

# Word formation of blends

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## WORD FORMATION OF BLENDS

*Along with neologisms, formed by established and well-documented word formation patterns in the Croatian language, recent years have seen a rise in (electronic) media language of words formed by blending parts of existing words which do not necessarily count as morphemes, the latter being a basic criterion for distinguishing compounds from blends. Blending has thus become a handy way of forming neologisms, particularly in marketing, due to their innovative and exclusive nature, well suited to attract the viewers (aromagija, slastistika, sprinternet). Since the word formation patterns and elements in question are not inherent to Croatian, the paper aims to determine whether the number of blends in Croatian grows by direct transfer of foreign words, or if the particular pattern of word formation is reproduced and adapted to the linguistic system of Croatian. Furthermore, the paper shall define the structure of blends based on the corpus compiled from Croatian printed and electronic media, list registers these most frequently appear in, and elaborate on the basic incentives for their creation.*

**Key words:** *blending, structure of Croatian blends, advertising language*

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## Introduction

New words, i.e. neologisms, have been a topic of discussion ever since Ancient Roman times when the grammarians and rhetoricians of the time classified them as those that were ‘born’ and those that had been ‘coined’. The former term would correspond to the contemporary view of a *coin word*, whereas the latter would point to the formation of neologisms by means of existing morphemes, a practice that was frowned upon.<sup>1</sup> The reason for the latter lied in the fact that the borrowed morphemes tended to come from Greek, which was deemed undesirable. Moreover, the use of such words in rhetoric was considered a sign of weakness.

However, every word was once a new word, a neologism. A word exists as a neologism until the moment it becomes conventionalized, i.e. no longer perceived as new, after which it is entered into the dictionary. Well-formed neologisms quickly lose the moniker and become a part of the general lexicon.

The approaches to neologisms in domestic and international linguistic literature widely differ. The historic approach thus takes time as one of the basic criteria and considers as a neologism any word the origin of which is present in the memory of the generation using it.<sup>2</sup> Šipka defines a neologism as a word which has entered the lexicon „only recently”, emphasizing that the term neologism should be seen as a very flexible one, not only with respect to the user, but also to the situation at hand.<sup>3</sup> The stylistic approach sees neologisms as stylistically marked words,<sup>4</sup> whereas the structuralist theory considers innovation in form as the basic requirement for considering a word a neologism.<sup>5</sup> Finally, one of the most widespread approaches in Western linguistics is the lexicographic approach, according to which a neologism is „a form or the use of a form not recorded in general language dictionaries”.<sup>6</sup> *Hrvatski jezični savjetnik* [Croatian usage manual] (1999) embraces the denotational theory which sees as a neologism any word denoting a new phenomenon or concept,<sup>7</sup> similar to Ayto who treats neologisms as follows: „By definition, the introduction of new words – and new meanings for old ones – reflects developments and innovations

<sup>1</sup> Basil Duffalo, „Words Born and Made: Horace’s Defense of Neologisms and the Cultural Poetics of Latin”, *Arethusa*, 38 (2005), 1, 91.

<sup>2</sup> Laurie Bauer, *English Word-formation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Danko Šipka, *Osnovi leksikologije i srodnih disciplina*, Matica srpska, Novi Sad, 2006, 81.

<sup>4</sup> Stjepan Babić, „Stilske odrednice u našim rječnicima” *Jezik*, 28 (1981) 3, 79-91.

<sup>5</sup> T. V. Popova, *Russkaja neologija i neografija*, PhD Thesis Manuscript, Ekaterinburg, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> John Algeo, *Fifty Years Among the New Words*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, 2.

<sup>7</sup> Eugenija Barić i dr., *Hrvatski jezični savjetnik*, Institut za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje, Pergamena, Školske novine, Zagreb, 1999.

in the world at large and in society.”<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that, as stated above, a word created by semantic shifts of existing words in a language is also considered a neologism. Thus, along with formal innovation, Muhvić-Dimanovski<sup>9</sup> also opens the possibility of semantic innovation, i.e. innovation in content as one of the criteria for listing a word as a neologism. The *form – content* distinction in the classification of neologisms draws directly on two basic types of formative processes used to form them: the grammatical and the semantic processes. Word formation by affixation and concatenation of bases and bound lexical morphemes is first and foremost a grammatical process. The multitude of words formed in this exact manner contributes to equating the formation of neologisms exclusively with creativity in the said grammatical processes. On the other hand, a number of words are formed by semantic formation such as onymisation, eponymisation, homonimisation and polysemisation. However, the impression is that these processes, as well as words resulting from them are only marginally studied in the studies of word formation, which distorts the general image regarding lexicon supplementation.<sup>10</sup>

The above definitions, therefore, lead us to conclude that the incentives for the creation of new words mostly stem from the extralinguistic domain. The needs for new words arise from pragmatic, i.e. communicative needs – with the existence of new objects or occurrences in need of naming – but also for aesthetic reasons, since speakers tend to lean towards innovative and clever ways of expression, whereby there is a particularly strong wish to address familiar issues in a fresh and different way.

