

CREATING CREATIVE BLENDS IN 21 CENTURY (A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND BULGARIAN)¹

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Abstract: *This article studies blending as a word-formative strategy used in newly coined vocabulary in English and English borrowings in Bulgarian. It involves merging parts of two or more words to create a new lexical unit and typically occurs when the beginning of the first is combined with the end of the second to form a new word that represents a combination of their meanings. Blending is commonly used to create new words for technological advancements, brand names, and other contemporary concepts. For this study we constructed two databases containing vocabulary which has already been included in the dictionaries of Standard English and some of them in the Dictionary of New Bulgarian Words. Additionally, we try to determine the processes of adaptation the English borrowings are subject to when they are adopted in the target language and their assimilation. The article also explores morphological differences in the construction of English and Bulgarian blends.*

Keywords: *new words/neologisms, blends, English vs. Bulgarian, borrowings, assimilation*

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Introduction

Language and human society are in a close relationship which causes language changes over time due to society's development. These changes reflect the shift of meaning of certain phrases in the context of language use. Therefore, language is not a static system, but it changes and develops together with society (Nabila & Abdulrahman, 2021). In any case, there could be a number of possible reasons that can provoke language changes. They can happen due to some transformations and adjustments in the social life system, as in education, culture, or technologies (Harya, 2016). For instance, the word *selfie* meaning "taking a picture of yourself" was accepted by people and spread very quickly in 2013 (Shin, Kim, Im & Chong, 2017). This is just one example of a language change due to technological development, and many other new words are also invented to describe things that did not exist before, e.g., *podcasting*, *webcasting*, *blogging*, *filmstock*, *webcams*, etc. (Yasin, Mustafa & Faysal, 2010).

Language can also change because of current social phenomena. Recently, the new collocation *Second gentleman* entered the American English with the meaning "the husband of the U.S. vice president, or the husband of a current state or local official ranking immediately below the governor or mayor" due to the fact that since 2020 the vice president of the United States is Kamala Harris, who is married to Douglas Emhoff, the first second gentleman in American history. No doubt we should mention the pandemic of Coronavirus Disease 2019, commonly known as COVID-19, which reshaped our daily lives very quickly. Our languages followed the tendency in terms of change and new words and expressions were coined in many languages along with the increased use of less usual ones. Here are some examples: *COVID-19*², *Coronavirus*³, *lockdown*⁴, *social distancing*⁵, *pandemic*⁶, *vaccine hesitancy*⁷, *herd immunity*⁸, *antibody testing*⁹. All these could be defined as neologisms as they were invented or constructed to name a new entity or represent new senses of already existing words. A variety of methods are used to create neologisms, but the most productive ones are compounding, derivation, analogy, abbreviation, and

2. "CO" stands for corona, "VI" for virus, "D" for disease, and "19" for the year it was discovered (2019).

3. This term existed before the pandemic but it became widely recognized and used during the COVID-19 outbreak.

4. The restriction of movement and activities imposed by governments to slow the spread of the virus.

5. The practice of maintaining physical distance from others to reduce the risk of transmission.

6. Though not a new word, it was used much more frequently and widely in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

7. The reluctance or refusal to get vaccinated, which became a significant public health concern during the pandemic.

8. The concept of a population becoming immune to a virus when a sufficient percentage of individuals have been vaccinated or have developed immunity through infection.

9. Testing to determine if a person has antibodies against the coronavirus, indicating a prior infection or vaccination.

meaning transfer (Zhou, 2016, p. 292). Some neologisms are short lived and disappear fairly quickly before becoming part of the standard language, others gradually lose their novelty. Mostly neologisms are found in the social and mass media, where changes in today's social, political, and economic life emerge and gain prominence most quickly. Language is continually evolving, and global events often play a role in shaping its development. The data this study is based on, however, contains only newly coined units which have already been included in the dictionaries of Standard English and some of them have found their places in the Dictionary of New Bulgarian Words (Rechnik na novite dumi v bulgarskiya ezik, 2021).

