

## NEW BLENDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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**ABSTRACT:** *The aim of this article is to identify new blends that have entered the English language. As one of the word-formation processes: compounding, clipping, backformation, acronym, derivation, clipping, conversion, coinage, and multiple processes, the new blends, being the focus of this research, will be analyzed. The descriptive approach, used in this article, is based on the division of the new blends and their structures in English. The blends are also investigated according to the domains they occur in English. The results obtained from this research suggest that most of the blends are made by clipping: using the first part of the first word and the last part of the second word, and the second most common form is clipping and overlapping.*

**KEYWORDS:** Word Formation Processes, New Blends, Blending Structures, Overlapping, Clipping.

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## INTRODUCTION

Because of new inventions and changes, every language is in need of new words borrowed, derived or otherwise formed, simply because new things need new words. The human community is steadily growing and developing, just as the tool we use to communicate: Language. When new inventions and changes enter our lives, we are in the need of naming them and of course to communicate about them. Language is dynamic, it changes constantly. The key here is usage: If a new word is used by many speakers of a language, it will probably survive and it can happen that one day, becomes an everyday word and enters our dictionaries. Especially in the last centuries, many word creations have been spread among the language community. For example, if you take a look at the vast amount of new inventions made in the 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is obvious that the words we knew before were not enough to cover all these things. Exclusively, in the 21st century, abbreviations were and still are everywhere, thanks to the internet and the cell phone. And of course there are language trends that come and go as time passes, for example youth language (Finegan, 2007:321). There are old words with new meanings, like *surf*, *bug* and *web*, whose meanings have broadened since the new technological inventions, but there are many other ways in which new words are created. If there is a new thing and the language community has no word for it, there are several options to create a new one. In the past and the present, people used, and still use, a variety of methods to create new words, such as compounding, derivation, coinage, or blending. (Wagner, 2010: 3-8). The main word formation processes will be explained in this article.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Blending has been analyzed in a variety of studies. They have focused on its nature, formation, types and other aspects. In this research, some of the investigations about it are presented by some authors:

**Martina Wagner** explains about word formation processes including: derivation compounding, blending, acronym, borrowing, neologism or coinage as well as new words in English and discusses why new words are needed. (2010: 3-8).

**Stefan Gries** investigates the word-formation process of blending in English. The main factors to be discussed are (i) the amount of information each source word contributes and (ii) the similarity of the source words to the blend. He also investigates blending in terms of these questions: (1) How can blending be distinguished from other word-formation processes? (2) How can different kinds of blends be distinguished from one another? (3) Why do blends have the structure they have? Put differently, why are blends created the way they are? (2004:639-40).

**John Algeo** presents a schema-based and a usage-based analysis of lexical blends. He divides blends into three groups: Phonemic Overlap: a syllable or part of a syllable is shared between two words. Clipping: the shortening of two words and then compounding them. Phonemic Overlap and Clipping: shortening of two words to a shared syllable and then compounding. (1977: 47-64).

**Thomas Pyle and John Algeo** study areas of linguistic structure in each period. In the last three chapters, they talk about creating words through compounding, clipping, blending as well as their functions and forms. The approach taken in their course is a descriptive one which is not situated exclusively in any specific linguistic theory. (2005:224-242).

**Susan Dostert** defines the term morphology, blending and its different types. He also explains about other kinds of word formation including clipping and its sub-types: fore-clipping, back-clipping (which is most common) and lexemes which have been both fore-and back-clipped. (2006:18).

**George Yule** explains about morphology, the process of word formation as well as free and bound morphemes making a word. Free morphemes such as: lexical and functional and bound morphemes including: derivational and inflectional. Moreover, he explains about allomorphs and their formations. (2006:59).

## METHODOLOGY

The research design of this current study is exploratory-quantitative-interpretative. New combinations of words have been explored and investigated. The data collected is primarily quantitative, and the analysis is interpretative. Data collection included library and extensive internet research. New blends have been divided into three categories whose different word formations have been elaborated along with their examples.