The 1990s were a particularly dynamic period in Croatia. This has, in turn, affected the lexical system as a whole. Šipka<sup>11</sup> singles out several major generators of change: socio-economic changes, war, changes in science and technology, changes in lifestyle, revival of religion, new ideologies, artistic and media movements as well as cognitive and ludic impulses. Changes in science and technology concern, first and foremost, the global informatisation, i.e. internetisation. The last two decades have seen the latter contribute to the spreading of freedom of communication, which has made the borrowing of foreign words or the coining of new ones a standard, rather than an exception. Furthermore, societal changes, be they material or intellectual,

<sup>8</sup> John Ayto, *The Longman Register of New Words*, The Bath Press Ltd, Avon, 1989., II.

<sup>9</sup> Vesna Muhvić-Dimanovski, *Neologizmi – problemi teorije i primjene*, Zavod za lingvistiku Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 2005.

<sup>10</sup> Branka Tafta – Petra Košutar, „Rječotvorni modeli u hrvatskom jeziku”, *Suvremena lingvistika*, 67 (2009), 87-107.

<sup>11</sup> D. Šipka, op. cit, 105.

demand new terms. The more intensive the changes, the greater is the number of new words or new meanings of words. Innovations, discoveries, wars and revolutions thus continuously give rise to neologisms. In that light every list of neologisms compiled reflects the changes an individual, or society as a whole, experiences in a certain period.

## 1. Strategies of neologism formation

The lexicon of a language is expanded in three ways: through formal and semantic neologisation, and borrowing. Formal neologisation includes processes which rely on word formation patterns and units. Semantic neologisation encompasses the change in meaning of existing lexical units, while borrowing stands for any transfer of lexical units from foreign languages. This classification of neologisation processes can be further expanded. According to Algeo<sup>12</sup>, the lexicon is thus enriched by the following processes: creating, borrowing, combining, shortening, blending, and semantic changes. The classification starts from the notion that a neologism is a new form, i.e. a new use of a form previously unrecorded in the general dictionaries of a language. Algeo's<sup>13</sup> view also includes a phrase, as well as a new meaning of an existing word, as a neologism. The author sees coining of new words as a process of forming new words „...from nothing or, at least, not from existing words.” emphasizing that this process is the least productive one and basically reducible to onomatopoeic words. The reproduction of the existing word formation patterns, resulting in new compounds and derivations, is the most productive source of new words in English, followed by blending, i.e. formation of new words by joining two or more parts of words, or whole words, into a new word. Blends are classified as those formed by shortening the first part of the word, those with the second part shortened, and those formed solely by an overlap of phonological material, i.e. without 'clipping'. Unlike word formation whereby new words are formed from existing morphemes with familiar and entrenched meaning, blending can, therefore, be considered formation, i.e. 'assembling' of words from parts which do not necessarily have to be morphemes.<sup>14</sup>

Clipping and blending are the processes drawing most attention in the above classification. Some examples from Croatian and English include *Krašotice* (*Kraš* +

<sup>12</sup> J. Algeo, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 2-4.

<sup>14</sup> Lidija Cvikić – Zrinka Jelaska, „Kratice u hrvatskome: hrvatske, međujezične i engleske”, *Inovacije u slavenskim jezicima*, zbornik radova, Srednja Europa, Zagreb, 2011, 104.

*krasotice* ‘name of the brand + beauties’), *maspok* (*masovni* ‘mass’ + *pokret* ‘movement’), *Dikolores* (*Dikan* + *Dolores*<sup>15</sup>), *Spanglish* (*Spanish* + *English*).<sup>16</sup>

One should note that such changes are not exclusive to English, but seem to be of more general nature. Their development could be explained by recourse to Zipf’s *Principle of Least Effort* (according to which more frequent forms tend to become shorter), or Martinet’s *Linguistic economy*. Modern technologies, which impose different rules of communication, have served only as a trigger, i.e. a fertile ground for those formation patterns to become ways of reflecting both the linguistic economy and linguistic creativity.

