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BLENDING AS A MANIFESTATION OF THE FLEXIBILITY AND MOBILITY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The article deepens into the intricate process of word formation in modern English. The article defines blending as one of the leading ways of word formation in the English language today. It highlights how the English language, shaped by its historical development, incorporates words of foreign origin that undergo assimilation and evolution to create new words, concepts, and meanings. The article provides a detailed discussion on the ambiguous definitions and terminologies associated with blending, such as telescopy, word fusion, hybridization, and contamination, among others. Blending has emerged as a predominant method of word formation in modern English, driven by linguistic economy and creativity. The article underscores the need for further research to understand its mechanisms, predictability, and usage across different contexts.
Keywords: word formation, blending, splinter, telescopy, word fusion.

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ЗМІШАННЯ ЯК ПРОЯВ ГНУЧКОСТІ ТА МОБІЛЬНОСТІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

Стаття заглиблюється в складний процес словотворення в сучасній англійській мові. У ній визначається злиття (blending) як один із провідних способів творення нових слів у сучасній англійській мові. Особлива увага приділяється тому, як англійська мова, сформована в результаті історичного розвитку, активно запозичує слова іншомовного походження, які піддаються асиміляції та еволюції, утворюючи нові слова, поняття й значення.

У статті детально розглядаються неоднозначні терміни та визначення, пов'язані зі злиттям, такі як телескопія (telescopy), злиття слів (word fusion), гібридизація (hybridization) та контамінація (contamination). Наголошується на тому, що злиття стало домінуючим методом словотворення в сучасній англійській мові завдяки лінгвістичній економії та творчому підходу до формування нових мовних одиниць.

Злиття передбачає поєднання частин двох або більше слів, що призводить до утворення нового слова, значення якого поєднує в собі семантику вихідних компонентів. Цей процес можна спостерігати як у розмовній, так і в писемній мові, особливо у сфері масової культури, реклами, науки та технологій. Яскравими прикладами є такі слова, як brunch (сніданок + обід), smog (дим + туман) або motel (мотор + готель).

Також розглядається роль скорочень і абревіацій у злитті слів, які часто зустрічаються в інтернет-комунікації, сленгу та технічній лексиці. Наприклад, слово blog (від "web" + "log") є типовим прикладом злиття, яке виникло у цифрову епоху та стало невід'ємною частиною сучасного інформаційного простору.

Стаття підкреслює необхідність подальших досліджень у цій галузі для кращого розуміння механізмів злиття, його передбачуваності та використання в різних контекстах. Особливо актуальним є аналіз впливу цього процесу на розвиток англійської мови у глобалізованому світі.
Ключові слова: словотворення, злиття, сплінтер, телескопія, злиття слів.

Formulation of a problem

The word-formation system of modern English has been actively and fruitfully studied by both domestic and foreign linguists. A significant number of works have been written that consider certain aspects of word formation. However, recently the language has been changing very quickly, its structure is partially changing, but mainly the lexical composition of the language and the productivity of word-formation models are changing. Existing theoretical knowledge becomes insufficient. Therefore, it is necessary to identify new, modern trends that have been traced in recent decades. Formation of words with the help of blending is a common way of word formation, which has its own characteristics.

Analysis of the current research

Among foreign researchers, we also do not find a single definition. For example, A. Enarson presents "blending" as a combination of two or more forms in which at least one word has been abbreviated. The abbreviation may be due to the simple omission of part of the word or maybe the result of overlapping sounds or letters. S. Gries sees "blending" as the creation of new lexemes by combining parts of at least two other words, and one of them has been shortened. In turn, A. Lehrer defines blends as "underlying compounds which are composed of one word and part of another, or parts of two other words. The word part is called a splinter". A splinter usually cannot occur as a word, but there is a possibility for the splinter to become a combining form. Linguistically a splinter is a clipping. A

classic definition was given by a British linguist Laurie Bauer: "A blend may be defined 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".

The term 'telescopy' describes the combination of words in such a way that the new formations turn out to be common to both sources as if merged into one, whole sounds, morphemes, and syllables. A typical example of such lexical units is the word *netholic* – network + alcoholic (addicted to the Internet).

Other authors, for example, G. Marchand, prefer the term "contamination". G. Marchand, on the basis of the English language, defines contamination as a method of merging parts of words into one new word. Contamination is also observed in colloquial speech and is often a deviation from the literary norm.

