AISB Journal **1**(2), © SSAISB, 2003
http://www.aisb.org.uk

The horse-bird creature generation experiment

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Abstract

This paper presents the process and results of experiments around the generation of blends of a concept of "horse" and a concept of "bird". The blending process is based on the framework of Conceptual Blending (Fauconnier and Turner, 1998) and is achieving some stability in its development. We present an overview of the generative system, Divago, namely of its newest developments around the optimality constraints. The results demonstrate the creative potential of such a system with regard to the generation of new concepts from the combination of pre-existing ones, although highlighting problems and further developments that must be taken.

1 Introduction

One big challenge to AI, more specifically to Computational Creativity, is that of the generation of new concepts. The problem starts from the very definition of *concept* and its representation, very interestings issue on their own. Assuming a concept representation and semantics, we are then faced with the problem of the *process*. What kind of processes can yield new and valid concepts?

In this paper, we apply a model that follows a framework, named Conceptual Blending (CB) (Fauconnier and Turner, 1998), as a creative process and present some results of recent experiments. Although lacking in formalization and scientific proof in some aspects, this framework suggests principles and processes to explain many creative cognitive phenomena such as metaphor, analogy and conceptual combination. In its many issues, Conceptual Blending is, at the least, a very elegant model of creativity, a motivation that lead us to bring it to a computational basis. In the system we are developing, *Divago*, those principles and processes are applied iteratively until a *stable* solution is found. This solution should be a *blend*, a new concept (or web of concepts) that shares structure and knowledge from the inputs, yet having an emerging structure of its own (e.g. a "pegasus", as a blend of "horse" and "bird").

We start this paper by a short review of similar systems, namely from the Conceptual Combination area, after which we give an overview of the Conceptual Blending framework. Divago is presented afterwards and, finally, we dedicate to present and analyse the experiments we made with the "horse" and "bird" domains. This should be the main motivation for this paper. The reader will also find a final discussion, in which we make a reflection around the results, the presented model and its creative aspects.

2 State of the Art

The first computational work on Conceptual Combination we find in literature is that of Carl Andersen (Andersen, 1996), which presents a system for ”joining of information from two existing concepts to form a third, more complex concept”. He gives a set of very interesting ideas, yet lacking argumentation and validation, thus leaving the idea of oversimplification of the problem of conceptual combination. An example of combination of ”house” and ”boat” is given, but the definition of these two initial concepts, from our point of view, biases the results because of their overt simplicity. Another issue is the lack of *background knowledge*, i.e., each concept is considered in isolation (a fact the author himself acknowledges), so there are no ontological explanations or means of relating the concepts in question other than from their structure, leaving to an external entity the task of establishing a mapping between them.

Fintan Costello and Mark Keane (Costello and Keane, 2000) bring us a computational model, C^3, for the interpretation of noun-noun compounds (e.g. ”Cactus fish”, ”pet shark”), proposing one or more solutions for each concept pairing and validating them against empirical tests on people. C^3 searches for concept explanations that use differentiating properties from each of the nouns (the *diagnosticity* constraint), that are consistent with background knowledge (the *plausibility* constraint) and that avoid redundancy or vagueness (the *informativeness* constraint). In so doing, they approach different sorts of noun-noun combinations, thus resulting in the polysemy we also find in humans. Noun-noun compounds are clearly one example of the conceptual combination and creativity we do regularly and this work is a well based proposal.

On the side of Conceptual Blending, Tony Veale and Diarmuid O’Donogue (Veale and O’Donogue, 2000) describe a proposal from a computational perspective, inspired on Veale’s Metaphor interpretation framework, *Sapper*. As we argue in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2001), this proposal lacks some fundamental points of CB, namely the emergence of a new domain, the blend, independently of the initial inputs. Furthermore, it takes into account only *metaphoric blends*.

Our system, Divago, initially proposed in (Pereira, 1998), (formalized in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2001; Pereira and Cardoso, 2003a; Pereira and Cardoso, 2003b)) makes use of a computational version of Conceptual Blending as a process for creative transformation of the search space. This motivation was discussed in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002b), and the first experiments with blending a ”house” and a ”boat” are shown in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002a). Divago has a knowledge based composed of domains, instances and rules and blends them following eight optimality principles (described below). It makes use of a *generic domain* to find mappings between concepts, generic frames and rules and integrity constraints. It is expected to do concept combination as in (Andersen, 1996) and make noun-noun compound interpretations as in (Costello and Keane, 2000). The experiments shown in this paper focus the former. We expect to approach the latter in next developments.

3 Conceptual Blending

Conceptual Blending (CB) was initially proposed by (Fauconnier and Turner, 1998) as part of a major framework concerning cognition and language and had the role of explaining the integration of knowledge coming from distinct sources onto a single, independent and coherent unit, the Blend. A blend is concept or web of concepts whose existence and

identity, although attached to the pieces of knowledge that participated in its generation (the inputs), conquers gradual independence through time and use.
In the *canonic* model of Conceptual Blending, we have four different *spaces*: two input spaces, one generic space and the blend. Each space corresponds to what Fauconnier and Turner call a "mental space", a cognitive structure that corresponds to a concept, a set of concepts, a frame, a reasoning or *lower level* entities like a perception. Mental spaces may have internal connections (inner-space relations) between its constituent elements and connections to other mental spaces (outer-space relations). The input spaces correspond to two mental spaces (e.g. horse and bird) that will be integrated in the blend (e.g. pegasus). The generic space contains knowledge that is not specific to any of the inputs but may relate to both (e.g. biology taxonomies) or is common sense (e.g. Greek mythology).
An essential step in the process of blending is the establishment of a (partial) mapping between elements of the input spaces. This mapping may be achieved through different processes (e.g. identity, structure alignment, slot-filler, analogy) and doesn't have to 1-to-1. The paired elements are projected onto its existence in the blend as well as other surrounding elements and relations. This is a *selective projection*, i.e., some get projected to the blend, some don't.
From the projections, some new relations emerge that relate elements either as direct result from the projection or from "running the blend", which consists of cognitive work performed within the blend, according to its own emergent logic. There is a set of *governing principles*, the *Optimality Pressures*, that should drive the process of generating a "good blend":

- Integration - The blend must constitute a tightly integrated scene that can be manipulated as a unit. More generally, every space in the blend structure should have integration.