## 2. Blending

A blend is defined as a word made up of two (or more) words, often of cognate meanings.<sup>17</sup> Croatian linguistics is still lacking in systematic discussions of this particular manner of word formation. Nevertheless, blends have gained popularity in the general public.<sup>18</sup> As stated previously, they still defy systematic attempts of studying. Some unresolved issues include e.g. the precise mechanisms of their creation, ways of their integration into the standard language, and their general importance (or lack of it) for the lexicon as a whole. This is partly understandable, given that other formation processes give rise to many more words required for everyday communication. However, there are examples which have found their way into the standard language<sup>19</sup>, while some enter monolingual dictionary only after being in use for so long that speakers have become unaware of their origin, e.g. *bankomat*<sup>20</sup>. Attitudes towards blends are divided. On the one hand, words produced by blending are on the increase, which reflects a positive attitude towards the specific way of producing new words. On the other hand, they are frequently dubbed *frankenwords*<sup>21</sup> insinuating an

<sup>15</sup> The Croatian example *Dikolores* was coined by analogy to *Brangelina*, making use of the surname of the male member of the pair and the first name of the female member.

<sup>16</sup> Lehrer (2003: 369) aptly refers to such cases as *trendy neologisms*, „eye-and-ear catching words”, although many have existed for some time, e.g. *smog* (*smoke* + *fog*), recorded as early as 1905.

<sup>17</sup> Louise Pound, *Blends: Their Relation to English Word Formation*, Winter, Heidelberg, 2012.

<sup>18</sup> The webpage <<http://www.zargonaut.com/>> sees the number of new words, especially blends increase daily. Interestingly, the title of the page, *žargonaut*, is itself a blend (*žargon* ‘jargon’ + *astronaut* ‘astronaut’).

<sup>19</sup> Vladimir Anić, *Rječnik hrvatskoga jezika*, second edition, Novi Liber, Zagreb, 1996, 30.

<sup>20</sup> *Banka* (‘bank’) + *automat* ((automatic) machine’) > *bankomat*

<sup>21</sup> The term *frankenword* was coined on analogy to the word *frankenfood*, coined in 1992 by Paul Lewis, a Professor of English at Boston University, who wanted to point to the negative consequences of genetic modification of food.

unnatural formation with extremely negative characteristics.<sup>22</sup> Although they can be considered a subtype of compounds, it was Aronoff<sup>23</sup> who has long since noted that despite there being some rules to their formation, these have to include a wider array of factors than is the case with other word formation processes. The author has, in fact, noted a greater regularity in the formation of compounds than blends, while Lehrer<sup>24</sup> points to another characteristic. Unlike compounds, which comprise whole morphemes, blends involve shortening. A blend is, therefore, often perceived as a sort of pun, i.e. wordplay, the success of which is reflected in the fact that it requires no special explanation upon having been used in context. The frequency of source words undoubtedly influences the time required to understand a blend: the more frequent they are, the less time is required to understand the blend comprising those words.

With regards to the motivation of blend production, the initial incentive seems to be connected to the desire to shorten certain expression, i.e. phrases that seem too long and „clumsy”, which makes blends particularly popular in marketing. The ludic element present in their creation should not be related to errors in speech. Blends differ from the latter in several respects:

- a) speech errors may occur with all word classes, whereas blends are exclusively nouns,
- b) blends and speech errors also differ in their origin: errors result from blending words, that „compete” for the same position in the sentence. They, therefore, involve the same word class, which is not necessarily the case with blends,
- c) speech errors may result in words which already exist, but are not appropriate in a context, whereas a blend has to be a new word.<sup>25</sup>

## 2.1. The term and its definition

Given the dynamic nature of word formation, it is hardly surprising that blending has found its place in overviews of word formation processes in English. Blends make up a considerable part of the corpus of new English words<sup>26</sup>. It is therefore, understandable that they have become a topic and interest of many linguistic discussions.

<sup>22</sup> Sol Steinmetz – Barbara Ann Kipfer, *The Life of Language: The Fascinating Ways Words Are Born, Live and Die*, Random House Inc., New York, 2006, 30.

<sup>23</sup> According to L. Bauer, op. cit, 232.

<sup>24</sup> Adrienne Lehrer, „Identifying and interpreting blends: an experimental approach”, *Cognitive Linguistics* 7(4) (1996a), 359-390.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 383-385.

<sup>26</sup> According to J. Algeo, op. cit., blends make up as much as 5-10% of the corpus of new English words.

The discussions are characterized by heterogeneity not only in definitions, but also in the naming of blends, a situation that also reflected in Croatian linguistics. Bauer<sup>27</sup> thus considers a blend as a „new lexeme formed from parts of two (or possibly more) other words in such a way that there is no transparent analysis into morphs”. Gries,<sup>28</sup> on the other hand, argues that „blending involves the coinage of a new lexeme by fusing parts of at least two other source words of which either one is shortened in the fusion and/or where there is some form of phonemic or graphemic overlap of the source words”.