Blending, which is extremely popular today, is not a new process in language. Blends have been recorded in Latin and Greek, as well as in Sanskrit, but this phenomenon is most common in Germanic languages [1, p.54].

The first 'fusions' were random in nature and often represented occasionalisms. Lewis Carroll is a well-known creator of contaminations, who turned their creation and use into a literary device and called these fusions "portmanteau words" (Previously, this word meant "suitcase for transporting clothes". Its peculiarity was that it was hinged and could open in both directions. It is because of this property that it was associated with blends). L. Carroll wrote, "Well, 'slithy' means 'lithe and slimy'. You see it's like a portmanteau – there are two words packed up into one word…. 'Mimsy' is 'flimsy and miserable'". Other well-known examples of L. Carroll are *chortle* (chuckle and snort), *galumph* (gallop and triumph).

The word blend was not used as a linguistic term before the late 19th century, and even then, it did not mean what it means today. In the academic works of the late 19th century, the term was used mainly in the context of speech errors, e.g. Sweet (1892: § 48) mentioned that blending of different constructions may cause certain grammatical and logical anomalies. The same use of the term can be seen in Jespersen (1918: 52): "Contaminations or blendings of two constructions between which the speaker is wavering occur in all languages". The study of blending, as an independent way of word formation, begins to appear in the 20th century, but this method reaches its peak in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This interest is not accidental, since it was during this period that this method of word formation passes from the category of secondary to the category of main ones, as evidenced by a large number of regularly appearing blends.

Scholars arguing for the predictability of blends focus on the regularities that may help develop a systematized account of this category, despite its fuzzy boundaries. Such sistematizations have been developed in many studies including Kubozono [1990], Gries [2006, 2012], and Arndt-Lappe & Plag [2013]. Thus, in Gries [2006, 2012] inferences about the systematic nature of blends are made based on corpus data on the frequency of occurrence of certain types of formations. Some insights into the mechanism of blending are drawn from considering cognitive factors involved in the formation (Arndt-Lappe & Plag [2013], Gries [2006, 2012]) and processing of blends.

Joan L. Bybee focused on the morphology, phonology, usage-based models. Bybee's work on usage-based phonology and morphology has been influential in understanding how frequency and usage impact language structure and change. Her book "Phonology and Language Use" integrates insights from cognitive linguistics and corpus linguistics. The researcher concludes that with the respect to the frequency of occurrence of the inflectional morpheme, as well as their order with respect with the respect to the verb stem, is that the relevance principle governs the formation of inflection at every stage. It sets up the syntactic conditions necessary and, in the addition governs the likelihood that an actual fusion will eventually take place. To a large extent the degree of fusion is determined rather mechanically by how long and in what order inflectional morphemes have been attached to the stem. But this is not entirely the case with stem changes that co-occur with inflectional categories, because these can be affected by morpho-phonemic changes. These changes are also governed by the relevance principle, and will be treated along with other matters relating to the organization of verbal paradigms.

Ray Jackendoff studied **s**yntax, semantics, cognitive linguistics. His works are devoted to mental structure, an integrated approach to generative grammar, conscious and unconscious aspects of language structure, the structure of complex actions, and cognition of society and culture.

Jackendoff's research bridges the gap between syntax, semantics, and cognition. His book "Foundations of Language: Brain, Meaning, Grammar, Evolution" [ ] offers a comprehensive overview of his theoretical approach to language structure and its cognitive underpinnings. The author alsoreturns to an importtant aspect of the hypothesis that the ability to acquire a language is a human cognitive specialization . Such cognitive specialization must be coded somehow in the genes, which determine how the brain is built. His works are devoted to mental structure, an integrated approach to generative grammar, conscious and unconscious aspects of language structure, the structure of complex actions, and cognition of society and culture. In his studies are discussed issues relating to various aspects of the structure of social cognition and theory of mind. He investigates the formal properties of mental structure and the relations between mental structure and brain structure, and opens with the following statement: "This book is concerned with exploring human nature in terms of the mental structures that play a role in constituting human experience and human behavior". Jackendoff provides his understanding of the terms brain, understood, rather conventionally, as the physical body part which accomplishes cognition (p. 3) and mind, understood, far less conventionally, as "the brain seen from the point of view of its functional or computational aspect" (p. 3). He also lists different ways, or 'dimensions', of studying the notions of mind/brain. In the conclusion to this chapter he stresses the

fact that the discussion at this point is strictly programmatic, and later chapters return to these issues in the broad context of other cognitive phenomena.