### Word Formation Processes

Following years of complete or partial neglect of issues concerning word formation, the year 1960 marked a revival, some might even say a resurrection, of this important field of linguistic study. While written in completely different theoretical frameworks (structuralist vs. transformationalist), both Marchand's *Categories and Types of Present-Day English Word Formation* in Europe and

Lee's *Grammar of English Nominalizations* instigated systematic research in the field. As a result, a large number of seminal works emerged over the next decades, making the scope of word-formation research broader and deeper, thus contributing to better understanding of this exciting area of human language. Recent voices stressing the importance of investigating word formation in the light of cognitive processes can be interpreted from two general perspectives. First of all, they indicate that a structural approach to the architecture of words and a cognitive view are not incompatible. On the contrary, both perspectives try to work out regularities in language. What sets them apart is the basic vision of how language is encapsulated in the mind and the ensuing choice of terminology in the description of the processes. Cognitive linguistics concedes closely to the self-organizing nature of humans and their language, whereas generative structuralist perspectives represent external boundaries as given in the institutionalized order of human interaction (Onysko & Sascha, 2010:1-25). By word formation processes we mean the different devices which are used in English to build new words from existing ones. Each word formation process will result in the production of specific type of word. Yule has listed six major categories: coinage, backformation, conversion, clipping, and multiple processes, blending. (2006: 53-9). Word formation processes include:

Derivation, as "the most common word formation process" builds new words by adding morphemes to stems. These morphemes are added to the target stem by affixation, through prefixes and suffixes. (Yule, 2006:53-9).

Compounding is the process of putting words together to build a new one that does not denote two things, but one "and that is pronounced as one unit" (Wisniewski, 2007: 4).

There are four kinds of compound words:

- endocentric compounds: A (modifier) + B (head) = a special kind of B (sea power)
- exocentric compounds: A + B = compound with an unexpressed semantic head (paleface)  
they mostly refer to depreciative properties of people.
- copulative compounds: A + B = the 'sum' of what A and B denote (bittersweet)
- appositional compounds: A + B = different descriptions for a common referent (singer-songwriter).

Acronyms are shortenings, built from the initial letters in a phrase or name. Acronyms are pronounced as single words: NASA, AIDS (Finegan, 2007:48).

Borrowing is the process of actually borrowing words from foreign languages. The English language has been borrowing words from "nearly a hundred languages in the last hundred years" (Finegan, 2007: 51).

Coinage is the process of inventing entirely new words. Often the new words or trademarks are adopted by the masses and they become "everyday words of language" (Yule, 2006: 53-7).

Backformation is a kind of word formation in which a word of one type is reduced to form another word of a different type. In other words, it is the process by which new words are formed by the deletion of a supposed affix from an already existing word. For example, the verbs: edit, televise and donate have been created from the pre-existing nouns: editor, television, donation. This

process normally involves the transformation of one part of speech into another (Becerra Zapata, 2000).

Conversion refers to the derivational process whereby an item comes to belong to a new word-class without the addition of an affix, e.g. verbs/nouns: smell, taste, hit, walk, bottle, brake; adjectives/verbs: dirty, empty, lower. Some grammars distinguish between full and partial conversion. The latter being cases where only some of the characteristics of the new word-class are adopted such as the rich. (David Crystal, 2003:109).

Clipping is a word formed by dropping one or more syllables from a polysyllabic word, such as cell from cellular phone. A clipped form generally has the same denotative meaning as the word it comes from, but it's regarded as more colloquial and informal. Some of the most common products of clipping are names: Liz, Ron, Rob, Sue, and so on. Clipping is especially popular in the speech of students, where it has yielded forms like prof for professor, and burger for hamburger. However, many clipped forms have also been accepted in general usage: doc(doctor), ad(advertisement), auto(autobus), lab(laboratory), sub(subway), demo(demonstration). (O'Grady, W. Archibald J. Aronoff, M. and Rees-Miller, J. , 2001).

