
HOW MUCH DO YOU GAIN AND LOSE IN BLENDING?

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KOLIK ZÍSKÁVÁTE A ZTRÁCÍTE PŘI KŘÍŽENÍ?

Tento článek se zaměřuje především na teoretické otázky související s jazykovou ekonomikou s ohledem na lexikální křížení. Předkládáme pojetí křížených slov a jejich struktury se zaměřením na angličtinu a slovenštinu. Výsledkem našich pozorování je odlišné vnímání strukturních typů, které tvoří základ pro tvorbu křížených slov. Dosud stanovené strukturní typy nelze považovat za jednoznačné. Jazyková realita poukazuje na to, že již nejsou uspokojivé, neboť křížená slova jsou značně nepředvídatelná. Proto se zaměříme na několik aspektů zabývajících se jazykovou ekonomikou a tím, jak mohou být křížená slova tvořená nejen pozitivně, ale i negativně. Jinými slovy, zaměříme se na ta křížená slova, která jsou naprosto srozumitelná, stejně jako ta, která jsou poměrně obtížně dešifrovatelná v závislosti na tom, jestli jsou použita výchozí slova zachována, nebo vynechána. Je třeba zdůraznit, že není možné jednoznačně určit, zda jsou křížená slova strukturně dobře utvořená, či nikoli. Záleží zejména na dalších aspektech, jako je záměr, stylistická kritéria, komunikační vlastnosti atd.

Klíčová slova: jazyková ekonomie; křížená slova; efektivita; zachování výchozích slov; rozpoznatelnost

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims mainly at the theoretical issues related to the language economy with regard to lexical blending. We present the preliminary notions related to blends and their structure, focusing on English and Slovak. Our observations resulted in a different perception of the structural types, though they are the cornerstone of the formation of blends. The given structural types cannot be considered

unambiguous. The linguistic reality proves that they are not satisfactory anymore, since blends are significantly unpredictable. That is why we discuss several aspects dealing with language economy and how blends can be formed not only positively, but also negatively. In other words, those blends which are too obvious, as well as those that are rather difficult to decipher, depending on the preservation and/or omission of the source words used. Of course, the above mostly depends on their categorisation within the structural types, but from this perspective, the categorisation is not always clear. The perception of (un)recognisable blends certainly exceeds the framework of linguistics, since blends are widely used, for example, in advertisements. In addition, we also address the extent of English influence on Slovak regarding blending, as well as some viewpoints on anglicisms. This is unquestionably a significant factor which may lead to change. In this respect, the theoretical notion of blending in English was adopted on the Slovak word-formation system. Finally, we present several examples analysing lexical blends in terms of proper or rather improper formation. However, it is necessary to emphasise that it is not possible to explicitly state whether a blend is structurally well-formed or not. That highly depends on other aspects, such as intention, stylistic criteria, communicative features, etc. Nevertheless, we believe that this study could make a contribution to the rather specific domain of linguistics, which is indeed productive and popular.

1 INITIAL POINTS TO BLENDS AND THEIR STRUCTURE

Starting with some preliminary notes on lexical blending, we would like to make several basic statements about it. For the purpose of this study, we just state that blending is a productive word-formation process, and that a number of linguists are in agreement in respect of its formation. Usually, it requires two truncated words, known as source words, which are merged together (cf. MARCHAND

1960; MATHESIUS 1975; ALGEO 1993; GRIES 2004; MILLER 2014; KVETKO 2015). Nonetheless, the source words may also be overlapped or intruded, hence not necessarily truncated (cf. SOUDEK 1967; BÖHMEROVÁ 2010, 2019; BAJZA 2024). Presenting the aforementioned, we have covered only the source words involved. In these terms, blending may not seem to be considerably troublesome, and yet the opposite is true. Bauer (2012, 11) stated very aptly that “the result is that in one way, we know a great deal about the structure of blends. At the same time, it is not clear what we can predict”. As regards the structure of blends, there have been published several papers, for instance, Soudek (1967), Adams (1973), Algeo (1977), Lehner (1996), Fandrych (2008), Böhmerová (2010) and Bajza (2024). Since we focus primarily on two languages, English and Slovak, including their contrastive perspective, we put in the foreground both Böhmerová (2010) and Bajza (2024). For the time being, it seems that both authors are the only ones who focus on blending from this perspective.