Marković<sup>29</sup> sees blending as a kind of formative *stitching*, dependent not on morphemes, but on the notion of the word as phonetic material partly or completely open to chopping, merging and blending. The author defines *blending* as word formation by combining and fusing non-meaning bearing parts of two existing autosemantic words (by far the most common case, with three words being very rare).<sup>30</sup>

Unlike Muhvić-Dimanovski<sup>31</sup> who calls the above procedure *contraction* (Cro. *kontrakcija* or *sažimanje*), defining it as the contraction of the first part of one word and the second part of the second word, the end of the word being the last syllable of the second word, or occasionally a single phoneme or grapheme, Marković suggests the terms *blending* and *blend* (Cro. *stapanje* and *stopljenica*, respectively). The term is used in the present paper, since the term suggested by Muhvić-Dimanovski fails to encompass words in which there is no omission of parts of words, and the blended word is created, for example, solely based on an overlap of phonological material, e.g. in the word *sprinternet*. Based on the presented definitions and examples of blends from our corpus, we offer the following definition: blends are words made by fusing at least two words by joining together parts of source words, or using whole words, whereby there occurs a phonological overlap.

## 2.2. Blends in Croatian

Data gained by the analysis of a corpus extracted from Croatian monolingual and bilingual dictionaries published after 1990, as well as printed and electronic media, show that blends make up as little as 1.6% of new words in total. The fringe status of

<sup>27</sup> L. Bauer, op. cit., 234.

<sup>28</sup> Stefan Th. Gries, „Shouldn't it be breakfunch? A quantitative analysis of blend structure in English”, *Linguistics* 42-3 (2004), 639.

<sup>29</sup> Ivan Marković, „Tri nehrvatske tvorbe: infiksacija, reduplikacija, fuzija”, *Rasprave Instituta za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje*, 35 (2003), 217-241.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>31</sup> V. Muhvić-Dimanovski, op. cit.



such word formation procedure is noted by Brdar-Szabo and Brdar<sup>32</sup> who conclude that the more closed and less flexible the linguistic system is, the less possibility there is for the occurrence of blends. Although blending is considered a central cognitive process, inherent to human everyday life<sup>33</sup>, and is the basis for a number of linguistic phenomena, it does not affect the number of blended words in the language. It is, therefore, evident that there are factors that limit their creation. These can be divided into two classes.

The first class relates to the structural characteristics of language and concerns the presence or absence of the other two word formation models: compounding and clipping. It is commonly held that the three are related, i.e. that the lesser productivity a language in terms of compounding shall also translate to blending. The number of compounds and blends is, therefore, proportional. The second class of factors concerns the dynamics and flexibility of a language, i.e. the speed with which foreign or borrowed lexemes are adapted and integrated into the system of the recipient language. Therefore, the more closed and less flexible the language system, the less common is the occurrence of blends.

Brdar-Szabo i Brdar<sup>34</sup> explain that what lies at the basis of lexical blending, i.e. reduction of phonological distance between two words is actually the reduction of conceptual distance, whereby after two separate entities have blended into a single word, they are no longer referred to as separate entities, but a third entity instead. The latter represents a sum of not only source characteristics, but also new, unexpected ones. The result of conceptual blending of two domains is not a mere sum of those domains, but a rather selective process, since only certain characteristics are chosen and built into the new concept, whereby the chief motivating factors are extralinguistic, e.g. cognitive structures and communicative needs.

Brdar-Szabo i Brdar,<sup>35</sup> therefore, consider the productivity of compounding as the key trigger, i.e. a structural prerequisite for the occurrence of blending. What also precludes the creation of blends in Croatian is the interfix. The high level constructional schema for compounds which demands an interfix in Croatian is not a good model for the development of a constructional schema for prototypical lexical

<sup>32</sup> Rita Brdar-Szabo – Mario Brdar, „On the marginality of lexical blending” *Jezikoslovlje*, 9 (2008), 1-2, 171-194.

<sup>33</sup> An example of the ubiquity of blending at the cognitive level is the coining *sunčale* (**sunč**ane + naoč**ale** ‘sunglasses’) unwittingly coined by Polish students in their classes in Croatian as a foreign language.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

blends. The second class of factors also concerns the speed of acquiring new words. According to Brdar-Szabo and Brdar<sup>36</sup> Croatian is restricted in this respect too, owing to a strong purist tradition which tends to slow down, i.e. considerably hinders, the proliferation of such word formation model.