Theoretical framework

Defining a word as an archaism or a neologism depends on the historical period. Only by referring to a particular period of language development could a word be considered as newly coined or treated as obsolete. Words such as *cable television*, *flashback* or *sitcom* were new words in the 1960s, similarly to *CD-ROM* and *hip-hop* in the 1980s, but nowadays, they are only familiar to the people in their 40s and over.

Neologisms are called “nonce words” by Crystal (2008, p. 329) because very few of them survive. However, in this study we do not use the two terms interchangeably because a *nonce word* is created either intentionally or unintentionally by a speaker to be used just once. Unlike a *neologism*, which by definition is not yet widely accepted (Durham, 2018, p. 1), but is intended to be, nonce formations are not meant to be adopted by the community. The databases of this research contain lexical units which have survived their infancy for they are associated with a lasting, meaningful concept and a significant term or usage for it.

In linguistics different parts of speech are studied as neologisms, however, the question of classification of neologisms has not been solved yet as there are different ways of classifying them (Usevičs, 2012, p. 2). What is more, in different studies of neologisms different aspects are taken into account. *Blending* as a word-formative strategy involves merging parts of two or more words to create a new lexical unit and typically the beginning of the first is combined with the end of the second to form a new word that represents a combination of their meanings, e.g., *relfie* (relationship + selfie).

Since the middle of the 20th century, the role of *blending* as a word formative process of neologisms has constantly increased. Comparing earlier research on blends, Gao (2023) has pointed out that in the 1960s blend words comprised approximately 3% of new English words, in the 1990s about 5% of the neologisms were blends, while in 2010s 43% of the analyzed 1,186 new words turned out to be blends. Contemporary research on blends applies different approaches,

such as the lexicographical approach (Gao, 2023), the descriptive approach (Hosseinzadeh, 2014)¹⁰, the psycholinguistic approach (Al-Salman & Haider, 2021; Hundt, Mollin & Pfenninger, 2017), the interdisciplinary approach (Bauer, 2012), the contrastive approach (Renner, 2018, 2020), the cognitive approach (Bagasheva, 2022; Schmid, 2011, 2020; Handl & Schmid, 2011), etc.

The growing number of new blends in the English vocabulary leads to inclusion of more such words in English dictionaries. This paper intends to study new blends organized in two databases, English and Bulgarian, compiled for the purposes of the study. The sources of the English database are the annual online updates of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Oxford English Dictionary and Collins Dictionary over a period of three years (2020-2022). The Bulgarian database contains excerpts from the paper edition of Dictionary of New Bulgarian Words (Rechnik na novite dumi v bulgarskiya ezik, 2021)¹¹, as well as some online sources such as the website of the Institute of Bulgarian Language of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences¹². The blends in these two databases are classified according to their word classes, morphological structure and genre. The research design of this study is exploratory-interpretative to both English and Bulgarian blends. The English database contains 370 new words, while the Bulgarian one comprises 320 new lexemes.

Unlike “regular” words, new blends which are borrowed present a double challenge. First of all, since it is a new word without an existing counterpart in the dictionary, translating blends is more challenging for the translator. Second, the translator must choose how to approach the challenge of translating a newly created word after learning the meaning of the blend. The original word, or the blend’s original form, will either be retained as in the source language, or the new word will be modified for the target language. Both options are viable, but the second one is far more delicate and requires paying much more attention to the entire (con)text rather than just the new word alone. The translator once more has at least two possibilities when it comes to the second solution: either to translate the blend or adapt it to the best alternative in the target language.

Since the focus of this paper is on English as a source language and Bulgarian as a target language, it is important to note that English has proven to be rich in scope when dealing with global events and technological innovations (Hundt, Mollin & Pfenninger, 2017, p. 21). It serves the purpose of lingua franca and a global language in order to maintain the international relationship in business, education, science, technology, travel, tourism, etc. Semantic changes in the

10. Hosseinzadeh (2014) investigates blending as one of the word-formation processes in English: compounding, clipping, backformation, acronym, derivation, clipping, conversion, etc. She analyses quantitatively her database and the obtained results show that most of the blends are made by clipping. Some of the examples in her research are part of my English database.