In Bajza (2024), we based our research on the observations presented by Böhmerová (2010), not only concerning the above-mentioned languages involved, but also with regard to the rigorous approach to blending. This approach consists of a rather complex understanding of blending, presenting it from various linguistic as well as interdisciplinary perspectives. What we underline is, among other matters, transparent terminology and graphical schemes. If one is to analyse blends using this approach, it is necessary to bear in mind only very simple rules. In addition, in Bajza (2024) we presented a modified overview of the possible structural types. These are based on Böhmerová (2010), and yet several changes are introduced in terms of the possibly distinguished structural types (cf. BÖHMEROVÁ 2010; BAJZA 2024). Referring to *Table 1* (below), already presented in Bajza (2024), this demonstrates only the very basic perception of structural types. Furthermore, as an extra point to the formal typological classification of blends as for their structural types and respective

subtypes, one should not address their delimitation only as rules of proper formation. Of course, it is undeniable that these rules are fundamental, especially from the point of view of the differentiation of those lexical units which qualify as blends and those which do not fulfil and/or violate the conditions. Apart from this, we would like to emphasise that the table contains those structural types of blends which are based on their real empirical evidence.

Telescoped Blends	Fused Blends	Dual Hybrid Blends	Special cases
A(x)B	Ab	a(x)bc	a≈b
A(x)b	aB	Abc	A≈B
a(x)B	ab	A(x)bc	
a(x)b	ab = ba		
a1(x)Ba2			
a1(x)ba2			

Table 1 – Overview of structural types and their respective subtypes

Considering the exemplified subtypes, a further consideration sheds light on their scrutiny in pragmatic, interdisciplinary and other not exclusively linguistic aspects. These aspects are related to, for instance, advertisements, in which blending is quite frequent. Concerning the reasons, we can mention especially those which reflect their attractive, remarkable, surprising, amusing, shocking, as well as provocative nature. It should be noted that the range of their possible communicative features is literally long; notwithstanding, this depends, to a large extent, on the source words used, or, to be more specific, on the preservation and/or omission of the particular parts of the source words. Therefore, returning to the further consideration as mentioned above, in this connection, our observations focus on the comprehension of the particular subtypes, as well as their graphical schemes, which might be implicitly perceived as referring ambiguously to merely one form of a blend. To elucidate, if

we focus, for instance, on telescoped blends, with the first source word fully preserved and the second one truncated (for which the graphical scheme is A(x)b), it is necessary to take into consideration any of their *absolute variations*. These variations indubitably originate and are conveyed in the basic notion of the subtype. However, the subtype should not be considered as finite. The above cannot be unequivocally concluded, especially for the purpose of further analyses, that the primary notion of the subtype(s) is satisfactory. To put it differently, there are such blends in which the clipped source word is, provisionally described, as preserving 95% of their source words, but, on the other hand, there are cases when preserved is only 5% of them. This idea is based on the fact that there are *several places* of overlap. As a consequence, we can speak about a positive economy (in the first case), or, more precisely, about a negative economy (in the second case) of blending. It should be accentuated that both contribute to the level of the perception of blends, and in this respect, the language economy is not negligible. As this was only an illustration focusing on subtype A(x)b, similarly, the same method can incontestably be applied for other subtypes, too. Consequently, it is necessary to include also their manifold *patterns*, which, however, are preponderantly the results of the combinations of the source words used. Nonetheless, we are aware of the fact that one is not able to presume exactly what patterns might be present. In this respect, it is only possible to determine their approximations based on analyses of plentiful blends.