### 2.3. The structure

Although most blends appear to come into existence randomly and mostly arbitrarily,<sup>37</sup> research has shown that there are indeed regularities in their creation. The creation of blends is regulated by linguistic and cognitive principles mostly related to:

- a) the word order in the blended word
- b) boundaries between parts of the blend, and
- c) similarities between initial/final phonemes of source words.

Kelly<sup>38</sup> finds that words with certain phonological and semantic characteristics, as well as more frequent words, tend to take the initial position in a blend. Words with fewer syllables and those denoting a prototypical object or term thus tend to be found in the initial position.<sup>39</sup> However, the drawback of this criterion seems to be the fact that word length and its frequency are always related, i.e. shorter words always display higher frequency.

Furthermore, the structure of blends was found to conform to the „me first“<sup>40</sup> model, according to which words closer to the speakers and their self-perception also tend to occupy the initial position in the blend, as do words carrying positive connotations, as opposed to those with negative connotations. What is also transferred from the phrase being shortened is the temporal arrangement, an example being the word *brunch*, where the order of meals is preserved.

Some regularities have also been perceived regarding the boundaries between constituents in the blend, which generally matches the syllable boundaries or the boundaries of the word itself. If the boundary does not correspond to the syllable boundary, it is most commonly found after consonant clusters. The boundaries are,

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> L. Bauer, op. cit., 580.

<sup>38</sup> Michael H. Kelly, „To „brunch“ or to „brench“ some aspects of blend structure”, *Linguistics*, 36-3 (1998), 580-583.

<sup>39</sup> To test the criterion on blend words, Kelly (ibid.) singled out for analysis only those blends with constituents belonging to the same conceptual categories. The prototypicality was determined in the following way: the subjects were given only one category, i.e. *fruit*, and were asked to write down as many members of the category as possible in 30 seconds. The instances appearing in most lists were considered more prototypical than others.

<sup>40</sup> It is a purely semantic criterion.

therefore, also not random, but occur at the syllable boundary, or after the consonant string. With regards to similarities between initial/final phonemes, one should remember that blends originate from wordplay. The overlaps of phonological materials should, therefore, be observed in this regard.

Seeing as there are regularities in the creation of blends, it is possible to address the issue of factors facilitating or impeding the understanding of blends, i.e. what constitutes a successful or unsuccessful blend. First and foremost, a blend is easier to interpret in a context. Furthermore, the more phonological material of the source words there is in a blend, the easier it will be to understand, especially if it is more frequently used. Finally, semantic transparency of at least one constituent in a blend certainly contributes to its easier and faster interpretation.

According to their structure, blends in Croatian can be divided into three classes:

- a) blends consisting of the first part of the first word and the second part of the second word: *banka* ('bank') + *automat* ((automatic) machine') > *bankomat*, *čoksa* (slang for 'chocolate') + *Božić* ('Christmas') > *čoksić*, *kragna* ('collar') + *ogrlica* ('necklace') > *kraglica*, *kultura* ('culture') + *koturaljka* ('roller skate') > *kulturaljka*.
- b) blends created by including one or both words, whereby there can be phonological overlap: *rad* ('work') + *alkoholičar* ('alcoholic') > *radoholičar*; *web* + *seminar* > *webinar*, *bicikl* ('bicycle') + *turizam* ('tourism') > *cikloturizam*, *kultura* ('culture') + *turist* ('tourist') > *kulturist*, *aroma* ('aroma') + *magija* ('magic') > *aromagija*, *sprint* + *internet* > *sprinternet*, *print* + *internet* > *printernet*, *bicikl* ('bicycle') + „ball” > *cikolobal*, *haker* ('hacker') + *aktivist* ('activist') > *haktivist*.
- c) blends with a part of one word inserted into another word, with the latter left intact: *rurbanitet* (*ruralno* 'rural' + *urbanitet* 'urbanity'), *Apsurdistan* (apsurd 'absurd' + Afganistan (or any of the countries (thought to be underdeveloped) ending in *-stan*), *filmozofija* (*film* 'film' + *filozofija* 'philosophy'), *velnestinovo* (*velnes* 'wellness' + *Valentinovo* 'Valentine's Day'), *knjigra* (*knjiga* 'book' + *igra* 'game'), *arteist* (*art* + *atheist*), *Krašopis* (*Kraš* 'name of the brand' + *krasopis* 'chirography'), *Krašotice* (*Kraš* 'name of the brand' + *krasotice* ('beauties')).

Based on the number of examples found, we conclude that the types with phonological overlap tend to be more frequent. This is understandable given the register the examples come from. These are mostly fitting ludic neologisms in journalistic and advertising language.

It is interesting to note that all the recorded blends, as well as words used to form them, are nouns. Since the existence of a lexical unit depends on the existence of

the concept it is used to denote, it is clear that not all words have equal potential for *hypostasis*<sup>41</sup>.

