APPENDIX 1. The Riddle of the Buddhist Monk

A well-known example of a conceptual blend is the inferential solution to the riddle of the Buddhist monk, analyzed by Fauconnier and Turner (1998:136-141). The monk begins walking up a mountain at dawn, reaches the top at sunset and meditates there for several days. One dawn he begins to walk back to the foot of the mountain and reaches it at sunset. Making no assumptions about his starting, stopping or pace during the trips, our task is to prove that there is a place on the path which he occupies at the same time of day on the two journeys.

The inferential solution to the riddle is to imagine the monk walking both up and down the path on the same day. There must be a place where he "meets himself" on the path and that place is the one he would occupy at the same time on the two journeys. Fauconnier and Turner (1998) analyze the inferential solution by breaking up the riddle and its solution into mental spaces (a more specific term for the domains of knowledge to which I refer in Section 2 of the main text when describing metaphorical mapping). Mental spaces are "small conceptual packets constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and action" (Fauconnier and Turner 1998:137). There are three types of mental space: input space, blended space and generic space. In the riddle, for example, there are two input spaces, in which d_1 is the day of the upward journey, d_2 the day of the downward journey, a_1 the monk going up and a_2 the monk going down (Figure A1.1). The blended space consists of a single day d' which is the fusion of the two days of travel d_1 and d_2, and monks a_1' and a_2' which are the counterparts of a_1 and a_2 at time t' (Fauconnier and Turner 2002:41-42). Generic space (not shown in Figure A1.1) contains what the input spaces have in common.
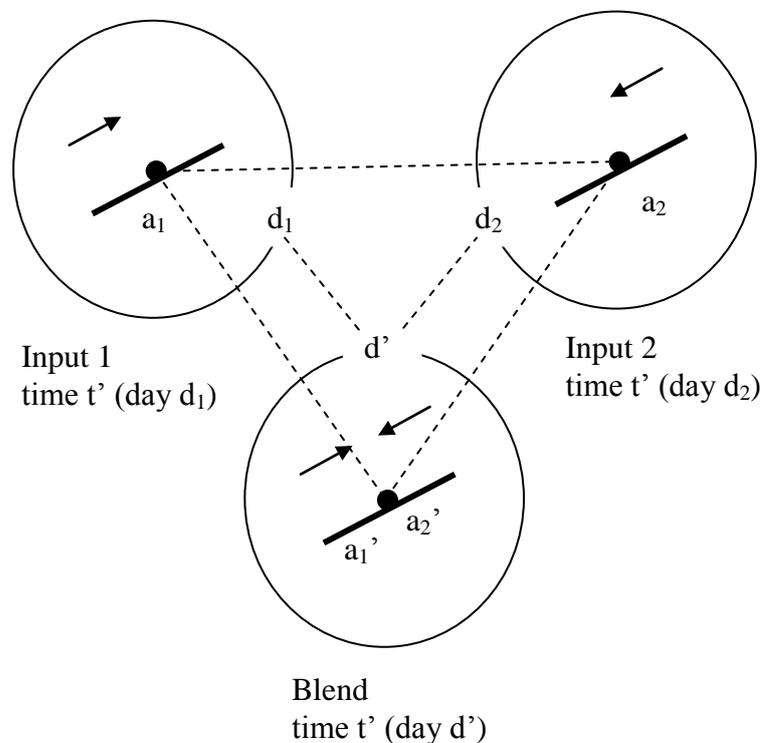

Figure A1.1. Conceptual blending as a solution to the Buddhist monk riddle (adapted from Fauconnier and Turner 1998:141, Fig. 5).

The monk riddle illustrates the three operations of blending that are explained in the main text. The riddle *composes* the two travelers making two journeys; it *completes* the composed structure by recruiting the well-known scenario of two people encountering each other on a path; and it can be *elaborated* by running an imaginative mental simulation according to the principles of the blend. The simulation example Fauconnier and Turner use is that the imaginary two monks would meet each other and begin a discussion on the concept of identity (Fauconnier and Turner 1998).