David Crystal dealt with Sociolinguistics, language change, internet linguistics. Crystal has written extensively on the evolution of English, including its sociolinguistic aspects and the impact of digital communication. His book "The Stories of English" provides a historical perspective on English and its global spread.

The first chapter "Modelling English" consists of a short introductory diagram showing the relationships between the different aspects of the study of language that are exposed in the body of the work, following the classical dichotomy: structure vs. use . The following chapters are grouped in the aforementioned six thematic parts, each part containing a variable number of chapters between two and six, all dealing with the main areas of study of a particular subfield. These six chapters also differ in length: 120 pages are devoted to Part 1 (*The History of English*), and 178 to Part 5 (*Using English*), with the remaining parts ranging from 30 to 75 pages.

The first part, "The history of English", presents the first seven chapters in chronological order: "The origins of English", "Old English", "Middle English", "Early Modern English", "Modern English" and, lastly, "World English", which enlarges this traditional classification. For each chapter, the author offers an account of basic axes of synchronic description: spelling, sounds, grammar and vocabulary, as well as other aspects like existing corpora and major milestones in the history of the language for each period, like *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Chaucer, Shakespeare, etc.
The author gives a short introduction presenting the mythical and historical origin of English that precedes Chapter 3 about Old English. Together with the basic account of the language, this chapter addresses a number of questions: runes, early literature and its devices, phonetic changes, different sources of vocabulary like Latin and Old Norse, Scandinavian influence and the emergence of dialects. Another valuable asset of the chapter is the number of illustrated examples of early writing samples, often accompanied by their transcription and translation, which can be particularly useful for both students and dilettantes. Likewise, the presence of maps is essential for understanding the birth of Old English dialects.

His views on Middle English, presents the continuity of the English language through the historical events and their effect on the transformation of the language, and discusses topics such as the change and continuity of literary tradition, the Chaucerian work, the Norman and French influence and changes in the different aspects of the language: sound system, spelling, grammar, morphology and vocabulary. Special attention is also drawn to the development of Middle English dialects and the origins of the standard variety. All these contents are presented in a clear and summarised fashion. As in the preceding chapter, the panels' contents are of great value: pictures of various literary works are accompanied by their transcription, and the use of maps and diagrams constitute an essential contribution for understanding Crystal's account

He presents a synchronic description of Early Modern English, roughly between 1400 and 1800 AD, and focuses on a number of subjects: the emergence of printing in England, main texts such as the various versions of the Bible, authors like Shakespeare, changes in grammar and sound, the stabilisation of the language (influenced by the regularisation of spelling or punctuation), and the publacation of Johnson's dictionary. Again, illustrations allow to have a visual image of the protagonists and reference works, and panels offer several examples of each point.

His works provide an outline of some interesting topics on Modern English, like the grammatical changes at the beginning of the period, the influence of prescriptive grammar, modern varieties of English, the American linguistic identity and current trends in lexical creation. Some tables offer specific data on these matters, like the evolution in the creation of scientific vocabulary and the preferred pronunciation of some terms.

The purpose of the article is to provide an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of blending in the English language. It aims to explore the historical development and evolution of English, emphasizing how words of foreign origin have been assimilated and how new words, concepts, and meanings, including blends, have emerged.

Presentation of the main material

The modern English language appears as a product of a long historical development, in the process of which it has undergone multifaceted changes due to various reasons. Words of foreign origin have gone through a long path of assimilation and continue their development, forming new words, concepts, and meanings, including blends. In the linguistic literature, the phenomenon 'blending' has a rather ambiguous definition. Linguists give different interpretations of blending. In addition, there is no single term for this process. There are the following options: telescopy, word fusion, hybridization, insertive word formation, insertive word fusion, telescoping, contamination, or overlapping. The question of the status of blending is still open. The mechanisms of blend formation are studied mainly by Western scientists, among which are I. Plag and P. Bertinetto.

A huge number of contaminations appear at the turn of the 20th-21st centuries, which is explained by a number of factors: the desire to save language resources and efforts, the spread of the Internet, and the popularity of using the language game on the Internet and in the media. The ability of contaminants to draw attention to an unusual language form (ironic Lollywood (Lahore (Pakistani city)) + Hollywood), their catchiness is widely used in ergonyms – the names of brands and advertising products (Amway – American Way, Camcorder – camera + recorder).

In British English, such formations are used mainly in journalism, for example: *edvertorial* (an advertisement and an editorial). Thanks to politicians, the word *Brexit* (Britain and exit) appeared. This word is understood as the

process of the UK leaving the European Union. Another large area that has given a large number of blends is the field of science and technology. For example, *chunnel* (channel and tunnel).