1.1 BLENDS AND CORPORA

Answering the question of whether corpora are useful from this perspective, we tend to be sceptical about lexical and text corpora. We do agree that they offer unique tools, but it is highly impossible to find the latest blends there. To clarify, Mattiello (2019) used the online edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, applying the filter “1950–today”. The result was that the author found data only up to the year

2010 (cf. IBID.). In other words, there is a significant lack of data covering the period of nine years. Corpora were disapproved already by Böhmerová (2010; 2014) who based her works on empirically collected blends. She pointed out that “the lexical units qualifying for blends are not marked as such in the Slovak lexicographical sources, the material collected can only be very fragmentary” (IBID., 2010, 116–117). Nonetheless, corpora may be profoundly utilised if the approach is based, for example, on productive lexical elements, such as on the so-called *splinters*, e.g. *burger* (from hamburger), *athon* (from marathon), *licious* (from delicious), *gasm* (from orgasm), *gate* (from Watergate; cf. LEHRER 2007; BÖHMEROVÁ 2010; HANKS 2013; BARRENA JURADO 2019). The last linguist from the previously mentioned ones, Barrena Jurado (2019), analysed blends formed this way in which the first source word was different, while the second one was exclusively the same, i.e. *gasm* (cf. IBID.). Moreover, moving to another consideration, it should be noted that blends can have the lexical status of nonce formations, as well as occasionalisms, and yet have significant and undoubted communicative function deserving attention. According to Crystal (2008, 329), nonce formation is “a linguistic form which a speaker consciously invents or accidentally used on a single occasion”. Similar wording can be observed in Renwick and Renner (2019, 1) who stated that “new words are not always coined with the purpose of becoming institutionalised, i.e. of becoming part of the lexicon of a community of speakers”. Blends are unquestionably included within the previously noted *new words*. Therefore, if research were based chiefly on corpora, the data analysed would be distorted. Not to mention, when using corpora, one should literally know what they are supposed to search. To put it differently, combinations of source words in terms of their very inner structure are unlimited, and this aspect is unavoidable. Let us again recapitulate the statement by Bauer (2012) that one cannot predict the lexical products of blending. In this respect, there is, of course, a premise that what qualifies as a blend and what does not.

2 FROM SIMPLIFICATION TO DIFFICULTIES?

Based on the explanations of blending stated above, it is evident that this word-formative process offers simplifications in terms of the source words not being fully preserved (excluding the instances which we mentioned previously). Notwithstanding, incontestably depending on the particular structural type, such kind of simplification is supposed to be perceived as both unclear and questionable, if not even confusing (as explained below). Therefore, we are of the opinion that blending should be considered not only positively (though we absolutely agree with its utilisation from various perspectives), but also negatively. At this point, let us return to the notion that blends can have the lexical status of nonce-formations and/or occasionalisms. This also means that they may occupy the outermost layer of the periphery of the lexis, which may result in the situation that only a limited number of language users can correctly perceive such blends. It should also be noted that their qualifications to become neologisms is low. Crystal (2008) states that nonce formations are highly impossible to be embraced by the language community. Furthermore, the perception of blends may be blurred, providing that they are not formed properly, though strictly following the principles of the structural types. To hypothesise our apprehension, we can demonstrate it by the example of a blend *brunch* (breakfast + lunch). The reason for its use as an example is that this blend is quite common, widely known and spread. It should be noted that the use of *brunch* has changed since originally it was used only as a slang word, dating back to 1896 (MILLER 2014). If we presented a *hypothetical* lexical unit, which would not be known, the shortened part of *breakfast* (br) could be considered as *brave*, *break*, or *bridge*. Similarly, the preserved part of *lunch* (unch) could be considered as a lexical residue of *crunch*, *punch*, or *munch*. In other words, whatever possible words starting with *br* and ending with *unch* could be taken into account. Our opinion can also be supported by the statement that “the number of letters and/or syllables that are present help identify

