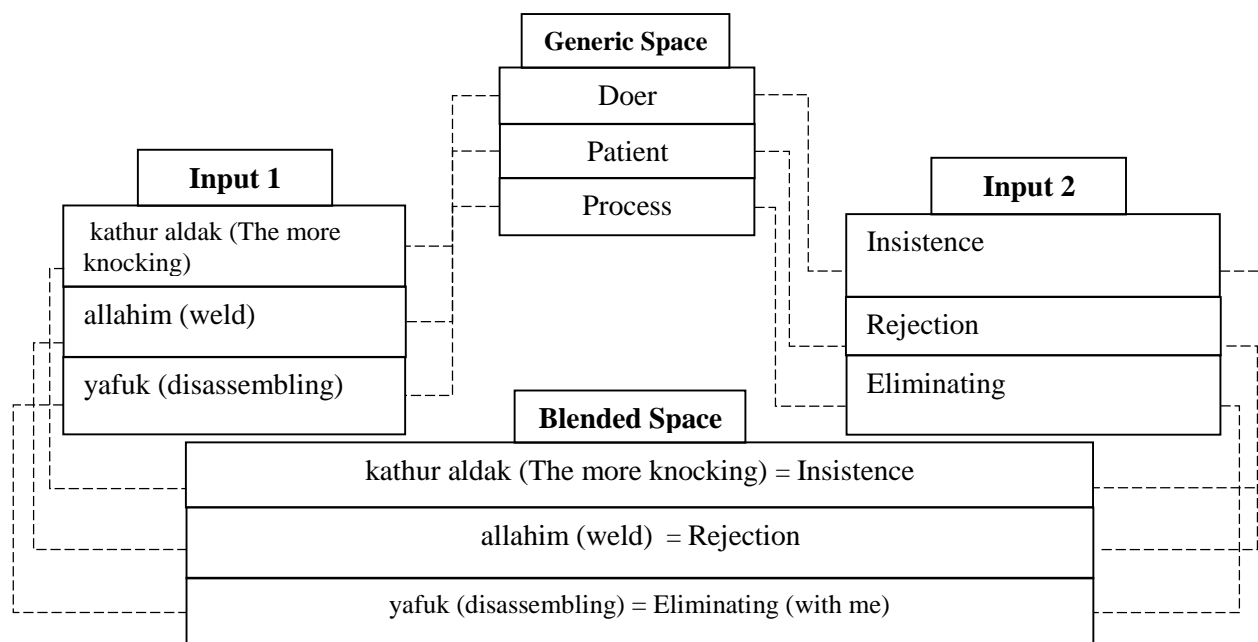**Intention:** Insistence eliminates rejection at the end.

Figure (28): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (27)

Idiom (28): "اكتل الحية من راسها" ((Kill the snake from its head)