Concerning multiple processes, it is possible to trace the operation of more than one process at work in the creation of a particular word. For example, the term *deli* seems to have become a common American English expression via a process of first borrowing *delicatessen* (from German) and then clipping that borrowed form. (Yule, 2006:58-9). As one of the word formation processes, new blends are the focus of this article.

### **Blending**

Similar to compounding, blending also involves the combination of two separate forms to produce a single new term. However, blending is typically accomplished by taking only the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of the other word (Yule, 2006: 53-9).

Sometimes blends are referred to as portmanteau words. The term *portmanteau* was coined by Lewis Carroll in 1882, when in his book: *Through the Looking Glass Humpty Dumpty* describes a new word he uses as follows: "Well, 'slithy' means 'lithe and slimy'. You see, it's like a portmanteau, there are two meanings packed into one word". There are two different words with completely unequal meanings put together to form a new word with a new meaning. (Carroll, 1996:102).

The term blending refers to a combination of two or more forms, where at least one has been shortened. The shortening can be by simple omission of a part of a word or it can be a result of overlapping sounds or letters (Algeo, 1977:47-64). Another view is 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. (Gries, 2004: 639-40).

A blend involves a telescoping of two or more separate forms into one, or, rarely, a superposition of one form upon another. It usually contains overlapping and preserves some of the meaning of

at least one of the source words, though sometimes so much of the roots are lost that a blend is unanalysable. (Cannon, 1986:725-53).

Blends have resulted from two motivating words which have been blended into a new coinage which is unanalysable into a fixed meaning, thus representing morpheme. The importance of phonemic overlap in distinguishing blends from compounds is pointed out and claimed that elliptical forms such as: *trafficator* (traffic + indicator) are not blends as they do not constitute a new meaning resulting from the blending process (Stekauer, 1991: 26-35).

Blends combine parts of lexical source words, rather than whole source words; this distinguishes them from compounds. Morphological structure is not particularly relevant to blends. Phonological properties are highly relevant to blending; phonological similarity of the blend with part or whole source (Kemmer, 2003:75).

## THE FORMATION OF BLENDS

In his discussion of how *dove* and *hawk* are to be blended, Bauer (1983: 233-5) considers *dawk* and *hove* the only possible alternatives, but the choice of one rather than the other would appear to be fairly arbitrary. In blending, the coiner is apparently free to take as much or as little from either base as is felt to be necessary or desirable. Exactly what the restrictions are, however, beyond pronounceability and spellability is far from clear.

### Different Types Of Blends

There are many types of blends, based on how they are formed. Algeo, a linguist, proposed dividing blends into three groups:

**A. Phonemic Overlap:** a syllable or part of a syllable is shared between two words.

**B. Clipping:** the shortening of two words and then compounding them. In other words, clippings are reductions of longer forms, usually removing the end of the word, sometimes the beginning, or both beginning and ending together (Crystal, 2003:1). Clipping refers to the process whereby a lexeme (simplex or complex) is shortened, while still retaining the same meaning and still being a member of the same form class (Bauer, 1983: 233-5). According to Marchand (1969:1), clippings are not coined as words belonging to the standard vocabulary of a language. They originate as terms of a special group like schools, army, police, the medical profession, etc., in the intimacy of a milieu where a hint is sufficient to indicate the whole. While clipping terms of some influential groups can pass into common usage, becoming part of Standard English, clippings of a socially unimportant class or group will remain group slang. Clipping mainly consists of the following types:

**I. Back Clipping:** Back clipping is the most common type, in which the beginning is retained. The unclipped original may be either a simple or a composite. Examples are: *ad* (advertisement), *cable* (cablegram), *doc* (doctor), *exam* (examination). Most back-clippings are nouns, but this kind of reduction occurs in other word classes as well. *Fab* for the adjective *fabulous* is one example (Ljung, 2003:159).

**II. Fore Clipping:** Fore clipping retains the final part. Examples are: chute (parachute), roach (cockroach), coon (raccoon), gator (alligator), phone (telephone), pike (turnpike), versity (university).