only novel blends, not familiar ones” (LEHRER 2003, 371). Bearing in mind this hypothetical example, this signifies that we have again returned to the blurred perception of blends, especially referring to the part of *br* from *brunch*. In this connection, language economy or, to be more specific, the way it is applied to blend formations, requires comprehensive analysis. In the context of lexical blending, we would like to highlight an absolutely aptly stated definition concerning language economy, claiming that it is a “difficult criterion to work with: simplification made in one part of an analysis may cause difficulties elsewhere” (CRYSTAL 2008, 162). Providing that the principle of language economy is significantly violated in terms of preserving parts of source words so that they can be deciphered, the use of blends from a pragmatic point of view is useless, pointless, or even superfluous.

2.1 WELL-FORMEDNESS VS. BLURRED PERCEPTION

Nonetheless, our argumentations stated above may refer to an ideal state, highlighting the way how blends should not be formed, and yet it is not strictly a rule. In a similar vein, linguists such as Böhmerová (2010), Bauer (2012), and Mattiello (2022) indicate well-formedness of blends, presenting *recognisability*. In this respect, according to Mattiello (IBID., 31), “recognisability is one of the major constraints that most linguists place on lexical blends and their well-formedness”. Besides, one should bear in mind also another feature which is tightly bound with recognisability. The feature in question is *transparency* (BÖHMEROVÁ 2010; SMITH 2014). Böhmerová (IBID., 89) fittingly associated both when stating “the degree of transparency of blends concerns the possibility of recognizing the bases and the meaning of the blends”. Applying it on the structural types, telescoped blends are more transparent than the fused blends, for instance, *netiquette* (net + etiquette) or *alcoholiday* (alcohol + holiday; cf. BÖHMEROVÁ 2010; 2015b). In connection with these examples, we would like to point out that both recognisability and transparency of the source

words is undeniable. Obviously, this is a statement, but it can only be applied to the specific subtype of telescoped blends, namely $A(x)B$ (cf. BAJZA 2024). Yet, there are, of course, blends that are categorised within the same subtype, though their recognition is poor. Bauer (2012) presents an example, *cold* (cold + old), which is unlikely to be noticed, and its successful lexicalisation is questionable. The situation would be different if a graphical element were used, if, for example, one of the source words (in this case, the second one) were capitalised as in *cOLD*. This is quite common since language reality testifies to such use. Nonetheless, from the semantic point of view, it is its meaning which is (can be) unknown. If the tendency for blends to be effective should be preserved, we cannot just simply rely on the basic notions of the structural types. To provide another example, presented by Smith (2014), *choup* (chowder + soup) is also a telescoped blend (the subtype $a(x)b$) which is described by the author (IBID., 15) as “this lack of transparency can affect recent creative blends, (...) but also long-term lexicalized historical blends”.

At this point, one could express objections to the specific character of blending, provided that blends are recognisable and transparent. We tend to disagree to perceive blends being recognisable and transparent, and claim that they are also surprising, shocking or amusing at the same time. If the formation of blends strictly followed their evidently identifiable nature, one must instantly exclude their communicative features presented previously. In this respect, from being a rather specific and phenomenal word-formation process, blending would result in becoming at a rather conventional and plain one (e.g. compounding). Furthermore, we believe that neither transparency nor recognisability is so crucial for blends to be successful or effective. First of all, blends are *foregrounded* in comparison with other words. This is certainly ensured by their atypical and eye-catching structure. Even the simplest and subtlest change in the standard use of the source words seems to be enough to be *peculiar*. This means nothing other than just the specific formation, utilising