11. The Dictionary of New Bulgarian Words (2021) contains new words of the first two decades of 21 century.

12. https://ibl.bas.bg/ezikovi_spravki/category/leksika/

system caused by any kind of linguistic interactions between languages are manifestations of “semantic interference”. Undoubtedly, semantics is the main prerequisite for borrowing a lexical unit at all; therefore, for any transfer to take place further down the levels of the receiving language system.

Data Analysis

This article aims to study the English blends from a linguistic perspective, focusing both on their structure and meaning. We also compare and contrast blends which are borrowed in Bulgarian, and what changes they undergo in the process of their adaptation. We explore the new English loan words in Bulgarian, considering their phonetic, morphological and semantic characteristics. We try to prove that the process of borrowing is a dynamic one, because the new word changes some of its phonetic and morphological characteristics, and advances in different spheres of life.

Blends by lexical categories

The method by which the structure of the bases is modeled is carried out by correlating each of the root morphemes to the corresponding part of speech; for the structural analysis we use the following abbreviations for the parts of speech: N (noun), Adj. (adjective), V (verb), e.g.,

N + N = N EN. *stan* “an excessively enthusiastic fan” (stalker + fan); *maskne* “acne caused by wearing a face mask” (mask + acne); BG. *ботел* EN. *botel* “a hotel on a boat” (boat + hotel); *инфотейнмънт* EN. *infotainment* “providing serious information in an entertaining way” (information + entertainment);

Less frequent combinations are the following:

V + V = V EN. *chillax* “calm down, take it easy” (chill + relax); No Bulgarian examples of this type have been attested.

V + N = N EN. *shrinkflation* “reducing a product’s amount or volume per unit while keeping the same price” (shrink + inflation); No Bulgarian examples of this group have been found in the database.

Adj. + N = N EN. *altcoin* “any alternative cryptocurrency, especially to Bitcoin” (alternative + coin); BG. *глемпинг* EN. *glamping* “a form of luxurious camping” (glamorous + camping); *флотел* EN. *flotel* “a ship used as a hotel” (floating + hotel);

N + Adj. = Adj. EN. *hellacious* “an awful experience” (hell + bodacious);

Adj. + Adj. = Adj. BG. *Мултикултму* is a clipped version of *multicultural*, often used as a shorter and more casual way to refer to matters related to cultural diversity or the coexistence of multiple cultures within a society. In both English

and Bulgarian, the term *multiculti* is employed when discussing a multicultural event, community, or perspective, for example: Университетът е известен със своя мултикулти кампус, който привлича студенти от цял свят. “The university is known for its multicultural campus, which attracts students from all over the world”.

The database shows that English neologisms formed via blending are almost entirely nominal (the most frequent combination is the juxtaposition of two nouns N + N), which can be explained by the necessity of naming new entities. The same reason applies to the blends borrowed in Bulgarian as nominal blends are often more easily adopted into everyday language because they fit seamlessly into noun structures. This facilitates their integration into common usage and their understanding is more efficient and clearer due to the fact that the intended concept is primarily a thing or an object. What is more, nominal blends often maintain a semantic unity by combining words with related meanings and as the Bulgarian examples reveal the assimilation they undergo is limited to transliteration or transcription of the source word during which English letters or phonemes, respectively, are replaced by Bulgarian ones. In this process some non-existent English vowels are changed in Bulgarian, e.g., examples of transliteration are *флотел* En. *flotel* /fləʊ'tel/ and *ботел* En. *botel* /bəʊ'tel/, which are pronounced as /flɔ'tel/ and /bɔ'tel/ due to the absence of the diphthong /əʊ/ in Bulgarian; as an example of transcription, we can regard *глемтинг* En. *glamping*, where the English phoneme /æ/ is transferred into the Bulgarian /e/.