**III. Middle Clipping:** In middle clipping, the middle of the word is retained. Examples are: flu (influenza), fridge (refrigerator), jams or jammies (pajamas/pyjamas), polly (apollinaris), tec (detective).

**IV. Complex Clipping:** Clipped forms are also used in compounds. One part of the original compound most often remains intact. Examples are: cablegram (cable telegram), op art (optical art), org-man (organization man), linocut (linoleum cut). Sometimes both halves of a compound are clipped as in navicert (navigation certificate). In these cases it is difficult to know whether the resultant formation should be treated as a clipping or as a blend, for the border between the two types is not always clear. The easiest way to draw the distinction is to say that those forms which retain compound stress are clipped compounds, whereas those that take simple word stress are not.

**C. Phonemic Overlap And Clipping:** shortening of two words to a shared syllable and then compounding.

For all three types of blending, the majority of items combine their components sequentially: a segment of the first word is followed by a segment of the second word, with possible overlapping between the two segments. But, Algeo notes that blending sometimes occurs through the insertion of one form into another, again with possible overlapping of segments. Following the terminology of Harold Wentworth, Algeo dubs such inserted blends "sandwich words." Note that sandwich words, like other blends, still require that at least one form is shortened in the process of combination. Here are examples of sandwich words given by Algeo to fit each of his three categories: (1977:47-64).

- Overlapping: *autobydography* < *autobiography* + *by dog*, *in-sin-uation* < *insinuation* + *sin*
- Clipping: *chortle* < *ch(uck)le* + *(sn)ort*, *miscevarsitation* < *misce(gen)ation* + *varsit(y)*
- Clipping and overlapping: *slithy* < *sl(i)m* + *lithe*, *ambisextrous* < *ambi(d)extrous* + *sex*
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### A1. New Blends with Overlapping

The most common pattern 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 several. Blends with overlapping may also include all of one form 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. This group is subdivided on the basis of (i) where and what kind of shortening and overlap occurs and (ii) whether the phonemic overlap is one of full segments or one of distinctive articulatory features:

**slanguage** = slang + language / language characterized by excessive use of slang or cant.

**sexpert** = sex + expert / an expert in sexual affairs.

**celebrity** = cell + celebrity / famous criminal.

**julielmo** = Julie + Elmo / the names of two musician.

**alcoholiday** = alcohol + holiday / Holidays that end up being more about parties and getting drunk with or without the meat.

**playbore** = playboy + bore / a boresome playboy.

**anecdottage** = anecdote + dotage / garrulous old age, anecdotes collectively.

**backronym** = back + acronym / reverse acronym.

**cartune** = cartoon + tune / musical cartoon.



## B1. New Blends with Clipping

Blends with clipping have no overlapping. Instead one part or more is omitted. There are different patterns that are used when creating these kinds of blends. They include subdivisions concerning the numbers and locations of the clippings: The second classification contrasts syntagmatic blends, so-called telescope blends of source words that usually co-occur sequentially like radarange, radar + range and associative blends, blends of source words that were usually semantically linked in the word maker's mind. (Algeo, 1977: 56)

There are different types of clipping:

1- New blends created by using the first bit of the first word, the last bit of the second one:

**spotch** = spot + blotch / make a blot or smear.

**guck** = goo + muck / a slimy, dirty, or otherwise unpleasant substance.

**blunge** = blend + plunge / mix (clay or other materials) with water in a revolving apparatus for use in ceramics.

**chexting** = cheating + texting / cheating the texting.

**cosmeceutical** = cosmetic + pharmaceutical / a cosmetic that has or is claimed to have medicinal properties, esp. anti-aging ones.

**globish** = global + English / an artificial language created by Madhukar Gogate that attempts to simplify English.

**blaccent** = black + accent / African American Vernacular English.

**bleen** = blue + green / the mixture of two colors.

**aprium** = apricot + plum / the combination of the two fruits.

**abiltude** = ability + aptitude / competence ability, capacity; aptitude..

**cama** = camel + llama / A hybrid animal produced by breeding a camel and a llama.

**digerati** = digital + literati / Collectively, people who are considered the elite in information technology.

**duppie** = depressed + yuppie / An urban professional suffering from depression, especially one who has lost a high-paying job and been forced to take up lower-paying work.