The term *hypostatization* draws on the assumption that the existence of a word is dependent on the existence of a concept, i.e. the object the new word denotes. Accordingly, the potential for hypostatization differs in individual word classes, with nouns displaying the highest degree, since it is the naming of new objects, occurrences and subjects that figures as one of the key reasons for coining new words.

If the results of research on English blends are applied to Croatian examples, we note that they fit the conclusions drawn by Kelly<sup>42</sup> and Lehrer<sup>43</sup>; the shorter word always takes the initial position in a blend (*Dikan + Dolores*, *Brad + Angelina*, *banka + automat*), the boundary between the parts of the blend is always the end of a syllable or the end of the word itself (*rad + alkoholičar > radoholičar*, *web + seminar > webinar*), whereas type 3 examples exhibit the element of word play in the coining of new words (*krasopis > Krašopis*, *krasotice > Krašotice*, *film + filozofija > filmozofija...*).

Although the number of blends in Croatian is on the rise, caution is advised in their definition, since many words have been created on analogy to the existing ones. This points to the fact that a part of a blend can develop into a combining form, as is the case with the combining form *-mat*. A number of words were thus coined on analogy to the word *bankomat*: *platomat* ('machine for paying'), *kovinomat* ('machine for coins'), *kavomat* ('coffee machine')...<sup>44</sup>

Lehrer<sup>45</sup> also recognizes that blends are a rich source of combining forms. The reasons for the proportional rise in the number of words created by blending, and those involving a combining form certainly include the following: their meaning is clearly entrenched and speakers have to learn it, the words involving a combining form are coined on analogy and are simply concatenated into larger units, i.e. words. Therefore, once the speakers have acquired their meaning, they are relatively easy to combine with other free or combining forms, since such words are, as noted above, created by analogy, i.e. motivated by a compound of the same word-formational structure.

<sup>41</sup> Hans-Jörg Schmid, „New Words in the Mind: Concept-formation and Entrenchment of Neologisms”, *Anglia - Zeitschrift für englische Philologie*. 126 (2008) 1, 5.

<sup>42</sup> M. H. Kelly, op. cit.

<sup>43</sup> A. Lehrer, op. cit.

<sup>44</sup> The tendency is well-exemplified in English by words coined on analogy to the word *anorexia – bigorexia*, *tanorexia*, denoting excessive formation of muscle mass and excessive tanning, respectively.

<sup>45</sup> A. Lehrer, op. cit.

There is another ever-increasing structural type of blends in Croatian, whose occurrence is conditioned by the register they appear in most frequently, *viz.* advertising. Udier<sup>46</sup> thus suggests that videocentrism has led authors of advertisements to resort to visual means in their creation, such as pictures, diagrams, graphs, photographs, and lettering options involving the choice, use and manipulation of different models and shapes of graphemes (fonts), as well as other symbols of different sizes and shapes.

These procedures lend the text concreteness, i.e. make language visible and graphically shaped. The lettering options are exemplified in examples such as *barKA* (*bar* + *boat*) and *natjeČAJ* (*contest*+ *tea*), while the dominance of the visual is also apparent in cases such as *coolinarika*, *podroom* and *booksa*. It is only by resorting to the visual that such examples gain their full sense, and it becomes clear that they are blends, i.e. words in which two words of either domestic or foreign origins are merged.

With regards to the registers blends appear in, the dominance of youth jargon and the advertising language has long since been illustrated. Bugarski<sup>47</sup> notes that the social acceptance of blends goes hand in hand with their increase in number, and important contributing factor being another „elite” register showing a rise in blends, *viz.* names of projects, cultural events and festivals (*Kulturaljka*, *Pričigin*, *Artomat*) as well as book titles (*Filmozofija*).

## 2.4. Causes of blending

Since blends invariably, or almost always, involve shortening of phonological material of one or both source words, whereby the expression is shortened and made semantically more efficient, it is hardly surprising that language economy is often heralded as the initial trigger for their creation. Still, most blends cannot be claimed to fully contribute to the economy of expression, since they demand extra effort in terms of interpretation, at least initially, until speakers have become aware of their makeup and the meaning constructed by the blending of constituents. The cause of blend creation seems to be more adequately explained from the pragmatic standpoint.<sup>48</sup> If we reconsider the registers most prone to blends, *viz.* journalese and language of advertising, it is the illocutionary force, i.e. the effect on the hearer the speaker aims to achieve, that emerges as the key reason of their creation. This is

<sup>46</sup> Sanda Lucija Udier, „Reklama kao prototip medijskoga teksta”, *Jezik kao informacija*, zbornik radova, Srednja Europa, Hrvatsko društvo za primijenjenu lingvistiku, Zagreb, 2013, 184-185.