- Pattern Completion - Other things being equal, complete elements in the blend by using existing integrated patterns as additional inputs. Other things being equal, use a completing frame that has relations that can be the compressed versions of the important outer-space vital relations between the inputs.

- Topology - For any input space and any element in that space projected into the blend, it is optimal for the relations of the element in the blend to match the relations of its counterpart.

- Maximization of Vital Relations - Other things being equal, maximize the vital relations in the network. In particular, maximize the vital relations in the blended space and reflect them in outer-space vital relations. There are 15 vital relations: change, identity, time, space, cause-effect, part-whole, representation, role, analogy, disanalogy, property, similarity, category, intentionality and uniqueness.

- Intensification of Vital Relations - Other things being equal, intensify vital relations.

- Web - Manipulating the blend as a unit must maintain the web of appropriate connections to the input spaces easily and without additional surveillance or computation.

- Unpacking - The blend alone must enable the understander to unpack the blend to reconstruct the inputs, the cross-space mapping, the generic space, and the network of connections between all these spaces

- Relevance - Other things being equal, an element in the blend should have relevance, including relevance for establishing links to other spaces and for running the blend. Conversely, an outer-space relation between the inputs that is important for the purpose of the network should have a corresponding compression in the blend.

These constraints work as *competing pressures* and their individual weight in the process should vary according to the situation. It is expectable that, with the growth of value of one, others decrease. As far as we know, there is no work yet towards an objective study of the optimality pressures, measuring examples of blends or specifying these principles in detail. This, we believe, disturbs considerably the appreciation and application of Conceptual Blending in scientific research, making a particular motivation for this work being that of testing and specifying a formal proposal for the optimality pressures.

4 Overview of the Model

The architecture of Divago has four central modules: The Knowledge Base, the Mapper, the Factory and the Constraints module.

4.1 The Knowledge Base

As in any other AI system, knowledge representation is the first fundamental issue to decide. Here, we are worried about the representation of a ”concept”, for it is the goal of Divago to generate new ”concepts”. Assuming a symbolic approach (as opposed to sub-symbolic ones, like neural networks or genetic algorithms), we decided for a semantic network based representation, in which a concept does not stand alone as an isolated symbol being its definition and explanation dependent on the relationships it has with the surrounding concepts. This is far from a novel perspective. It goes in consonance with Murphy and Medin's mini-theories (Murphy and Medin, 1985) or CYC (Lenat, 1995) and WordNet (Miller, 1995) representations. Even more important, any of the previously mentioned works ((Costello and Keane, 2000; Andersen, 1996; Veale, 1997) suggest this view of concepts.

From a semiotics perspective, this representation of concepts seems very Saussurian, where ”everything depends on relations”(de Saussure, 1983). We try to escape from this extreme position through the possibility of association of effective semantics to each concept (e.g. the concept ”window” may be realized as a set of instructions for ”drawing a square”) and to the association of the concepts to the instances (as in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002a)). Now, from a Percian point of view, imagining the *meaning triangle* (**?**), we have the individual *symbol* (e.g. ”window”) as standing for a *concept* (e.g. the concept network around ”window”) and corresponding to an *object* (e.g. a drawing of a window).

More specifically, we take our concept networks as being *Concept Maps*. A Concept Map is a graph in which nodes have *concepts* and arcs have *relations*. The choice of symbols for each one of these is arbitrary, yet we are following a normalization principle stating that relations must belong to the Generalized Upper Model hierarchy ((J. Bateman and Fabris, 1995), a general ontology with two hierarchies (elements and relations). Concepts should be nouns or adjectives, preferably in the singular form. More constraints could be followed for the concept maps, a matter also to be developed in future work. In Divago, there are also other elements (such as instances), but for the scope of this paper, there reader needs only to understand the notion of *concept map*.

In figure 4.1, we show an example of a concept map of a bird. These maps are necessarily arbitrary in the sense that each person would draw her own ”bird” concept map, a result of the different conceptualization and points of view one can take individually. Yet, we assume that as the conceptualization of a ”bird” (or of the ”bird” domain) and so, when we interpret a new concept as being a ”bird with a moustache”, we refer to that specific ”bird” concept map with an attached subgraph that represents a ”moustache”.

isa(horse,equinae)	pw(leg, horse)	purpose(horse, food)
isa(equinae,mammal)	purpose(leg, stand)	sound(horse, neigh)
existence(horse, farm)	pw(paw, leg)	purpose(mouth, eat)
existence(horse, wilderness)	purpose(horse, traction)	purpose(ear, hear)
pw(snout, horse)	eat(horse, grass)	color(mane, dark)
pw(mane, horse)	ability(horse, run)	size(mane, long)
pw(tail, horse)	carrier(horse, human)	material(mane, hair)
quantity(paw, 4)	quantity(leg, 4)	purpose(horse, cargo)
pw(eye, snout)	quantity(eye, 2)	taxonomicq(horse, ruminant)
pw(ear, snout)	quantity(ear, 2)	ride(human, horse)
pw(mouth,snout)	purpose(eye, see)	motion_process(horse,walk)

Table 1: The concept map of *horse*

isa(bird, aves)	existence(bird, house)	isa(aves,oviparous)
lay(oviparous, egg)	existence(bird,wilderness)	purpose(bird, pet)
purpose(bird, food)	purpose(eye, see)	smaller_than(bird, human)
pw(lung, bird)	motion_process(bird, fly)	purpose(beak, chirp)
purpose(lung, breathe)	quantity(eye, 2)	quantity(wing, 2)
isa(owl, bird)	isa(paradise_bird, bird)	quantity(claw, 2)
ability(bird, fly)	pw(wing, bird)	conditional(wing, fly)
pw(feathers, bird)	pw(beak, bird)	purpose(wing, fly)
purpose(beak, eat)	purpose(claw, catch)	sound(bird, chirp)
isa(parrot, bird)	ability(parrot, speak)	pw(straw, nest)
pw(eye, bird)	pw(leg, bird)	purpose(leg, stand)
pw(claw, leg)	role_playing(bird, freedom)	quantity(leg, 2)
isa(nest, container)		

Table 2: The concept map of *bird*

Two other important knowledge structures to refer here are the *frames* and the *integrity constraints*. The frames have the role of describing specific composite concepts, situations or idiosyncracies. For example, we could specify that we are in face of a ”new ability” if some concept X has, in the blend, the ability A, which was not present in A’s input space. We can even say that this ”new ability” should have a minimal explanation, i.e., there must be a subpart P of X whose purpose is to provide ability A.

$$\begin{array}{rcl} frame(new_ability(d1)): & & ability(X,A) \wedge purpose(P,A) \wedge pw(P,X) \\ & & projection(blend,d1,X,X) \wedge \\ new_ability(X,A) & \longleftarrow & projection(blend,d2,A,A) \wedge \\ & & not\,rel(d1,ability(X,A)) \end{array}$$

Frames can represent very abstract reasonings (e.g. the blend should have the same structure of the input space 1 - the ”aframe”) or very specific (e.g. the ”transport_means” frame). The generic space we use in the experiments has the frames of table 4.1.