aktil alhayah min rasha

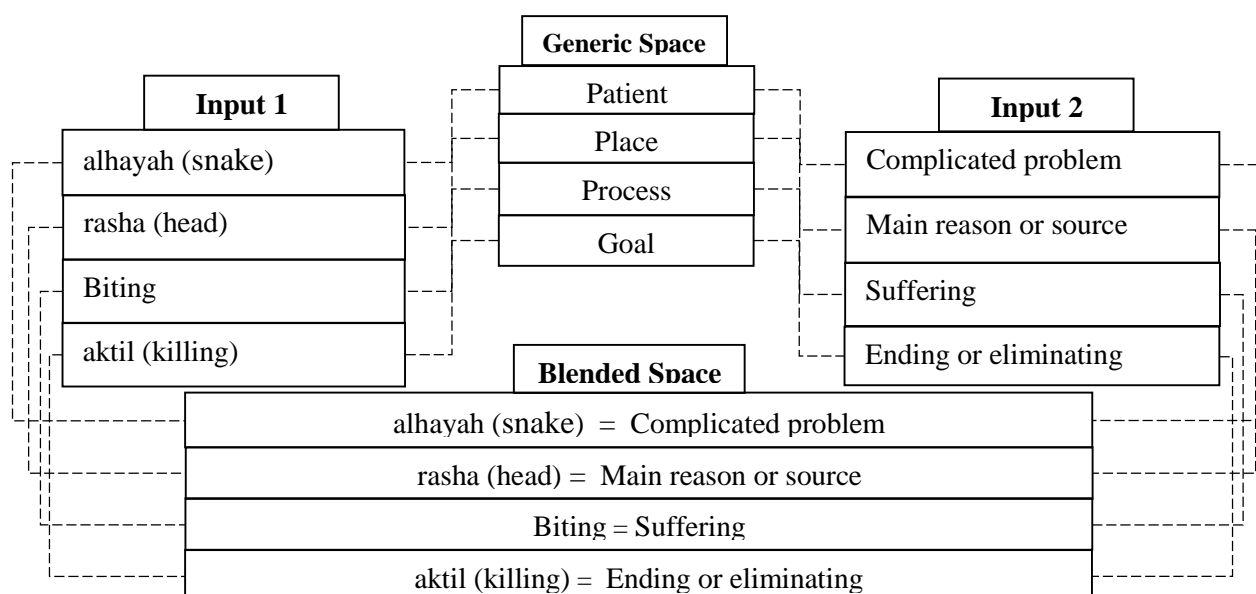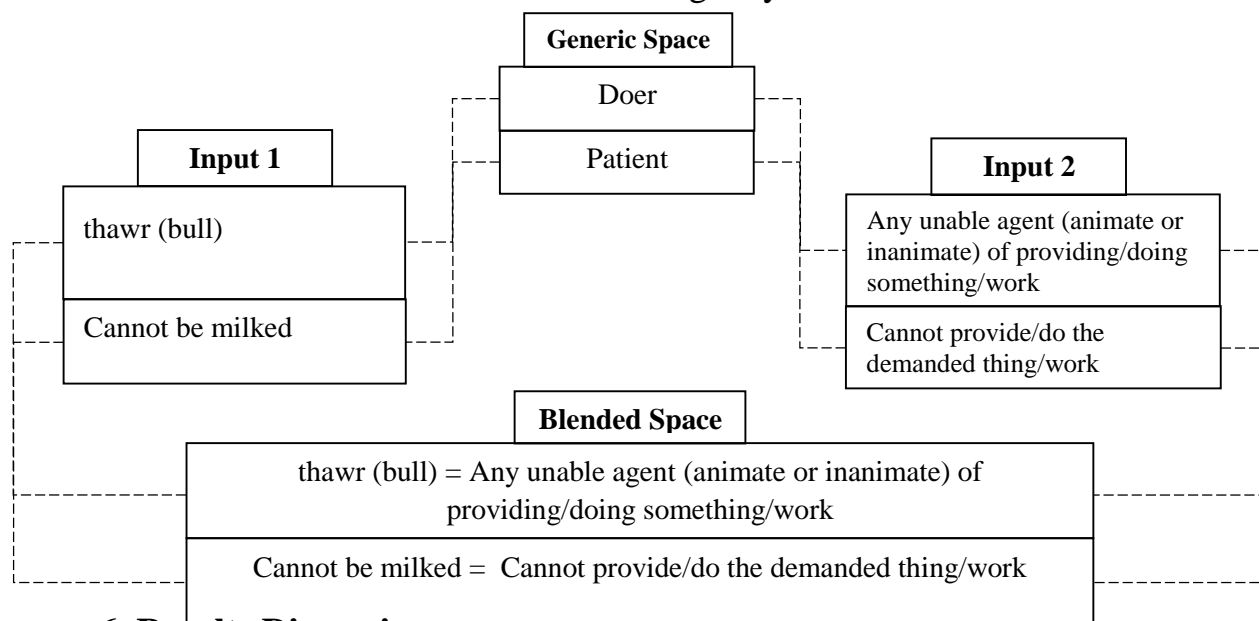**Intention:** Insistence eliminates rejection at the end.

Figure (29): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (28)

Idiom (29): أكله ثور ... يكول حلبه (I told him that it is bull… he says "milk it")

'agulah thawr ... yagul ihilbah

Intention: You cannot ask someone to give you what he does not have.

Figure (30): Conceptual Blending Analysis of Idiom (29)

6. Results Discussion

The analysis of the above selected idioms was in terms of the conceptual blending theory. It is found that all the analyzed idioms are found in the form of analogy between two situations and this analogy is based on metaphoricity. The meanings of these idioms are fixed in Iraqi dialect and they encodes the meanings of the different situations that they used in. As clarified in the analysis, the first input consists of some concepts or a fixed well known situation that is used analogically to indicate a specific meaning. The second input has unlimited number of possible situations that have some general similarities with the situation in the first input. One of the remarkable aspect of metaphoricity between the concepts of the two inputs is the hyponymic relations in which the one of them represents the superordinate to the second or both of them belong to the same superordinate. Some of the concepts in the inputs are not directly represented, but metonymically. In general, idioms represent a very distinctive analogy that is based on metaphoricity in which the first input is fixed and it is part of the language dictionary, while the second input is unpredictable and have different details according to the different situations and contexts of our daily life uses.

7. Conclusions

The current study has raised two main questions about the role of metaphoricity in structuring Iraqi idioms and the main aspects of this metaphoricity. In light of the above analysis and results, the following conclusions can be delivered on the basis of the research questions:

1. Idioms are containers of meanings that are used in the form of analogy which is mainly based on metaphoricity which works in this context not as a figure of speech, but as a feature and process that structure idioms.

2. Metaphoricity of idioms have a distinctive aspect in which the analogy takes place by using two compared situations, one of them is fixed and part of the language dictionary (the first space) and the second one is unpredictable because it differs from one situation to anther.

3. Hyponymy and metonymy play a role in metaphoricity in which the compared concepts may have hyponymic relation, and some concepts are not directly mentioned but through concepts have metonymic relation with.

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