<sup>47</sup> Ranko Bugarski, *Evropa u jeziku*, Biblioteka XX. vek, Beograd, 2009, 198.

<sup>48</sup> A. Lehrer, „Understanding trendy neologisms”, *Rivista di Linguistica*, 15.2 (2003), str. 371-384.

especially the case in advertising, where the goal is to win attention and beat the competitors. Seen from a pragmatic standpoint, blends prove especially opportune, as it is the goal of any advertisement to make viewers or listeners retain at least a part, if not the whole advertisement, which would ensure the recognisability of the product or brand in the future.<sup>49</sup> Advertising professionals, therefore, do not target a quick and automatic reaction to the blend. Quite the contrary, the use of blends aims to make the viewer and listener think. Lehrer<sup>50</sup> suggests that the viewer/listener feels accomplished after interpreting a blend because s/he „got it”. This, in turn, results in a positive attitude towards the advertised product or brand. *Timespeak* or *Timese*, a writing style developed by *Time* magazine and characterized by gross overuse of blends, illustrates the lengths one can go in attempts to attract the readers' attention. Illustrative examples include *cinemactress*, *slanguage*, *cinemogul* etc.

The modern man is continuously exposed to visual and audio stimuli coming from the media world. Advertisers, journalists and politicians crave for attention, and language has offered them an excellent solution in blends as witty expressions, easy to remember, but demanding attention and active participation in their interpretation.

## 2.5. *The making(s) of a good blend*

Thousands of new words are created every day, only some of which will earn their place in dictionaries or everyday vocabulary of speakers of a language. According to Metcalf,<sup>51</sup> to determine whether a word is successful or not, it needs to be recorded in monolingual general dictionaries for forty consecutive years, i.e. be in active use by two generations of speakers. To determine the potential of a new word, Metcalf<sup>52</sup> has developed a scale called *fudge*, modelled after the Apgar Index, i.e. a scale developed for newborns. The elements used to grade a new word are frequency, unobtrusiveness, diversity of users and situations, generation of other forms and meanings and endurance of the concept, with the initial letters of these factors forming the above mentioned acronym.

The first factor can also be called the popularity of a word. Although the factor may seem simple at first blush, there are several ways to determine popularity. A

<sup>49</sup> The following blends thus stem from advertisements: *kulturist*, *Krašopis*, *Krašotice*, *Krašuljci*, *čoksić*, *ljetnissan*, *sprinternet*, *aromagija*...

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Allan Metcalf, *Predicting New Words: The Secrets of Their Success*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, 2002, 168.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 152.

new word depends on the attention given to it by speakers who should start using it for her frequency to move. Regarding unobtrusiveness, the author considers the less obtrusive words to be more successful. The more similar a word to existing words and „less peculiar” it is, the greater its potential for success<sup>53</sup>. According to the third criterion, it is important for a new word to be used in various life situations and by as many speakers as possible. Therefore, if the use of a new word remains confined to only one professional, social or other class of speakers, it will probably not persist in the general lexicon. It is also important for a new word to be able to serve as input for the formal and semantic derivation of other new words. The last factor pertains to endurance, but not of the word itself, i.e. the term, but the object, concept, occurrence, i.e. the idea the new word denotes. Every word, i.e. term has two facets; the concept it denotes and the linguistic expression used to denote it. Apart from denoting the concept and its place in the system of other concepts, the term belongs to the lexical system of a language and follows its laws. Since a concept is a unit of thought established by abstraction based on similarities between members of a group, the name of the concept by virtue of its association to it, depends solely on the conceptual system the concept belongs to.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, the most successful blends will be those denoting the object which is itself a kind of a hybrid, and those denoting a new object or idea. Another factor influencing the ‘lifespan’ of a blend is most certainly the understanding of its meaning. It is influenced by the following factors:<sup>55</sup>

- the amount of contextual information
- transparency of blend structure
- transparency of the constituent parts of the blend
- the number of derivatives of each constituent in the blend (the more derivatives, the more transparent its meaning)
- semantic transparency between the constituents of the blend

The last three factors can be subsumed under a single one, semantic transparency. Therefore, speakers will find the meaning of the new word more transparent, if they are familiar with the meanings of its constituents.

<sup>53</sup> Unobtrusiveness as a criterion is supported by many coinwords produced or revived to replace international terms in the time of the Independent State of Croatia, a Nazi puppet state during World War 2 which are ridiculed nowadays and have never become part of everyday use (e.g. *krugoval* (‘radio’), *slikokaz* (‘cinema’), *slikopis* (‘movie’), *munjovoz* (‘tram’) etc.).