Frame name	**Conditions**
aframe	The blend contains identic structure from input 1
aprojection	The blend contains the same concepts of input 1
bframe	The blend contains identic structure from input 2
bprojection	The blend contains the same concepts of input 2
pw_based_explanation	Set of part-whole relations associated to a concept
transport_means	Features expected in a generic transport means
purposeful_subpart	Set of relations that justify the existence of a subpart of a concept
new_ability	A concept has an ability relation not existent in any of the inputs
new_creature	A concept is a living thing that did not exist (or wasn't such) in any of the inputs
new_feature	A concept has a feature relation not existent in any of the inputs

Table 3: Frames of the generic space

The integrity constraints serve to specify logical impossibilities. Two examples of integrity constraints could be for specifying that something cannot be dead and alive at the same time and for avoiding part-whole recursion, i.e. something cannot have a part-whole relation (pw) with itself:

$$false \leftarrow state(X, dead) \wedge state(X, alive)$$

$$false \leftarrow pw(X, X)$$

The violation of an integrity constraint does not imply the elimination of a blend, it only brings a (configurable) penalty to its value, thus it must have strong arguments to violate an integrity constraint and still be a "good blend". For space restrictions, we don't show the generic domain concept map, yet the reader should only know it has a very long list of "isa" relationships, establishing an ontological basis for the concepts (e.g. *isa(red, color), isa(human, primate), isa(physical_object, object)*, etc.).

4.2 Mapper

The Mapper currently takes an optional role in the architecture. Its purpose is to generate mappings between the concept maps of the input domains automatically. It uses an algorithm of structure matching inspired in Tony Veale's Sapper framework (**?**). Basically, it uses a spreading activation algorithm to look for the largest isomorphic pair of subgraphs from the input domains. In this context, two graphs are considered isomorphic if they have the same relational (arcs) structure, independently of the concepts (nodes). There is potentially more than one structure matching between any pair of concept maps and this complexity grows exponentially with the number of relations. This means the "perfect choice" is not guaranteed every time we run the Mapper.
This module generated three different mappings for input spaces of "horse" and "bird", as shown in table 4.2.

ear	↔	wing
snout	↔	bird
eye	↔	lung
mouth	↔	feathers
2	↔	2
hear	↔	fly

1

mouth	↔	beak
snout	↔	bird
eye	↔	lung
ear	↔	feathers
eat	↔	eat

2

vegetable_food	↔	vegetable
food	↔	food
horse	↔	bird
equidean	↔	aves
animal	↔	animal
human_setting	↔	house
wilderness	↔	wilderness
ruminant	↔	oviparous
run	↔	fly
cargo	↔	pet
neigh	↔	chirp
snout	↔	lung
mane	↔	feathers
tail	↔	beak
leg	↔	eye
paw	↔	wing
4	↔	2
eye	↔	leg
ear	↔	claw
hear	↔	catch
grass	↔	grass

3

Table 4: The three mappings

4.3 Factory

The Factory is the module of Divago that spends the most of processing time. It makes a search for blends that fit the optimality constraints in the space of "selective projections". This space of "selective projections" has a very high complexity. Taking a close look on this issue, we notice that, for an *input* domain 1 with m concepts and an *input* domain 2 with n concepts, we may have the maximum of $m \times n$ different mappings (if we use the isomorphic mappings, as in the Mapper), with the larger mapping having the size $k = min(m, n)$(we assume the function $min(x, y)$ to return the smaller number from x and y). This projection selection is made independently on each concept, which means we have $l = m + n$ different concepts for each blend, each one with its own projection. So, in the "least complexity scenario", the size of the mapping is 0, meaning we have only two choices for each of the l concepts (either it gets projected to the blend or it is not projected), thus we have 2^l "selective projections". If the size of the mapping is k (the maximum possible), we have four choices for $2k$ concepts (k concepts in each of the domains) because each concept x mapped to y can be projected either to x, y, a composition of both (we represent by $x|y$) or nothing. Apart from these $2k$ concepts, the rest ($l - 2k$) has only two possibilities. This leads us to the conclusion that we have a range of 2^l to $4^{2k} \times 2^{l-2k}$ different "selective projections" to choose, which is a very large search space. For example, for $m = n = 20$ (a "small" size pair of networks), we have at least 2^{40} different projections.

Given this complexity, we decided that the search procedure should be able to do parallel search, without trying to follow a sequence of steps determined by the optimality pressures (it would raise the question "Which order of constraints should we take?"). The best

solution that we found was that of Genetic Algorithms: an evolution framework in which we have a sequence of *populations* of *individuals*, each *individual* with a *fitness* value that represents its *survival* and *reproduction* possibilities. This well-known framework that follows the paradigm of *Evolutionary Computation* has made much success in problems with a search space with the configuration we described. The detailed formal and technical explanation of Genetic Algorithms (GA's) is far out of the scope of this paper, so we redirect the interested reader to (**?**). On the other side, those not interested in the technical details of our GA implementation may skip the next explanation and retain the general idea that this is a parallel search that does not guarantee the optimal solution but is able to search a vast area of the space and return, with correct parameters, relevant solutions.
In our GA, the *individuals* we are *evolving* are blends, each one determined by a "selective projection". The *individual* is then an ordered sequence of projections (the *genes*), each one with an allowed value given by the projection function (from the range x, y, $x|y$ and $\emptyset$). The evaluation of a blend is made by the application of the optimality pressures and we have populations of individuals (currently 100) that are *naturally* selected according to fitness value. The fitness value is obtained by a weighted sum of the individual values of the optimality measures.
After the selection of the individuals, the step of generation of the following population is made by using 4 operations: direct reproduction (the individual is copied to the next population); crossover (two individuals exchange part of their genotypes); mutation (random changes in the projections); random individual. The system stops when a predefined number of iterations of this process has been done, when it is stalled around a maximum for more than a predefined number of iterations or when an individual was found with a minimum predefined value.
Through this process, Divago is able to search in a huge space of blends according to the preferences of the user. The best solution is not guaranteed, but it is expectable that the higher the number of iterations, the more likely it is to find a good blend.