the possible patterns of the source words. When speaking about the unconventional structure of blends, we would like to apply the term *exploitation*, which was presented by the English lexicographer *Patrick Hanks*. According to him, an exploitation is “a deliberate departure from an established pattern of normal word use, (...) typically dynamic, creative, or graphic choices within the boundaries of possible language use” (HANKS 2013, 212). Taking this into consideration, each of the structural types and their subtypes fulfil this condition with regard to the outcomes. Subsequently, it depends primarily on the particular source words used, or more precisely, how the notion of structural types of blends can indeed be utilised. Therefore, from our perspective, even if blends are seemingly formed improperly, can still be considered to be formed properly. On the other hand, their use and/or time will corroborate whether blends can still be considered as properly formed or having the desired purpose. Besides, the need for deciphering is perhaps what adds a surplus benefit to them. Blends are “intended to be surprising, and not traditionally straightforward but at the first encounter as if secretive and with an air of mystery and ‘magic’ in their form and meaning” (BÖHMEROVÁ 2010, 90). However, this explanation can be interpreted ambiguously. We believe that it depends highly on a particular language user if they want to spend some time analysing blends. Providing that there is such an intention, this is what could be labelled as blends having a *double impact* (maybe even multiple). Let us present two situations. First, a blend may evoke a range of various *feelings*, both positive and negative, which may lead to its better retention (perhaps also some associations) as there might be a presumption that novelty is capable of having such an effect in comparison with the mainstream lexis. Second, a blend, for example, *promotes a product* (advertisement). A language user may take further steps, searching for the blend which may result in subsequent actions, exceeding only the one product in question and trigger interest in other products, too. When speaking about advertisements, we can also add that the *name*

of a product or company, etc, can be “hidden” within a blend itself, promoting both the product and company. Nevertheless, these two situations described only a favourable intention. Whatever effect of the use of blends is wasted as long as they are simply skipped over. That is why, we are persuaded that there should be a particular boundary in their use. It means that the boundary would guarantee a blend its qualification for a lexical unit being neither too obvious nor too opaque. Yet, we agree that this motive should not be interpreted as a strict rule, but rather as a recommendation for blend formations, depending on, for example, the type of text, stylistic criteria, audience, etc.

3 BLENDING AS A MIRROR OF CHANGES

Since we focus on two languages, English and Slovak, within this paper, it is useful to discuss some other notions underlying blending. We briefly mention what seems to be the early presence of blending in English. It should be noted that English has had a significant influence on other languages, including Slovak. Therefore, we also devote attention to the so-called anglicisms present in Slovak in terms of blends, as well as other relevant insights. In other words, we would like to point out that lexical blending in Slovak is a rather new phenomenon and that its perception can be blurred or even misunderstood.

In English, lexical blending is not anything new since there were some lexical units classified as blends already several hundred years ago. Algeo (2010) illustrates an example, namely *hapel* “nobleman” (*apel* and *halep* from Old English *æpele* “noble” and *hælep* “man” respectively). This is what was found in the poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (14th century; cf. IBID.). Despite this fact, the beginnings of blending are traditionally ascribed to Lewis Carroll, as presented by many linguists (e.g. POUND 1914; BAUER 1983; ARNOLD 1986; BÖHMEROVÁ 2010; RENNER et al. 2012; BALTEIRO 2013).

We agree that it was Carroll (1872) who made blends *popular*, presenting the lexical unit *slithy* (*lithe* and *slimy*). This can be found in his poem called *Jabberwocky* (cf. CARROLL 1872). Considering adequate scientific considerations of blends, they date back to the year 1906 when Gustav Adolf Bergström published his work *On Blending of Synonymous or Cognate Expressions in English: A Contribution to the Study of Contamination* (Böhmerová 2010). Such long span of time testifies to the miscellaneous approaches, but also to the considerably differing definitions that have been proposed by a number of linguists, above all by Pound (1914), Marchand (1960), Soudek (1967), Algeo (1977), Gries (2004), Miller (2014), or Böhmerová (2010). The number of linguists is, of course, only a very brief selection. The popularity of blending resulted in a number of publications. If we wanted to present all of them, we are very confident in stating that such intention would be more than just a one-page-long explication.