<sup>54</sup> Milica Mihaljević – Ljiljana Šarić, „Terminološka antonimija”, *Rasprave Instituta za hrvatski jezik i jezikoslovlje*, 20 (1994), 1, 213.

<sup>55</sup> H.-J. Schmid, op. cit., 13.

The above discussion clearly shows that there are no universal recommendations for a successful blend. Their short-term nature is conditioned by usage, which is mostly limited to generational and professional classes. However, there are trends, i.e. areas of human life in more frequent need of new words than others. Some of these include finances, computer technology, music, fashion, crime and everyday life. Perhaps one should turn to these exact domains to look for gaps in the linguistic system in need of filling by means of blends.

## Conclusion

Blends provide a creative and economical means of expression both to the modern speaker, who makes daily use of the Internet as means of exchanging information, and to professionals who use language as an efficient means of attracting their potential clients' attention.

Although blending is often related to English, which forms a considerable number of new words in this way, one should note that the occurrence of blends in Croatian is not motivated by English words alone. In the second half on the 20th century, the influence of Russian has given rise to abbreviation as a productive word formation process not only in Croatian, but also in other Slavic Languages.<sup>56</sup> Some Russian abbreviations such as *rabfak* (Рабфак, a syllabic abbreviation of Рабочий факультет 'Workers' Faculty'), *kombjed* (комбед, a syllabic abbreviation of комитет бедноты 'Committee of the Poor'), *kolhoz* (колхоз, a syllabic abbreviation of коллективное хозяйство 'collective farm') etc. served as the model for Croatian words, e.g. *maspok*.

Apart from abbreviations, this period sees the origins of blends as understood in this paper. We thus note the Russian-motivated *profsojuz* ('The union'), a blend made by fusing the first part of the first word and the whole second word профсоюз - профессиональный союз. Therefore, blends can be claimed to have a more universal nature. Their occurrence can be attributed to the workings of Zipf's *Principle of Lesser Effort* or Martinet's *Linguistic economy*. The productivity of such a way of forming new words in specific languages shall also depend on their structural characteristics, regarding the presence of the other two formation models – compounding and clipping.

Modern technologies, dictating different modes of communication, and the influx of words from English have served as a mere trigger, i.e. a fertile ground for this

<sup>56</sup> Martina Radčenko, „Semantička adaptacija ruskih posuđenica u hrvatskom jeziku od 1945. do 2000. godine”, *Croatica et Slavica Iadertina*, II (2006), 146.



mode of word formation to become a reflection of both linguistic economy and linguistic creativity.

Regarding the future of blends in Croatian, one should keep in mind the relative poverty of the corpus at present, which does not allow the drawing of universal conclusions. The kinds of analysis of blends in other languages are hindered in Croatian by one of the basic characteristics of neologisms – their short-term nature, the nature of the very process of lexicalisation, i.e. „socialization” as a long-term process, as well as the registers they gravitate towards being always in need of fresh solutions and ideas. Time, as well as language in action, will show whether the growing number of blends in the Croatian language is of a mere fashionable, jargon-oriented character, or if they represent a hint of new trends in formational structure which will call for a reexamination of traditional assumptions regarding the issue of word formation in Croatian.

## TVORBA STOPLJENICA

### Sažetak

*Uz neologizme koji u hrvatskom jeziku nastaju već utvrđenim i opisanim tvorbenim načinima, posljednjih je godina u jeziku (elektroničkih) medija primijećen sve veći broj riječi koje nastaju stapanjem dijelova postojećih riječi koji nisu nužno morfemi što ujedno predstavlja i osnovnu razliku između složenice i stopljenice. Stapanje se dakle nametnulo kao prikladan način tvorbe neologizama posebno u reklamama jer svojom ekskluzivnošću i inovativnošću privlače pozornost gledatelja (aromagija, slastistika, sprinternet). Budući da je riječ o hrvatskome jeziku neautohtonim tvorbenim formantima i obrascima, u radu će se nastojati utvrditi povećava li se broj stopljenica u hrvatskome jeziku izravnim preuzimanjem stranih riječi ili se taj tvorbeni obrazac reproducira te prilagođuje hrvatskomu jezičnom sustavu. Nadalje, utvrdit će se struktura stopljenica iz korpusa koji je prikupljen iz hrvatskih tiskanih i elektroničkih medija, popisati registri u kojima se one najčešće pojavljuju te objasniti najčešći razlozi nastanka.*

Ključne riječi: *stapanje, struktura hrvatskih stopljenica, jezik reklama*