4.4 Constraints

The Constraints module has the computational implementation of the optimality pressures. The general procedure of this module is to make a preprocessing of each blend (checking frame satisfaction and completion, integrity constraint violation, vital relation projection, etc.) and then obtain a value for each of the eight measures. These values then participate on a weighted sum, which yields the final result that is returned to the Factory. The weight attributed to each optimality pressure is defined by the user. The optimality pressures are formalized and described in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2003b), and so an entire paper is needed to specify in detail our implementation of these, therefore we give an informal explanation below. Beforehand, we would like to say that we make no claims in respect to the cognitive realization of each measure, being these eight suggestions of quantification concerning totally to the representation and scope of this model which, we remind, moves towards a computational account of conceptual blending. This doesn't mean that this proposal should not be verified or tested with regard to cognition and the blending phenomena in general, it states that we didn't make our measures based on cognitive experiments, but only toyed to follow the philosophy behind the description that F&T give in (**?**) projected to our formal model. In the system, each weight is normalized to fall into the [0,1] interval.

4.4.1 Integration

Frames have a natural integration role. The reasoning behind frames lays on the idea that concepts within it should be tightly integrated according to a situation, structure, cause-effect or any other relation that ties a set of concepts onto one, more abstract or broad, composite concept. For example, the frame of ”transport means” corresponds to a set of concepts and relations that, when connected together, fit the abstract notion of ”transport means”. We see frames as *information molds* and building a blend for a given situation should depend much on the choice of these structures.
Assuming the set F of frames that are satisfied in a blend, we define the *frame coverage* of a domain to be the set of relations from its concept map that belong to the set of conditions of one or more frames in F. The larger the frame coverage of the blend, the more it is integrated. Yet, a blend that is covered by many frames should be less integrated than a frame with the same coverage, but with less frames. In other words, if a single frame covers all the relations of a blend, it should be valued with the maximal integration, whereas if it has different frames being satisfied and covering different sets of relations, it should be considered less integrated. The intuition behind this is that the unity around an integrating concept (the frame) reflects the unity of the domain. The Integration measure we propose varies according to this idea. It also takes integrity constraints into account so that, when a frame violates such a constraint, it is subject to penalty. We think the integration measure belong, along with the relevance and pattern completion measures, to the fundamental bricks of the blending process. It leads the choice of the blend to something *recognizable* as a whole, fitting patterns that help to determine and understand what a *new* concept is.

4.4.2 Topology

The Topology optimality pressure brings *inertia* to the blending process. It is the constraint that drives against change in the concepts because, in order to maintain the same topological configuration as in the inputs, the blend should maintain exactly the same neighborhood relationships between every concept, ending up being a projected copy of the inputs. This pressure is normally one that is disrespected without big loss in the value of the blend. This is due to the *imagination* context that normally involves blends, i.e., novel associations are more tolerable.
In our Topology measure, we follow the principle that, if a pair of concepts, x and y, is associated in the blend by a relation r, then the same relation must exist in the inputs between the elements from which x and y were projected. We say that $r(x, y)$ is *topologically correct*. Thus, the value of Topology corresponds to the ratio of topologically correct relations in the concept map of the blend.

4.4.3 Pattern Completion

The Pattern Completion pressure brings the influence of patterns being them present in the *inputs* or come from the *generic* space. Sometimes a concept (or a set of concepts) may seem incomplete but making sense when ”matched against” a pattern. At present, in the context of this work, a pattern is described by a frame, i.e. we don’t distinguish these two concepts, and therefore pattern completion is basically frame completion. Here, as in the definition of this principle, the completing knowledge becomes available from ”outside”, not as a result of projection. This means the act of completing a frame consists on asserting the truth of the ungrounded premises, a process that happens only after a sufficient number of premises is true. We call this the *evidence threshold*. When the

conclusion part of the frame is known as true, whereas its premises aren't so, we call this *completion by abduction*.
As in the integration pressure, we have the problem of taking into account multiple frames. This time, given that we are evaluating possible completion of subsets of relations, instead of sets of relations that are actually verified in the domain, it is difficult to find such a linear rationale (e.g. would two patterns each with individual completion x value higher than three having each slightly less than x?). As a result, the value of Pattern Completion of a blend corresponds to the evidence threshold of the union of the frames.

4.4.4 Maximization of Vital Relations

For the maximization of vital relations, we estimate the impact of the inner-space and outer-space vital relations to the blend. Therefore, we need three components: the inner-space vital relations from the inputs that get projected to the blend; the outer-space vital relations between the inputs that get projected to the blend either becoming an inner-space vital relation or being compressed onto a single concept; the inner-space vital relations appeared from the emergent structure. Maximization of Vital Relations is calculated as a ratio of the actual number of vital relations in the blend w.r.t. the maximum possible number of vital relations (that would appear in the blend if every concepts were projected).

4.4.5 Intensification of Vital Relations

Intensification of Vital Relations is the principle that maximizes the concentration around a specific vital relation. I.e., while the Maximization of Vital Relations favors the creation in the blend of vital relations in general, Intensification is based on focussing on a specific vital relation. Thus, we need a notion of "intensity" of a vital relation. For such, we argue that a vital relation is considered more "intense" when there is more evidence of its strength. This evidence should be dependent on the kind of vital relation we are dealing with. For example, an "analogy" vital relation between two concepts is stronger when there is also a systematical association between the neighborhood concepts (the systematicity principle).
The evaluation of this Intensification pressure takes the point of view that a blend that applies only one vital relation, with intensity x, should have higher measure than a blend with n vital relations, each with intensity x/n (the sum would thus be x). So we want to favor "concentration" of vital relations.
In the experiments below, we only apply one vital relation (analogy) in the mapping, so this measure could not yet be tested.

4.4.6 Unpacking

Unpacking is the ability to reconstruct the whole process starting from the blend. In our view, such achievement underlies the ability to reconstruct the input spaces, specifically. This ability, we think, depends on how much the reader "recognizes" subparts of the blend as being from the inputs. This lead us to follow a simple heuristic: the unpackability of a concept is the ratio of relations it has with neighbor concepts that match its original existence in the input(s) space(s) w.r.t. the relations it has with every concepts. If there is a big match (i.e. a big ratio), then the concept "reminds" its existence in other space.
The overall measure of Unpaking corresponds to the average of the individual values.