Moving to Slovak, the very first theoretical considerations are absolutely the most recent ones in comparison with English. There is a significantly strong agreement among the linguists (e.g. ORGOŇOVÁ and BOHUNICKÁ 2011; OLOŠTIAK 2015; LANČARIČ and HROTEKOVÁ 2023) pointing out that it was Böhmerová (2010) who was the first linguist to have contributed to Slovak linguistic theory with regard to blending. Her monograph discussed blending mainly in terms of English linguistics, but there are several pages dealing with blending in Slovak, too. The languages included should not be considered as something surprising since Böhmerová (2010) applied the features used preponderantly for English to the Slovak lexical system, among other relevant aspects, in her monograph. This approach resulted in the methods of blend analysis being applicable to both English and Slovak. Furthermore, above all, two matters should be emphasised. First, no similar research had been conducted earlier, though Liptáková (2000) analysed several occasionalisms being classified as blends. Second, there is also an unavoidable influence of English

on Slovak, with English overwhelmingly functioning as a donor of lexical units, the so-called *anglicisms* (cf. FILIPOVIĆ 1996; BÖHMEROVÁ 2009, 2014, 2015a; DUDOK 2012; KUMOROVÁ 2015; BAJZA 2024a). It is stated by Böhmerová (2015a) that not only anglicisms found in Slovak have been recognised for over 50 years, but also that these lexical units participate in the most dynamic development of the Slovak lexis.

When speaking about the English influence on the Slovak language, the Slovak linguist Dolník (2002) has dealt with both the positive and the negative aspects of anglicisms in these terms. What makes this study interesting is already its title *per se*, with the wording *Ohrozujú anglicizmy slovenčinu?* (Do anglicisms threaten Slovak?). The author (IBID.) provided a resolute answer that it is not true that they are a threat, referring to the real functioning of Slovak, as well as its functioning from the historical point of view (cf. IBID.). Similarly, Böhmerová (2015a) focused on several aspects underlying borrowing of anglicisms into Slovak and presented a rather complex overview of the processes involved (cf. IBID.). In one of her studies, she also used the apt title *Udomácnení hostia? Nahliadnutie do prítomnosti anglicizmov a dynamiky ich vplyvu na jazykové roviny súčasnej slovenčiny* ('Domesticated guests? Some considerations concerning the presence of anglicisms and the dynamism of their influence upon the linguistic layers of contemporary Slovak'). As regards other linguists dealing with the status of anglicisms, we can refer to Jesenská (2016), or Entlová and Malá (2020). The latter scholars dealt with both Czech and Slovak. The reason why we manifested this very brief outline should be considered not only as an addition to what we discussed above, but also in terms of blends being borrowed from English to Slovak, e.g. *motel*, *smog*, *spam*, *botel*, etc. (cf. BÖHMEROVÁ 2010). There is no doubt that the number of blends is constantly increasing in Slovak. The very first blend found in Slovak was perhaps *motelový*, which is an adjective of *motel*; this was observed by Böhmerová (2010), referring to the *files of the Linguistic Institute of the*

Slovak Academy of Sciences. Bearing this in mind, we have to refuse what was presented by Borková (2018, 41) that “when exactly the lexical blends started to appear in the Slovak language is unknown for now, as Slovak etymological work is in its beginnings”. In this respect, in another work by Böhmerová (2015a), it was pointed out that some blends date back to the 1980s.