It is a well-known fact that a language reflects the realities of modern life. The coronavirus has led to the emergence of a number of new blends in the English language, which were instantly picked up by many Internet users. For example:

covidpreneur – COVID + entrepreneur (a person or organization that uses the general panic amid the Covid-19 pandemic, buying and reselling consumer goods);

homecation – home + vacation (holiday spent at home);

homeference – home + conference (conference held at home);

zoombie – ZOOM + zombie (a person feeling overwhelmed by endless zoom conferences);

covidiot – COVID + idiot (a person who deliberately does not comply with safety measures during a pandemic COVID-19);

maskne – mask + acne (acne or skin irritation caused by prolonged exposure to the mask);

lockstalgia – lockdown + nostalgia (feeling when a person misses the time spent in quarantine);

spendemic – spending + pandemic (excessive spending of money during quarantine);

coronely – corona + lonely (the loneliness that people experienced during quarantine);

coronapocalypse – corona + apocalypse (seemingly the end of the world as we know it because everyone is either infected with coronavirus in the lungs);

coronageddon – corona + armageddon (the near-certain, end-of-times condition created either by the actual COVID-19 virus or the massive social, financial, and political devastation generated on the back of global hysteria);

quarantini – quarantine + martini (a cocktail you make at home and drink alone or with members of your household during a period of imposed isolation);

zumping – Zoom + dumping (the act of dumping someone over Zoom);

coronials – corona + millennials (babies conceived or born during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially one apparently conceived during a lockdown);

coronasomnia – corona + insomnia (sleep problems related to stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic).

The universal structural features of the blends involve the formation of derivatives of units, as a rule, on the basis of two correlates, although several samples of three-element blends are also present in the English language:

Intelevsionary – Intel + Television + Visionary.

Taking as a basis the classification proposed by Yu. A. Zhluktenko, according to which they stand out full (connection of the initial fragment of one the original word with the final fragment of the second), partial (the combination of a truncated fragment of the foundation of the first original word with the full basis of the second) and haplological blends (the combination of components with their application at the junction), it was estimated that complete and haplological units are most spread; in English, their number is 34.9 % and 39.5 %.

Blends, like full-fledged lexical units, have a certain set of morphological signs, the composition of which varies depending on the frequency of a part of speech affiliation of the derivative. The prevalence of nouns should be emphasized, although such parts of speech as a verb, an adjective, and an adverb are also represented. The initial components of blend words should match each other in several ways – phonological, semantic, grammatical – and at the same time have a high lingua-creative potential.

Thus, in recent decades, blending has become one of the leading ways of word formation, producing a large number of words that have entered the vocabulary. The main productive models of creating blends in modern English are: 1) ab + cd → ad; 2) ab + cd → abd; 3) ab + cd → acd; 4) ab + cd → ac. During the formation of blends, not only the univerbation of the values of the original lexemes can occur, but also certain semantic modifications: addition, transfer, and reinterpretation of meanings. They simplify the recipient's understanding and perception (even at the associative level). Blends were formed based on complete letter and sound compatibility to create a word that makes sense and is easy to pronounce. Morphological motivation helps us easily understand the meaning of even an unknown word if we know what the components of this word mean.

Unlike other ways of word formation, the word-forming unit here is not the stem, but its arbitrary fragment. Such a fragment does not exist in the language, but appears only at the time of word creation, which explains the absence of a single word-forming model. The main methods are reduced to two – the connection (amalgamation) of the fragments of the bases and the actual fusion of the fragments. In the first place is always part of the dominant word, which contains the main information or feature of the newly created word. In most cases, the second part of the word is shortened, and when transforming words, they rely on a more appropriate sound and meaning, a combination of letter-sounds and sense.

Blends serve the needs of the scientific community to denote new concepts and entities, they are one of the ways of manifesting the author's word-making in fiction and gain more and more distribution in journalistic works due to their expressiveness, novelty of form, and content.

The spread of the internet has been a major catalyst for this linguistic change. Online spaces provide rapid, global, and informal communication environments where users are constantly looking for ways to express themselves creatively while economizing on time and effort. The internet's vast reach and speed facilitate the adoption and dissemination of contaminations.

Memes, hashtags, and viral phrases often thrive because of their blend of humor, irony, and creativity. These linguistic innovations quickly capture the attention of users, and once they go viral, they spread to a broader audience. For example, "smog" (smoke + fog) might have started in scientific discourse, but similar contaminations like "Brangelina" (Brad + Angelina) became widespread because of the internet and social media.