4.4.7 Web

The Web principle concerns to being able to ”run” the blend without cutting the connections to the inputs. In our opinion, this is not an independent principle, being co-related to those of Topology and Unpacking because the former brings a straightforward way to ”maintain the web of appropriate connections to the input spaces easily and without additional surveillance or computation” and the latter measures exactly the work needed to reconstruct the inputs from the blend. It is not to say that Web is the same as Topology or Unpacking, what we are arguing is that, on one side, Topology provides a pressure to maintain the most fundamental connection to the input: the same structure; on the other side, Unpacking evaluates the easiness of reestablishing the links to the inputs. The weighted sum of these two values yield, we propose, an estimation of the strength of the web of connections to the inputs.
Since it is not an independent variable, we don't apply the Web constraint in the tests we show here.

4.4.8 Relevance

The notion of ”relevance” or ”good reason” for a blend is tied to the pragmatics of the situation. In other words, the context and goal of the blending generation. Once again, frames take a fundamental role as being ”context” specifiers, (i.e., the set of constraints within a frame describe the context upon which the frame is fulfilled). Therefore, having a set of goal frames, which could be selected from any of the existent domains or specified externally, a blend gets the maximum Relevance value if it is able to satisfy all of them.
In this measure we must also take into account partial completion of the goal frames. A blend that ”almost” satisfies a goal frame should be valued in relation to a frame that doesn't (assuming both are equal in the other features). Regarding this, we consider a factor for the partial completion of the goal frames following the same procedure as in Pattern Completion.
Intuitively, this measure takes two parts: the satisfied goal frames and the unsatisfied goal frames. The value of the latter depend on completion (e.g. if Completion=50%, these count as ”half” satisfied goal frames).
An aspect of the goal frames is that they allow the application of queries. For example, if we want to find a concept that ”flies”, we could build a goal frame with the relation $ability(x, fly)$. The blends that satisfy this frame would have high relevance.

5 Experiments

We made two different experiments: assessment of the individual effects of each measure on the final results; qualitative evaluation and tuning of the model. After several preliminary GA parameters tuning tests, we decided for 100 individuals as the population size, 5% of assexual reproduction (copy of an individual to the following population), 80% of crossover (combination of pairs of individuals), 5% of mutation and 1% of random generation (to allow random jumps in the search space). We have three different stopping conditions: appearence of an individual with the maximum value (1); achieving n populations ($n = 500$); being stalled (no improvements in best value) for more than m populations ($m = 20$).

5.1 Evaluating Optimality Pressures

This test aims to understand the real effect of each measure in the final results, bringing up a way to predict and control the system. For the first part of these experiments, we isolated each optimality pressure, by attributing zero weight to the remaining criteria. Since one of the optimality pressures is not independent (Web) and another (Intensification of V.R.) only applies one mapping (the analogy base), we did not test them, meaning that we had six different criteria to take into account.
The input domains we applied were the domains of *horse* and *bird* (in tables 4.1 and 4.1), meaning that the expected results range from the unchanged copy of one (or both) of the concepts to a horse-bird (or bird-horse) which is a combination of selected features from the input domains. The generic domain consists on a simple general ontology, a set of frames and integrity constraints (see table 4.1). We applied the mappings presented in figure 4.2. For each mapping, we tested the six optimality pressures. Each of these comprising 30 runs[1].
We present now a brief analysis of the effect of the mapping size on each of the measures, according to four parameters: size of the returned solutions, number of local maxima, value of the best returned solution and number of novel relations (relations between concepts that didn't exist in any of the inputs).

	result size	nr. maxima	value	new relations
Integration	$\nearrow$	$\nearrow$	$\nearrow$	$\nearrow$
P. Completion	-	-	$\nearrow$	$\nearrow$
Topology	$\nearrow$	-	1	-
Max. V.R.	-	$\nearrow$	1	-
Unpacking	$\nearrow$	-	1	$\nearrow$
Relevance	-	-	-	-

Table 5: Effect of mapping size on the Optimality Pressures

From the table 5.1, we see that, as the mapping size grows, so does the size of the best results in Integration, Topology and Unpacking. We can also see it had no perceivable effect on Relevance, understandable by the fact that this measure is calculated from a set of specific goals that are not dependent of the mapping size. Integration (and Pattern Completion) too depends on the knowledge base (the available frames). The same notes are valid for the next analysis, in table 5.1, where we see the correlation of the calculated value in each measure with the size of the blends as well as the amount of new relations.

	size	new relations
Integration	$\searrow$	$\nearrow$
P. Completion	$\nearrow$	$\nearrow$
Topology	-	$\searrow$
Max. V.R.	-	$\searrow$
Unpacking	$\searrow$	$\searrow$
Relevance	-	-

Table 6: Correlation Value *vs* Size and new relations

[1] A run is an entire evolutive cycle, from the initial population to the population in which the algorithm stopped

For a more detailed analysis, we would like to summarize some observations on the independent effects of the measures:

- In **Integration**, frames behave as *attractor* points in the search space. Moreover, the frames with a larger coverage tend to be preferred, although when too large (like *aprojection* or *aframe*) they are dropped away. The evolution is directed to a compromise of coverage and satisfiability. The complexity of the search space landscape grows with mapping size. In fact, when we have a mapping of size 2, the algorithm only finds two different solutions and the better rated (possibly a global maximum) is achieved in 77% of the runs, but with a mapping of size 5, it returns six different blends, being the best choice retrieved only 43% of the times. A good compensation for this apparent loss of control is that the returned values are clearly higher (0.68, for the best) than in the small mappings (0.22), meaning with big mappings there are much more possibilities to find integrated blends.

- **Pattern Completion** drives the blend to partially complete (i.e., instantiate partially its conditions) the highest possible number of frames, leading, in each case, to several sets of relations that fit into those frames without satisfying them. Interestingly, this means that Pattern Completion can serve as a heuristic guide to Integration because it brings gradually to the blend the concepts and relations that are needed to complete the frame. In which respects to the *search landscape*, it seems to be very rich in local maxima. The most constant results came from mapping 2, with 13% of the best result obtained and 20% of the second best. An interesting remark is that the resulting local maxima always fall within a very strict range of values (of maximum amplitude 0.11, in mapping 3).