**framily** = friend + family / A group of friends, who are close like a family.

**geep** = goat + sheep / A sheep-goat hybrid.

**girus** = giant + virus / a type of giant virus.

**hectivity** = hectic + activity / A state of constant, frenzied, and typically stressful activity.

**infotopia** = information + utopia / An idealized information resource.

**liger** = lion + tiger / An animal born to a male lion and a tigress.

**keytar** = keyboard + guitar / A relatively lightweight keyboard or synthesizer supported by a strap around the neck and shoulders.

**mobot** = mobile + robot / a mobile autonomous robot, especially one used in artificial intelligence research, or as a toy.

**snirt** = snow + dirt / Snow that is dirty, often seen by the side of roads and parking lots that have been plowed.

**malware** = malicious + software / software that is intended to damage or disable computers and computer systems.

2-New blends which keep the whole part of the first word and the last part of the second word.

**babelicious** = babe + delicious / (of a woman) sexually very attractive.

**foodoholic** = food + alcoholic / a person having an excessive, often uncontrollable craving for food.

**carbonrundum** = carbon + corundum / the original manufacturer of the abrasive.

**staycation** = stay + vacation / a vacation spent in one's home country rather than abroad.

**sunbrella** = sun + umbrella / An umbrella used to shade the sun.

**jazzercise** = jazz + exercise / a type of fitness training combining aerobic exercise and dancing to jazz music.

**beautillion** = beau + cotillion / A coming of age party for a young man.

**blacktress** = black + actress / An African-American woman who is a pioneer of the film industry.

**boomburb** = boom + suburb / A rapidly expanding suburb.

**bluenette** = blue + brunette / A person with blue hair.

**bookazine** = book + magazine / A publication combining elements of books and magazine.

**civilogue** = civil + dialogue / A civil discussion in which participants avoid insults and hostility.

**deskfast** = desk + breakfast / Breakfast eaten at work.

**dramality** = drama + reality / A genre of television program that blends reality with drama.

3- New blends which keep part of the first word plus whole of the second one:

**Eurasia** = Europe + Asia / the land mass formed by the continents of Europe and Asia.

**Cheaster** = Christmas + Easter / An individual who attends religious services only twice a year, at Christmas or Easter.

**animutation** = animation + mutation / A flash animation consisting of random images set to (often) non-English music.

**fugly** = fucking + ugly / very ugly or unattractive.

**testlying** = testify + lying / Police perjury is the act of a police officer giving false testimony.

**architourism** = architecture + tourism / tourism involving seeing buildings and other architectural works.

**dup** = do + up / to open.

**automagic** = automatic + magic / A process carried out automatically in such a clever way that the result appears to be magic.

4- New Blends created by using the first parts of two words:

**pokémon** = pocket + monster / a video game, card game, or other toy featuring certain Japanese cartoon characters.

**famicom** = family + computer / The Nintendo Entertainment System is an 8-bit video game console that was developed and manufactured by Nintendo.

**avgas** = aviation + gasoline / gasoline fuel for aircraft.

5-Multiple sounds from two component words are blended, while mostly preserving the sounds' order. Poet, Lewis Carroll was well known for these kinds of blends.

**slithy** = lithe and slimy / graceful and slimy.

**daisy** = day's eye / a small grassland plant that has flowers with a yellow disk and white rays.

6- New Blends created by using the last parts of two words:

**podcasting** = ipod + broadcasting / a program (as of music or talk) made available in digital format for automatic download over the Internet.

### C1. New Blends with Clipping And Overlapping

**californication** = californi (a) + fornicat (e) / It is an American comedy-drama television series created by Tom Kapinos.



**pomato** = po (t) ato + (to) mato / a hybrid or chimera produced by grafting a tomato plant and a potato plant, both of which are members of the Solanaceae.