In addition to the above, Jesenská (2014, 85) indicates that “the English language is said to have created or borrowed approximately 1,000 new words every single year”. Böhmerová (2009) expresses a conjecture that the number is even higher, namely about 15,000 to 20,000 new words a year. The discrepancy between the two figures is evident. Nevertheless, we tend to believe that both authors are relevant as regards their presuppositions. Besides, it is necessary to underline that blends must be taken into account in terms of being means of neologization. It is necessary to mention that the frequency of blends is surely integrated in these figures. We can support our standpoint referring to the intriguing research by Cook (2012), who analysed lexical blends, using a *computational method* for their identification on a social media platform that was known as *Twitter* (nowadays known as “X”). The data collected manifested 976 *candidate blends* after five weeks of collecting, and 57% of them were proved to be *blends*. One should bear in mind that this number may be considered as not being exact, since the blends collected could be repeated (cf. IBID.). Nonetheless, regardless of the repetition and this study itself, we must declare that blends are undoubtedly productive means of neologization (cf. LEHRER 1996; GRIES 2004; BÖHMEROVÁ 2010, 2016; LÓPEZ RÚA 2012; RENNER ET AL. 2012).

In this respect, the conception of further (not only) literary use of blending is something that certainly should be considered. This can be understood in terms of neologization of the lexis, or, as Lipka (2002) claims, of *dynamic lexicology*, including a category where blending is present. From this point of view, it is rather obvious that blending crucially in fact exceeds the theoretical framework within

linguistics and its utilisation can be found interdisciplinary. In these terms, Böhmerová (2010) mentions its relevance in *advertisements* (in general, media discourse), Renner (2015) speaks about *wordplayfulness*, Dudík (2017) focuses on the *new words being reflected in a changing culture*, and Renwick and Renner (2019) devote attention to *playful nonce formations in the Simpsons* (animated TV series), etc. In addition, we would like to emphasise the observation by Jeremić and Josijević (2019, 5), which is similar to the one by Böhmerová (2010) that the popularity of blends “increased considerably in the 20th century due to the growing influence of the mass media and advertising”.

4 EXAMPLES OF BLENDS

Since our approach towards quantitative processing of the source words as to the language economy seems to be a novel one, we based our analysis only on several instances. Even though our database consists of several hundreds of blends found in English and Slovak, we do not consider it reasonable to deal with all of them. The decision to include the following examples was deliberate. The point we would like to emphasise is that there are presented blends with a different degree of preservation and omission of their source words. In addition, one can notice a *wordplay* which is enhanced by paradigmatic combinations, especially in blends in which either of the source words is the same. We believe that our analysis may be further developed, and its approach applied on a larger set of data.

The following set of blends, (1) – (3), was found in British media discourse, referring to a sweet called *Creme Egg*. That is why the blends also explicitly promote the product itself. They consist of the first reoccurring source word (egg), which is followed by a different second source word, namely *except*, *exciting* and *experience* respectively. The below presented blends are based on the similarity of the overlapping phonemes, namely /g/ and /x/. In these examples, the

first source word is fully preserved, while the second source word is subtly truncated, i.e. the grapheme (e) got lost. In this respect, it can be concluded that these blends are still recognisable. Besides, they are examples of wordplay in terms of their combinations, which is based primarily on the similarities of the phonemes. That also means that other words, having these phonemes, can be used in the position of the second source words.

- (1) Eggcept (egg + except)
- (2) Eggciting (egg + exciting)
- (3) Eggsperience (egg + experience)

Starting with the description of the following examples, (4) combines names of Formula 1 drivers *Lando Norris* and *Oscar Piastri*. It may be considered as a sort of simpler way when both of them are discussed. (5), a bizarre one, comes from the Slovak political discourse when people were told to visit a notary asking for consent to watching porn. Significant overlap can be found in the examples (4) and (5). In (4) both source words are fully preserved, and there is a simple single overlap found on the grapheme (o). Similarly, example (5) also belongs to those blends with a simple overlap. However, in this case, in comparison with (4), two graphemes are merged, i.e. (no).

- (4) Landoscar (Lando + Oscar)
- (5) Pornotár (porno + notár)

A different example is (6) which is supposed to be considered as a blend with poor recognisability, though its transparency might be good, depending on the context. This blend is the combination of two names *Milhouse* and *House* (a fictional character). As regards its structure, there is a very complex overlap, covering a large part of the source words (house).