- In all the experiments with **Topology**, the final results were valued 100%, meaning that this constraint is easily fully accomplished, independently of the mapping. An interesting fact is that there is a multitude of solutions in the *search landscape* of Topology, showed by the amount of different final results in each mapping. Intuitively, and observing the short duration of each run, this means that, wherever the search starts, there is always a Topology optimal point in the neighborhood. From observation of the relations contained in the final results, we see that this constraint brings a tendency for *disintegration*, i.e, small isolated graphs appear in the blend. Each isolated graph is either a copy of a (normally unmapped) subgraph of one input source or consists on complete structure matching (there are concepts from both domains, but only the relations that exist in both are present)

- The influence of **Maximization of Vital Relations** in the results is straightforward, given that its highest value (1) reflects the presence, in the blend, of all the vital relations that exist in the inputs. As the evolution goes on in each run, the value grows until reaching the maximum reasonably early. For each set of 30 runs, it reached the value 1 a minimum of 93% of the times, and the remaining 7% achieved at least a value of 0.95. As in Topology, the search space of Maximization of Vital Relations is very *simple* since there is a global maximum in the neighborhood of (almost) every point.

- The results of the **Unpacking** measure show that it has a notorious side effect on the size of the blend, it drives it to very small sets (between 0 and 5) of relations. The interpretation here is straightforward: the ratio of *unpackable* concepts is highly penalized in bigger sets because of the projected relations that come as side effect of the projection of (*unpackable* or not) concepts. These relations *confuse* the unpacking algorithm so that it leads the evolution to gradually select the smaller results. The maxima points also correspond to the value 1, but it seems, from the experiments, that there is a very limited set of such individuals, achieved in the majority (at least 93% for each mapping) of the experiments.

- The first part of the test on **Relevance** focussed on making a single relation query. In this case, we asked for "something that flies" (ability(_, fly)). The results were straightforward in any mapping, accomplishing the maximum value (1) in 100% of the runs, although the resulting concept maps did not reveal necessarily any overall *quality* or unity. In other words, the evolution took only two steps: when no individual has a relation "ability(_, fly)", therefore with value 0; when a relation "ability(_,fly)" is found, yielding a value 1, independently of the rest of the concept map. The second part of the test on Relevance, by adding a frame (*ability_explanation*) to the query, revealed similar conclusions. There was no sufficient knowledge in any of the input domains to satisfy this new frame completely, so the algorithm searched for the maximum satisfaction and reached it 100% of times in every mapping. So the *landscape* seems to have one single global and no local maxima, reflecting the integration of the two parts of the query. If there were separate frames, it is expectable the existence of local maxima. Intuitively, the *search landscapes* of Integration and Relevance seem to be similar.

5.2 Qualitative evaluation

In this stage of the experiments, we try to understand the behavior of the system by generating and observing different blends, each one with a specific goal. The first goal is to generate a *well known* blend of a horse and a bird: the *pegasus*. Then, we allow more variations of this creature, by changing the mapping or the weights of the optimality pressures. Finally, we try to generate different creatures that, from our point of view, reveal interest.

5.2.1 The Pegasus

For our concerns, we define a pegasus as being a "flying horse with wings", so leaving out other features it may have (such as being white). These extra features could also be considered but would need knowledge concerning to the several aspects of ancient Greece, Greek mythology and some ontological associations (e.g. purity is white) and we believe would turn the generation of the blend considerably more complex, yet interesting. Formally, the pegasus we want to generate has the same concept map of the horse domain augmented with 2 wings and the ability to fly (the relations "ability(horse, fly), motion_process(horse, fly), pw(wing, horse) and quantity(wing, 2)").
For validation purposes, we started by submitting a query with all the relations of the pegasus, so as to check if they could be found in the search space, and obviously the results reveal that only the mapping 3 respects such constraints. This means we are exclusively using this mapping throughout this part of the test.
Knowing that the solution exists in the search space, our goal is to find the minimal necessary requirements (the weights, the frames and the query) in order to retrieve it. From a first set of runs, in which the system considers a big set of different frames and no query, we quickly understood that it is not simple (or even possible) to build the pegasus solely by handling the weights. This happens because there is no controlling device that allows

a user or an evaluation function to drive the evolution to a particular place. The optimality pressures provide control regarding to structural evaluation and general consistency and may yield interesting results, but only by chance a pegasus, which drives us to the need of queries.
A query may range from specific conditions we demand the blend to respect (e.g. the set of conditions for flying, enumerated above) to highly abstract frames that reflect our preferences in the blend construction (e.g. the frame *aprojection*: elements from input space 1 should all be projected). Intuitively, the best options seem to comprise a combination of the different levels of abstraction.
Since a query is only considered in the Relevance measure, its weight must be large if we intend to give it priority. In fact, using only Relevance is sufficient to find the solution if the query is specific enough, as we could test by using a query with *aprojection* and the flying conditions. Yet, it is not expectable to have very specific queries (in these cases, the search wouldn't be needed, in the first place) and we are more interested in less constrained search directives, namely from a creativity point of view. In the table 5.2.1, we show the parameters we used. The weights presented correspond to Integrity (I), Pattern Completion (PC), Topology (T), Maximization of Vital Relations (MVR), Unpacking (U) and Relevance (R). The "fly conds." are the relations the blend must have in order to be a flying creature, and aframe, aprojection and new_ability are frames as described before.

Exp.	Weights						Query
#	I	PC	T	MVR	U	R	
1	0	0	0	0	0	1	fly conds. + aprojection
2	0	0	0	0	0	1	fly conds. + aframe
3	0	0	0	0	0	1	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
4	1	0	0	0	0	1	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
5	1	1	0	0	0	1	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
6	1	0	1	0	0	1	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
7	1	0	1	1	0	1	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
8	1	0	1	1	1	1	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
9	8.5	0	4	2.5	1	9	fly conds.+ aprojection + aframe
10	8.5	0	4	2.5	1	9	new_ability+aframe+aprojection

Table 7: Parameters used in each experiment.