**suspose** = susp (ect) + (sup) pose / suppose with suspect.

**traficator** = trafic + (ind) icator / a blinking light on a motor vehicle that indicates the direction in which the vehicle is about to turn.

**feminazi** = feminist + Nazi / a radical feminist.

**fugly** = fu (cking) + ugly / very ugly or unattractive.

**foolosopher** = fool + (phi) losopher / person lacking in judgment or prudence.

**nature** = n(e) at + nature / title of a series of popular online videos.

**Hungarican** = Hungari (an) + (Ame) rican.

**motel** = moto (r) + (h) otel / a hotel for people who are travelling by car.

**mockumentary** = mock + (do) cumentary / motion picture or television program that takes the form of a serious documentary in order to satirize its subject.

**codec** = code (r) + dec (oder) / A device or computer program capable of performing.

**carboxide** = carbo (n) + oxide / A compound of carbon and oxygen, such as carbonyl, with some element.

**doublonie** = doubl (e) + lonie / A Canadian two-dollar coin.

**eclection** = eclectic (c) + (se)lection / An eclectic selection.

**faitheist** = faith + (a) theist / An atheist who thinks faith should not be criticized.

**federast** = federa (list) + (pe) derast / A federalist, especially in the EU.

**floatel** = float + (h) otel / A floating hotel.

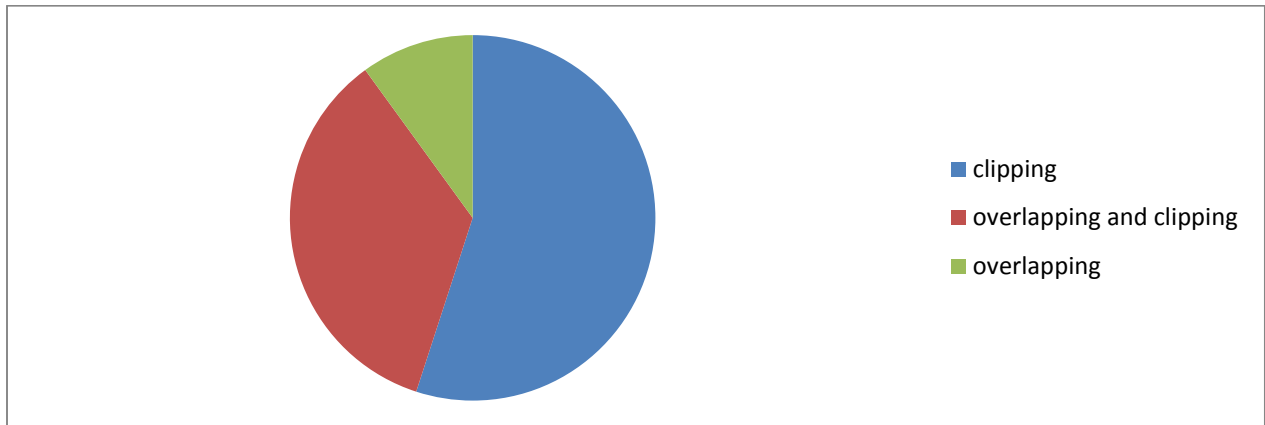
**glamazon** = glam (orous) + amazon / A glamorous woman.