Moreover, platforms like Twitter, with its original 140-character limit, promoted the use of shorter, hybridized forms of words to maximize space while maintaining clarity and punch. The internet, therefore, serves as both a stage and laboratory for language experimentation, where new forms are born and either fade out or become part of everyday speech.

The language game in media and online spaces highlights how playfulness with language has become both a creative and persuasive tool. The example of "Lollywood" (Lahore + Hollywood) mirrors a broader global trend where people adapt the "Hollywood" suffix to various localities (e.g., "Bollywood" for Bombay/Mumbai). This wordplay adds an element of irony, satire, or commentary, often poking fun at the cultural dominance of Western media while reappropriating its forms for local use.

In advertising, this linguistic creativity is harnessed to make brands more memorable. Take "Amway" (American Way), where blending serves to evoke associations with American ideals of success, independence, and innovation while remaining catchy and easy to pronounce. This makes brands more relatable and attractive to global markets.

Advertisers and marketers understand that blending words creates novelty, and novelty captures attention. The familiar + unfamiliar dynamic (where one part of the word is recognizable, and the other part adds an element of surprise) draws consumers in. These contaminations tend to be sticky, staying in people's minds for longer periods because of their clever construction.

In the commercial world, ergonyms—names of businesses, brands, or products—often rely on these creative blends to stand out in competitive markets. Examples like "Amway" and "camcorder" demonstrate how language blending can convey multiple layers of meaning, helping consumers quickly understand a product's functionality or the brand's identity.

Camcorder: A blend of "camera" and "recorder," instantly communicates that this device serves both functions.

Amway: By blending "American" and "way," the brand conveys its origins and the promise of success through the American model of entrepreneurship.

This technique makes brands easy to remember and often gives them an edge in cross-cultural marketing. In an age where branding has to transcend national borders, such blending plays a crucial role in making names accessible and resonant with diverse audiences.

These contaminations not only serve linguistic or commercial purposes but also reflect deeper cultural shifts. The blending of terms can signify globalization, where cultures and languages mix more freely, creating hybrid identities and forms of expression. The use of portmanteaus or hybrid words often signifies how modern societies are increasingly complex and interconnected.

For instance, the proliferation of words like "frenemy" (friend + enemy) or "glocal" (global + local) reflects a nuanced understanding of relationships and environments in the 21st century. These words capture contradictions or dualities that didn't necessarily exist in such prominent ways in previous generations.

The idea of saving language resources and efforts reflects a tendency toward simplifying communication. People naturally gravitate toward shorter, punchier, and more memorable language forms to convey complex ideas quickly. This desire for efficiency aligns with the rise of global digital communication, where brevity is crucial (e.g., in social media, texting, and advertising).

Contaminations, like "camcorder" (camera + recorder), are perfect examples. Instead of referring to two separate devices, a single term conveys both, saving time, space, and cognitive effort. This practice mirrors a broader trend where languages evolve to adapt to new technologies and social contexts. Abbreviations, acronyms, and portmanteaus (blends) have become increasingly popular, especially in digital communication (e.g., "blog" from "web log" or "brunch" from "breakfast + lunch").

Conclusions and prospects for further research

Thus, the following conclusions were drawn during the study. Despite different approaches to the definition of the concept of "blending" in linguistic literature, many authors agree on one thing: blending is the combination of parts of two or more words. With the development of society and language, new lexical units will appear. Blends make up a considerable part of the corpus of new English words. Blending, being one of the ways of word formation, has universal general language characteristics that manifest themselves at various language levels, as well as national features that reflect the consciousness and perception of reality by the speakers of a particular linguistic culture. Based on the tendency to save language resources, it can be argued that most new nominations will be created with the help of blending. It should be also noted that at the moment blending is widely used in fiction for the so-called "term creation", and as a means of wordplay and information coding in mass media and advertising, therefore, needs further research.

Their widespread adoption in ergonyms and brand names speaks to their **efficiency**, **creativity**, and **cultural relevance** in modern communication. Whether in marketing, media, or everyday conversation, these hybrid words are shaping how we express ourselves in a fast-paced, interconnected world.

By blending ideas, languages, and concepts, contaminations not only streamline communication but also enhance its richness, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of human interaction in the digital age. This idea revolves around the increasing prevalence of linguistic contaminations - words or phrases.

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