The first 8 experiments were dedicated to understand the effect of gradually adding optimality pressures to the fitness function. In the first three (only Relevance is used), we verified that, although it was *easy* to have all the concepts and relations we expect for a pegasus, often it was complemented by an apparently random selection of other relations. This results from having no weight on Integration, which we added on the experiment 4, yielding the most strict pegasus, the projection of the entire horse domain, and the selective projection of wings and the fly ability from the bird domain, in more than 90% of the runs. In experiment 5, the influence of Pattern Completion lead the results to minimum incompleteness (e.g. a pegasus with everything except a mane, wings or any other item), which revealed that, by itself, it is not a significant or even positive contribution to the present goal, a reason for dropping its participation in the following experiments. Moreover, it suggests a revision of the implementation of this measure.
Adding Topology (exp. 6)brought essentially two different kinds of results. In 60% of the runs, it returned the "correct" pegasus with extra features like having 2 wings (which was not constrained in the query), feathers or a beak, either of each apparently selected

at random. These were also given the higher scores in the experiment. In other 37% of the runs, the results were either ”simple” horses or a compromise between a bird a horse (e.g. two legs, a beak, two wings, ruminant, a mane, paws, etc.). A possible interpretation is that, on one side, the frames *aprojection* and *aframe* already imply strong topological maintenance, and Topology itself brings knowledge that, although not considered in the frames, strengthens this value. Yet, this does not avoid the existence of local maxima that represent stable results, in terms of the weights considered. The following experiment, the inclusion of Maximization of Vital Relations, confirmed the same conclusions, but with more control on the kind of extra relations transferred to the blend. For example, the blend may have 2 wings (from the relation *quantity*), a beak and feathers (from *pw*), but it is never an oviparous (from *taxonomicq*). On the other hand, we can sense a gradual lack of focus on the overall results (no two runs returned the exact same result) complicating considerably our goal of controlling the system. There is a simple explanation for this: Relevance, Integration, Topology and Maximization of V.R. all have the same weight and some (like Maximization) are more easily satisfied, thus driving the evolution around their maxima.
The eighth experiment brought a more stable set of results. Adding Unpacking to the other pressures reassures the prominence of the ”basic” pegasus, but, as happened with the majority of sixth experiment results, augmented with features projected from the bird domain. This time, some of these new features came isolated to the blend, i.e., not connected to the rest of the blend (e.g. there are 2 claws that serve to catch, but they don’t make part of anything).

An immediate conclusion we took from these first 8 experiments was that each pressure should have a different weight, correspondent to the degree of influence it should have in the result. In our case, we are seeking for a specific object (the pegasus), we know what it is like, what it should not have and some features not covered by the query conditions that we would like it to have. This lead us to a series of tests for obtaining a satisfiable set of weights, used in the configurations 9 to 12. Given the huge dimension of the problem of finding these weights, they were obtained from a generate-and-test process, driven by our intuition, so there is no detailed explanation for why exactly these values and not others. Yet, a qualitative analysis can be made and we see a clear strength given to Relevance and Integration. The former serves to ”satisfy what we asked” and the latter guarantees overall coherence (centered on the query frames) and consistency (e.g. it prevents the solution from having 2 and 4 legs simultaneously). There is also a more discreet presence of Topology, Maximization and Unpacking, to allow the transfer of extra knowledge.

The experiment 9 revealed, possibly, the ”best” pegasus we could expect. As we can see in the two results presented in figure 5.2.1, it has all the horse features, the specified ”flying” requirements and some added knowledge that we consider valid, like having 2 wings, lungs or claws. It is clear that these results were subjectively driven by us in the choice of the weights, but the argument we try to bring is that it produces a new concept that, not only respects the query, but also brings new knowledge that was selectively projected.

In the final experiment (10), we decided to give a more vague specification, asking only for a *new_ability* in the blend, as well as the generic frames *aprojection* and *aframe*. As a result, we found the exact pegasus in 23% of the times. This gives the first evidence that the system can be used for generating concepts without a very constraining and specific query and led us to the following experiments, in which we tried to assess its

quantity(wing, 2)	conditional(wing, fly)	motion_process(horse, fly)
ability(horse, fly)	purpose(wing, fly)	pw(wing, horse)
isa(horse,equinae)	pw(leg, horse)	purpose(horse, food)
isa(equinae,mammal)	purpose(leg, stand)	sound(horse, neigh)
existence(horse, farm)	pw(paw, leg)	purpose(mouth, eat)
existence(horse, wilderness)	purpose(horse, traction)	purpose(ear, hear)
pw(snout, horse)	eat(horse, grass)	color(mane, dark)
pw(mane, horse)	ability(horse, run)	size(mane, long)
pw(tail, horse)	carrier(horse, human)	material(mane, hair)
quantity(paw, 4)	quantity(leg, 4)	purpose(horse, cargo)
pw(eye, snout)	quantity(eye, 2)	taxonomicq(horse, ruminant)
pw(ear, snout)	quantity(ear, 2)	ride(human, horse)
pw(mouth,snout)	purpose(eye, see)	motion_process(horse,walk)

Figure 1: Example 1

purpose(claw, catch)	pw(claw, leg)	purpose(lung, breathe)
pw(lung, horse)	conditional(wing, fly)	motion_process(horse, fly)
ability(horse, fly)	purpose(wing, fly)	pw(wing, horse)
isa(horse,equinae)	pw(leg, horse)	purpose(horse, food)
isa(equinae,mammal)	purpose(leg, stand)	sound(horse, neigh)
existence(horse, farm)	pw(paw, leg)	purpose(mouth, eat)
existence(horse, wilderness)	purpose(horse, traction)	purpose(ear, hear)
pw(snout, horse)	eat(horse, grass)	color(mane, dark)
pw(mane, horse)	ability(horse, run)	size(mane, long)
pw(tail, horse)	carrier(horse, human)	material(mane, hair)
quantity(paw, 4)	quantity(leg, 4)	purpose(horse, cargo)
pw(eye, snout)	quantity(eye, 2)	taxonomicq(horse, ruminant)
pw(ear, snout)	quantity(ear, 2)	ride(human, horse)
pw(mouth,snout)	purpose(eye, see)	motion_process(horse,walk)

Figure 2: Example 2

generative possibilities.