**glocal** = glo (bal) + local / being both global and local.

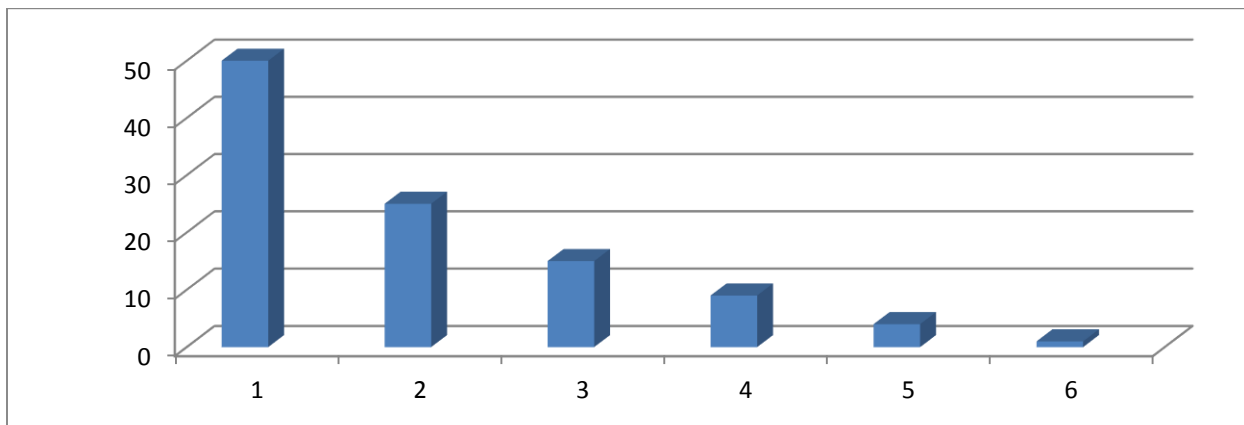
**Godcast** = God + (p) odcast / A podcast is a podcast of religious nature, including music, preaching, seminary lectures.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Based on the research done about different kinds of blends and their structures by using the specialized linguistic sources, Wikipedia, Google, as well as other internet sites, of the three major categories of blends: blends with clipping, blends with both overlapping and clipping and blends with just overlapping, the first category has been the most common blend, then blend with clipping and overlapping and last of all blending with just overlapping. They are shown by the following pie.



Concerning blends with clipping, as it was represented above, of the 6 categories, the most common has comprised the first one, that is, new blends created by using the first bit of the first word and the last bit of the second one. Number 6 has been the least common blend with clipping. Moreover, new blends have been searched on the basis of general and specialized domains. Most of the new blends have been based on general domains such as: food, society, exercises etc.



- 1-New blends created by using the first bit of the first word, the last bit of the second one.
- 2-New blends which keep the whole part of the first word and the last part of the second word.
- 3- New blends which keep part of the first word plus whole of the second one.
- 4- New Blends created by using the first parts of two words.
- 5- Multiple sounds from two component words are blended, while mostly preserving the sounds order. Poet Lewis Carroll was well known for these kinds of blends.
- 6- New Blends created by using the last parts of two words.

### Domain of Blends

General	Art, Literature, Entertainment	Internet & computer	Scientific	Organizations Companies
celebrity	julielmo	malware	carboxide	Carborundum
spotch	animutation	sysop	cosmeceutical	
family	famicom	codec		
staycation	pokémon			
sunbrella				
pomato				
foodoholic				
motel				

**Tableau 1: number of blends for each domain**

Concerning the 81 new blends, their categories and structures, having been investigated in this article, most of them have been general. In contrast, specialized or technical blends, have been fewer in number than those of general ones. The above table presents 5 domains of blends including general and technical terms. The number of blends in each domain varies from the most to the least one.

## CONCLUSION

As we have seen before, there are many ways to create new words: Borrowing from other languages, blending together from several words or deriving from words we already have, converting words from one grammatical category to another, for example from verb to noun (to flow → the flow) or from noun to verb (the e-mail → to e-mail), clippings, with which the word is shortened (e.g. influenza → flu; advertising → ad; motorbike → bike), or folk etymology, where words from other languages are taken and then, over time, people try to make sense of them. So, gradually the word is changed to a more familiar form that usually keeps its original meaning, e.g. the Spanish word cucaracha was borrowed and then gradually transformed to cockroach. Even the creative respelling, where the spelling of words is changed for products (e.g. Kleen, Krunch), is considered to be one of these processes. So finally, if we take a look around, we will see a mass of new words surrounding us, brought to us both consciously by language trends or advertising and unconsciously through language change over time. It is obvious that language is dynamic, because both the grammar and the words are different to ours now. Language changes constantly. And who knows if the people will understand the language we are using now in a few decades?

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