Structural patterns of blends

Blends do not exhibit fixed word-formative rules, but the analysis of the databases shows some structural patterns in both languages (Grlj, 2022). Blends combine parts of source words, rather than the whole source words (Enarsson, 2006, p. 4); this distinguishes them from compounds. Some authors (cf. Marchand, 1969, p. 451) do not consider as blends words created by joining together the front parts of two or more source words, e.g., *sponcon* (sponsored + content). These coinages are regarded as a subtype of acronyms or complex clippings rather than blends. In the present research, however, we include them in the group of blends.

Regarding what has already been mentioned, blends show a variety of structural patterns. The source words can be shortened or not, they can be put together or inserted or they can even be kept whole and overlap in the middle part of the blend they form (cf. Fandrych, 2008).

Blends formed by shortening

In the blends with shortening one part or more are omitted. The different patterns that are used include subtypes concerning the number and location of the clipping:

- The first part of the first source word is combined with the last part of the second source word, e.g., AB + CD = AD

EN. *chexting* ‘che(ating) + (te)xting’ “a new form of betrayal that combines cheating and texting”; *bleen* ‘b(lue) + (g)reen’ “the mixture of two colors”; *abilitude* ‘abili(ty) + (apti)tude’ “competence, capacity, aptitude”; *duppie* ‘d(epressed) + (y)uppie’ “an urban professional suffering from depression, especially one who has lost a high-paying job”; *family* ‘fr(iend) + (f)amily’ “a group of friends, who are close like a family”; *girus* ‘giant + virus’ “a type of giant virus”; *snirt* ‘sn(ow) + (d)irt’ “dirty snow, often seen by the side of roads”; *bromance* ‘bro(ther) + (ro)mance’ “a close but non-intimate relationship between two men”;

BG. *кобот* ‘co(laborative) + (ro)bot’ “a robot used in manufacturing small objects”, *косметевтика* ‘cosme(tics) + (pharma)ceutics’ “cosmetic products that have medicinal or drug-like benefits”, *чатбот* ‘chat(ter) + (ro)bot’ “a software application that aims to mimic human conversation online”; *алкорексия* ‘alco(hol) + (ano)rexia’ “a diet in which meals are replaced by alcoholic beverages”; *хакатон* “an event at which participants aim to create functioning software or hardware” (hacker + marathon).

- The entire first source word is brought together with the last part of the second source word, e.g., AB + CD = ABD

EN. *mocktail* ‘mock + (cock)tail’ “a non-alcoholic drink consisting of a mixture of fruit juices or other soft drinks”; *foodoholic* ‘food + (alc)oholic’ “a person craving excessively for food”; *sunbrella* ‘sun + (um)brella’ “a parasol”; *blacktress* ‘black + (ac)tress’ “an African-American woman who is a pioneer of the film industry”¹³; *boomburb* ‘boom + (su)burb’ “a rapidly expanding suburb”¹⁴; *bluenette* ‘blue + (bru)nette’ “a person with blue hair”; *bookazine* ‘book + (mag)azine’ “a publication combining elements of books and magazines”; *staycation* ‘stay + (vo)cation’ “a vacation spent at home, rather than traveling”;

BG. *кучемат* ‘куче lit. ‘dog’ + (auto)mat’ “dog feeder”; *слашкини* ‘slash + (bi)kini’ “bikini with a lot of strips”; *флатформи* ‘flat + (plat)forms’ “shoes on flat platforms”; *фолксномия* ‘folk + (ta)xonomy’ “the means by which people organize various elements according to their own systems”¹⁵; *йогалатес* ‘yoga

13. <https://www.powerthesaurus.org/blacktress/definitions>

14. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/boomburb>

15. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/folksonomy-tagging-social-media>

+ (pi)lates¹⁶ “a fitness routine that combines yoga and Pilates exercises¹⁷ with the postures and breathing techniques of yoga”; *моккейл* ‘mock + (cock)tail’ “a non-alcoholic drink consisting of a mixture of fruit juices or other soft drinks”; *дрънкорексия* ‘drunk + (an)orexia’ “missing or skipping meals to conserve calories in order to consume alcoholic beverages”;