5.2.2 Other creatures

After the pegasus experiments, we made additional tests, without having particular results in mind. We didn't make significant variations on the weights of the previous tests. For two, we removed some weights from the configuration and reduced Integration in the latest ones. In table 5.2.2, we show all the configurations (the omitted weights are 0, as in the other experiments). We made variations on the query and checked the results, trying not to bias for particular outcomes. Therefore, these tests aim to give an informal insight on the generative potential of the system.
We found several ”creatures” that we'd like to describe. To the first (experiment 11), we call ”dumborse”, a flying horse that uses its ears as wings (like *Dumbo*, the flying elephant). This ”creature” is possible to find in mapping 1 (*ears* are mapped onto *wings*). It is exactly a horse, but it has wings instead of ears, which serve to fly and to hear. With *Dumbo* in mind, we tried to go further to a horse with ears that serve to fly and hear (instead of wings in place of ears), and this was achieved by allowing only weights on Integration and Relevance (experiment 12). A simple explanation is that, while it satisfies entirely Relevance and, almost totally, Integration, it has less topology and less Unpacking (ears don't ever relate to fly in the bird domain).
Another creature to report is the ”flying snout” (which appeared in 23% of the runs of configuration 13, see table 5.2.2), a snout that has all the features of the bird. This is a ”week” blend in the sense that an isolated concept (the ”horse snout”) gets projected to the ”bird” structure without any surrounding support such as its shape or its purpose. The second creature is the transport bird, which has all the features of the bird, but also carries humans, it serves for cargo and traction. It appeared occasionally during the previous experiments, but was triggered now by the frame ”transport_means” in the query (in configuration 20), meaning indeed we had it in mind. Yet, its appearance throughout the tests (only when dealing with mapping 3, though) lead us to include it in this section. The third creature is an oviparous horse, with two legs (instead of four), two wings and claws. It appears in less than 10% of the results in the configuration 20, but it is the most valued. In configurations 14, 15, 21 and 22, the results were essentially copies of the ”bird” concept map, whereas 19 and 21 yielded highly unstable partial projections of both the ”horse” and the ”bird” concept maps simultaneously to the blend, since each of the 30 runs returned a different concept map. In the latter, we find it difficult to interpret anything. A possible explanation for these unsuccessful configurations is that the frames used are too much abstract, leaving no concrete goal to the system.

These ad-hoc experiments reveal that the system can produce novel concepts, yet it also demonstrates clearly that we face a very large search space, demanding a serious reflection about the tuning of the system.
It is the capacity to create novel and valid (with regard to the queries) creatures that testifies the potential of this model towards computational creativity. On one hand, it sure allows the creation of new concepts, a vital feature of a creative process, but on the other hand, the ultimate control always needs to be parameterized by a user (or another system?). There seems to be a paradox here: one must orient the system towards novelty and usefulness, but if doing so exhaustively, the emergent *creativity* is set *a priori* by the parameters. Yet, this apparent paradox seems to be present in discussions around creativity regarding issues like intentionality or evaluation. In fact, the boundaries between what is and what is not a creative product are very controversial and fragile. In our case, this boundary may lie in the level of abstractness given in the specification, which should

Exp.	Weights					Query	Mapping
#	I	T	MVR	U	R		
11	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	new_ability+aframe+aprojection	1
12	8.5	0	0	0	9	new_ability+aframe+aprojection	1
13	8.5	0	0	0	9	new_ability+ bprojection + bframe	1
14	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	new_ability + bprojection + bframe	1
15	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	bprojection + bframe	1
16	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	new_ability + bprojection + bframe	3
17	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	bprojection+ aframe	1
18	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	bprojection+ aframe	3
19	8.5	4	2.5	1	9	aprojection+ bframe	3
20	4	4	2.5	1	10	transport_means+bframe+bprojection	3
21	4	4	2.5	1	10	transport_means+bframe+bprojection	1
22	4	4	2.5	1	10	transport_means+bframe+bprojection	5

Table 8:

comprise of the mandatory conditions (e.g. specific frames) and more abstract preferences (e.g. abstract frames, like *aframe*).

6 Discussion

As we expected, the experiments raised several fundamental issues, some of which demanding a short reflection. Does the system agree totally with the Conceptual Blending framework? Does this system implement any kind of Computational Creativity? What can we expect from this model?

Since Fauconnier and Turner do not present a formal perspective on Conceptual Blending, it is not straightforward to validate our work in this respect. Starting from the representation of a mental space, we decided for a static, generic notion, that of a domain. We believe the representation we use (or an extension of it) could lead to mental spaces in general, but we are not confident to claim as much. This reduction of the knowledge basis of Conceptual Blending - the mental space - brings, *a priori*, limitations to our model. If successful, it should be able to produce the specific types of blends that result from blending static knowledge, such as domains, as opposed to dynamic knowledge, such as we have in discourse. In the latter case, we would need to extend our language to consider modalities, tense, mood, perspectives, or any other subjective, pragmatic or circumstantial components of discourse. Assuming a concept, like ”horse”, can be validly defined by a domain (that of ”horses”, from a common sense perspective), as much as ”bird”, our model is expected to generate new concepts, from blending ”horse” and ”bird”. Above all, this ”horse-bird” must be understandable from *a)* the chain of explanatory connections that appear in the new domain; *b)*the reference to the input domains, in the ends of the explanatory connections. This agrees with the notions of *emergent structure* and *web of connections* that are present in the fundamentals of Conceptual Blending.

In (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002b)and (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002a), we discussed the potential of this framework from the point of view of Computational Creativity, namely in transforming the search space by changing the meta-level description of a domain. We showed that, having a level of instances (in the example, visual constructions of a ”house” and a ”boat”), a theory for explaining the concepts involved in them, and assuming these instances as the search space for the problem (in the example, ”drawing a house” or a

”boat”), it is possible to obtain new ideas via blending the theories. After generating a blend (with the first version of this model, formally described in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2001)), the system reinterpreted each of the instances according to the new relations (e.g. a house with a round window). There were no criteria for assessing the value of the blends or even selective projection. The idea was to generate the whole new search space at the instance level starting from different mappings. Currently, we focus on domain theories and on the evaluation of the blends via optimality pressures, leading to further conclusions about the creative aspects of this model. Creativity has, without controversy, two important aspects: novelty and usefulness. The work described in (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002b) and (Pereira and Cardoso, 2002a) is centered on novelty, leaving the task of choosing the ”useful” results a responsibility of the search procedure. The combination of the two could then be novel and useful. A step further, the model we present now brings two components that may be precious for usefulness: the frames and the optimality pressures. Frames provide low-level specifications or directives that should be valued in the blend, whereas the 8 optimality pressures work as high-level directives that allow the system to evaluate each blend according to several aspects. Thus, without having to exhaustively specify the query, it is possible to generate a novel concept that conforms a set of constraints. From the assumption that the ability to create concepts is a factor of creativity, we argue ours is a computational model of creativity.

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