(6) Milhouse (Milhouse + House)

Regarding the blends which seem to be not very transparent, we present examples (7) – (9). The first two are combinations of the first names of Formula 1 drivers, namely *Lando Norris*, *Pierre Gasly*, *Sebastian Vettel* (a former driver) and *Lewis Hamilton*. First of all, we would like to point out that the meaning of these blends might be totally blurred if used in different contexts. (7) could be thought of as a *land*, followed by something perhaps undecipherable. Both source words are only subtly clipped, namely the graphemes (o) and (p). (8) is similar, since only (se) is preserved from *Sebastian*. Nonetheless, it depends on whether the full version of the name is used or the shorter one (Seb). In both cases, we tend to believe that their formations are questionable, especially when followed by (ewis). Finally, (9) mocks *Lance Stroll*, as it is based on his accidents when being more often *off* the track than on it. Therefore, only the adverb might be properly understood. In addition, example (9) consists of the surname of the driver, *Lance Stroll*, and the adverb *off*

(7) Landierre (Lando + Pierre)

(8) Sewis (Sebastian + Lewis)

(9) Stroff (Stroll + off)

Though we focus mainly on English and Slovak, as the last example, we would like to present a bizarre and shocking blend. We found it in the Czech media discourse, being an official advertisement of *Penny Market*. It may be agreed that there is an obvious promotion of the grocery itself (Penny), but in combination with *tenisky* (shoes) it creates an eye-catching effect since it suggests a male reproductive organ. As regards its structure, there is a complex overlap (/enɪ/); from the second source word, only the grapheme (t) has been lost.

(10) Pennysky (Penny + tenisky)

CONCLUSIONS

This paper focused on the notion of language economy of lexical blends with respect to their transparency and recognisability. We presented several theoretical instances in terms of the understanding of the structural types of blends. One should certainly agree that they are important for the formation of blends, although the state-of-the-art seems to be inadequate for the time being. Thus, we think that merely distinguishing the basic respective subtypes needs to be modified. Nonetheless, one should bear in mind that this intention is rather demanding, though feasible, with regard to the fact that it is not possible to know what kinds of blends are formed. We point out that corpora may be helpful in these terms, and yet they seem to offer just a limited number of instances, especially when blends can have the lexical status of nonce formations and/or occasionalisms. We also focused on features which are said to be desirable in the formation of blends, since they contribute to the correct perception of blends. It is necessary to state that the situation is not always so straightforward, because the perception can be blurred even when both source words are fully preserved. In addition, the relation between well-formedness and blurred formation was discussed. Some blends are shocking, surprising or amusing and, in this respect, they cannot be fully transparent. Of course, that highly depends on their use, as well as on the language users if they are willing to spend some time deciphering not only the structure, but also the meaning of blends. Last but not least, another part of the study was devoted to the influence of English on the Slovak lexical system. We stated that the very first linguist who did a complex study of blends in Slovak, utilising the English theoretical framework, was Böhmerová (2010). English lexical units pervading other languages, including Slovak, the so-called anglicisms, have been recognised in Slovak for more than 50 years. Yet, it cannot be claimed that they threaten Slovak. Finally, ten examples of blends were demonstrated, and we analysed them in terms of their structure, transparency and recognisability. They

are/were accompanied by the degree of language economy, and we also stated which parts of the source words were both preserved and omitted. We would like to conclude that the language economy is certainly an unquestionable part of lexical blending. It is possible to study how language economy influences the perception of blends, but that is limited to some extent since source words of blends evince various combinations. Therefore, it is not possible to unambiguously make certain conclusions. We can only presume them, having a representative set of blends on which the so-called patterns of the structural types could be manifested. This study seems to be a novel one in terms of its approach, and we believe that it can be used as a model for further considerations and can be further elaborated. For the time being, we hope that it means a contribution to the domain of lexical blending, based on our having presented several theoretical insights.

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