- The first part of the first source word is brought together with the entire second source word, e.g., AB + CD = ACD

EN. *Cheaster* ‘Ch(ristmas) + Easter’ “a person who attends religious services only at Christmas or Easter”; *testlying* ‘test(ify) + lying’ “the act of a police officer giving false testimony”; *architourism* ‘archi(itecture) + tourism’ “sightseeing buildings and other architectural works”; *dup* ‘d(o) + up’ “to open”;

BG. *робохеликоптер* ‘robo(t) + helicopter’; *орнитотурист* ‘ornitho(logist) + tourist’ “a tourist who is interested in ornithology”; *културжурналист* ‘cultur(e) + journalist’ “a journalist who writes about culture”; *апартохол* ‘apart(ment) + hotel’; *глокален* ‘g(lobal) + local’ “relating to the interconnection of global and local issues”.

When the borrowed word is an adjective, e.g., *глокален* ‘glocal’, in the process of assimilation it acquires the suffix corresponding to the part of speech, e.g. *-ен*.

- The last part of both source words is shortened and they are put together, e.g., AB + CD = AC

Following Renner (2018), we include blends which are formed from the front parts of source words. Some authors (Arndt-Lappe & Plag, 2013, p. 5) classify these coinages as complex clippings they treat as patterns distinct from blending.

EN. *famicom* ‘fami(ly) + com(puter)’ “an 8-bit video game console that was developed and manufactured by Nintendo”; *avgas* ‘av(iation) + gas(oline)’ “gasoline fuel for aircraft”; *zedonk*, *zonkey* “a hybrid”, respectively ‘ze(bra) + donk(ey)’ and ‘z(ebra) + (d)onkey”;

BG. *кросфит* ‘cross(-discipline) + fit(ness)’ “a high-intensity fitness program incorporating elements from several sports and types of exercise”; *сисадмин* ‘sys(tem) + admin(istrator)’ “a system administrator”.

16. <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/yogalates>

17. Pilates is a physical fitness system that focuses on the development of core strength, flexibility, and overall body awareness.

Blends formed by overlapping

The most typical pattern of overlapping is the one where the final part of the first word overlaps the first part of the second word. The overlap can be one phoneme or two, or a syllable (Enarsson, 2006, p. 14). Blends with overlapping may also include the entire first word and the first or last part of the other word. In those cases, it is the spelling of the word that tells us it is a blend.

- None of the source words is shortened, but they overlap in the middle, e.g., AB + BC = ABC

EN. *alcoholiday* ‘**alcohol** + **holiday**’ “a holiday which is more about parties and getting drunk”; *playbore* ‘**playboy** + **bore**’ “a boresome playboy”; *anecdotalage* ‘**anecdote** + **dotage**’ “anecdotes collectively”; *cartune* ‘**cartoon** + **tune**’ “musical cartoon”; *deskfast* ‘**desk** + (brea)**kfast**’ “breakfast eaten at work”; *slanguage* ‘**slang** + **language**’ “language characterized by excessive use of slang”; *sexpert* ‘**sex** + **expert**’ “an expert in sexual affairs”; *Yahooligan* (**Yahoo** + **hooligan**); *covidiot* ‘**covid** + **idiot**’ “a person who does not observe regulations or guidelines designed to prevent the spread of disease (e.g., COVID-19)”;

BG. *peλφu* ‘**rel**(ationship) + (s)**elfie**’ “a self-taken photograph of a couple in a relationship”.

- The second source word is inserted into the first one, i.e., the term *infixation* applies to this group, e.g., AB + CD = ACDB.

EN. *Armachillo* ‘**armadillo** + **chill**’ “workwear made of special fabric”; *adorkable* ‘**adorable** + **dork**’ “someone who is socially awkward in an endearing way”;

The word *cutensil* ‘**cute** + **utensil**’ represents full overlap. No Bulgarian examples are attested in this group.

Blends with both shortening and overlapping

This group of blends combines both word-formative techniques: one or both source words are shortened and they overlap in one or two phonemes, or a syllable.

En. *suspose* ‘**sus**(pect) + (sup)**pose**’ “suppose and suspect”; *traficator* ‘**trafic** + (ind)**icator**’ “a blinking light on a motor vehicle”; *feminazi* ‘**femin**(ist) + **Nazi**’ “a committed feminist or a strong-willed woman”; *fugly* ‘**fu**(cking) + **ugly**’ “very ugly or unattractive”; *foolosopher* ‘**fool** + (phi)**losopher**’ “a foolish philosopher”; *mockumentary* ‘**mock** + (do)**umentary**’ “a television programme or film which takes the form of a serious documentary”; *faitheist* ‘**faith** + (a)**theist**’ “an atheist who thinks faith should not be criticized”; *glamazon* ‘**glam**(orous) + **amazon**’ “a glamorous woman”; *automagic* ‘**auto**(matic) + **magic**’ “magic results achieved through an automatic process”; *civilogue* ‘**civil** + (dia)**logue**’ “a civil discussion”

without insults and hostility”; *hectivity* ‘*hecti(c)* + (*a*)*ctivity*’ “frenzied and stressful activity”.

BG. *твитервю* ‘*twitter* + (*in*)*terview*’ “an online interview via Twitter”; *драмедия* ‘*dram(a)* + (*co*)*medy*’ “a genre of dramatic works that combines elements of comedy and drama”; *социономика* ‘*socio(logy)* + (*econ*)*omics*’ “the study of social mood and its influence over social attitudes and actions”; *флотел* ‘*flo(ating)* + (*h*)*otel*’ “a floating hotel”; *ботел* ‘*bo(at)* + (*h*)*otel*’ “a hotel on a boat”. The verb *въкъществувам* – ‘*въкъщ(и)* lit. home + (*с*)*ъществувам*’ lit. exist – can be interpreted as a calque of the English *staycation* ‘stay + (*vo*) cation’ as it literally means staying at home rather than going out or travelling.

The example *nomophobia* “fear of being without your phone or unable to use it” is a special case as it combines four words “no-mobile-phone phobia”. In this case we observe two words which have preserved their entirety, *no* and *phobia*, and two which have been shortened, *mobile* and *phone*; they have preserved their first syllables but their last ones have been clipped. The technique of overlapping is also applied as *phone* and *phobia* share the syllable *pho-*. This could be interpreted as an instance of *univerbation*, the diachronic process by which a fixed collocation of words becomes a single word, in the way that *goodbye* evolved from “God be with you”.

From a quantitative point of view about two thirds of all the blends in the English database include shortening of one source word, whereas the other one third displays shortening of both source words. Less than one percent of the examples exhibit an overlap of the source words in the middle.

Distribution of blends by genres

If we need to classify the areas in which *blends* as a group of *neologisms* generally occur, the richest groups, according to our two databases, are:

- a. Technology and business;
- b. Education and science;
- c. Slang and informal language;
- d. Health care;
- e. Food and beverage

In group (a) Business and technology, we can include some new terms related to economics, bank system, trade, investments, etc.

- *skimpflation* “reducing the quality of a product while keeping the price the same” (skimping + inflation); *excuseflation* “raising prices and blaming it on inflation, even when inflation is not the main cause of the price increase” (excuse

+ inflation); *mockumentary*/ *мокументари* “a film or television show made in the style of a documentary”¹⁸ (mock + documentary);

- *фаблет* (EN. *phablet*) “a smartphone having a screen which is intermediate in size between that of a typical smartphone and a tablet computer” (phone + tablet).

This group also comprises words related to the virtual world such as *netiquette* “the correct way or etiquette of using the internet”; *sponcon* “sponsored content posted by an influencer on social media made to look like an ordinary post but is actually an advertisement”. The noun *metaverse*, created in correlation to universe, refers in computing to a number of individual virtual environments and also, in cosmology, the hypothetical combination of all co-existing *universes*, motivated by the meaning of the prefix *meta-* “higher, beyond”.

Category (b) Education and science contains examples related to human knowledge about our environment, for instance: *travelogue* “a film, book, or illustrated lecture about the places visited by or experiences of a traveller” (travel + catalogue); *edutainment* “material, intended to be both educational and enjoyable” (education + entertainment).

Slang and informal language (group c) is the most numerous category but very few of those words become part of the standard language. Nowadays the internet shortens the time period of adoption of slang words and informal language. This group stands out with its diversity of word classes as it includes not only nouns but also adjectives and verbs.

- *cosplay* (verb, informal) “to dress up as a character from a film, book, or video game” (costume + play);

- *dumbphone* (noun, informal) “the opposite of smartphone” (dumb + telephone);

- *pictionary* “a fun game where players try to guess what other players are drawing” (picture + dictionary);

- *frenemy* (noun, slang) “a person with whom one is friendly despite a fundamental dislike or rivalry” (friend + enemy);

- *sheeple* (noun, derogatory) “people compared to sheep in being docile, foolish, or easily led” (sheep + people);

- *глупомер* (noun, informal) “a tool measuring stupidity” (глупост + измервателен уред).

Still prominent is the category (d) Health care due to COVID-19 although four years have passed since its outbreak. Usually when a word is used frequently

18. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/mockumentary>

by many speakers and writers in a few years it enters the dictionary. However, in some extraordinary cases, such as COVID-19, a new term immediately becomes part of common daily vocabulary and in a shorter period of time than the normal practice it enters the dictionary. The word COVID-19, however, holds the record of having gone from coinage to dictionary entry; it happened in only 34 days. New words related to the pandemic are still coined to respond to the necessity for more vocabulary to describe the policy and research developments connected to COVID-19. Being essential to communication, these new words became part of the dictionary updates in the last two years.

- *infodemic* “an overabundance of unreliable information” (information + pandemic);
- *quarantini* “during quarantine a cocktail or alcoholic drink made at home” (quarantine + martini);
- *coronacation* “a prolonged period at home away from work, study, etc. due to the pandemic” (corona + vocation);
- *маскне* (EN. *maskne*) “acne and other rashes of the face caused by wearing a face mask” (mask + akne);
- *панденомика* (EN. *pandemonics*) “economics in pandemic times” (pandemics + economics).

The last category (e) is the most diverse in English. Names of drinks and food become familiar around the world through cooking shows and blogs, menus and recipes on the internet. But borrowings are not the only sources of neologisms, native new words also take part in this group.

- *fluffernutter* “a sandwich of white bread made with peanut butter and marshmallow crème” (marshmallow fluff + peanut butter);
- *hangry* “bad-tempered or irritable as a result of hunger” (hungry + angry);

As the sources of the two databases are the annual online updates of several English dictionaries in the last three years and the Dictionary of New Bulgarian Words (2021), we consider them representative, as well as the categories defined above. They illustrate the spheres in which new blends are created in English and Bulgarian.

Conclusion

In this analysis we have made an effort to highlight the word formative patterns of blending and the processes of adapting the newly borrowed words in Bulgarian. The research has demonstrated that most of the borrowed words are transliterated or transcribed and then adapted using the grammatical markers of the target language. The two databases show that the investigated blends are

mostly nominal, more specifically N + N combinations, which we relate to the necessity of naming new entities. The study has revealed how the two compared languages – English and Bulgarian – show similarities in the construction of blends. Both languages exhibit the same structural patterns (e.g., AD, ABD, ACD, AC, ABC, ACDB, etc.); the differences, however, originate in the more varied grammatical morphemes in Bulgarian.

The use of blends allows expressing many concepts in the shortest possible way, as this research shows they are mainly found in the fields of Technology and business; Education and science; Slang and informal language; Health care; Food and beverage. In this article we discuss only blends as representatives of neologisms, while clippings, abbreviations/acronyms and compounds are the focus of another study. Further research on all neologisms is indispensable for linguists, lexicographers and sociolinguists to acknowledge that new words are systematically accounted for and registered and to show how languages evolve, adapt, and sometimes decline.

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