

ON UNFAMILIAR ITALIAN LEXICAL BLENDS FROM NAMES AND NOUNS

1. INTRODUCTION

Italian has recently witnessed a steady increase in the use of unfamiliar lexical blends from names and nouns with an identificatory and descriptive function (in the sense of Anderson 2007), e.g. *Draquila* < *Dracula* [Dracul] + *L'Aquila*, or *docciabatta* < *doccia* [shower] + *ciabatta* [slipper]. An important fact about blends is that they are created in extragrammatical morphology (Dressler 2000; Ronneberger-Sibold 2006, 2010). Unlike regular inflection and word formations – governed by rule-based grammatical competence –, they are consciously created to reduce morphotactic and morphosemantic transparency (Dressler et al. 1987; Dressler 1999). The resulting increase in processing time and effort makes the blend memorable (Lehrer 2003) in the interest of relevance (Sperber/Wilson 1986/1995) and effectiveness (maximum success chances) versus efficiency (minimum effort) (cf. de Beaugrande/Dressler 1981). More particularly, while intentional blends from names and nouns are coined with careful attention to the semantic concepts encoded by the individual source words (SWs), processing and understanding the blend depends on the decoder's direct or surrogate experience of the related reference.

Whereas lexical blending has typically been dismissed as an elusive and peripheral word-formation process cross-linguistically, it is found to be underrepresented in Italian (as compared to English, German and French, cf. Bertinetto 2001). It is therefore not surprising that blending has been often neglected in Italian linguistics. As far as we are aware, the only exceptions are Migliorini (1949), Thornton (1993, 2004b) and Bertinetto (2001). And yet, it has received far less attention than it deserves. This paper is thus an attempt to redress the imbalance and contribute to the (by now growing) body of work on morphological blending. Our main concern relates most directly to the morphosyntactic and morphosemantic transparency – and, ultimately, conceptual motivation – of Italian blends from names and nouns as operations of extragrammatical morphology.

The paper is structured as follows. Because the delimitation of the category is a matter of debate, in Section 2 we provide a working definition of lexical blends. At the same time, we touch upon the identificatory function of names. Section 3 is devoted to our research question. Specifically, we shall carry out a qualitative investigation into a restricted number of examples selected from a collection of 100 blends that we mainly gathered from the World Wide Web. They are used in media language and journalese, radio programmes, TV

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programmes and movies, product advertising and marketing, and event advertising. While Section 3.1 concentrates on morphotactic transparency, Section 3.2 deals with morphosemantic transparency and conceptual motivation. Naturalness Theory (Dressler et al. 1987, Dressler 1999) is extremely well-designed to analyze and categorize blends, with an eye at their categorical status within the radial category of subtractive word formations. We shall further touch upon conceptual motivation in the composite structure of individual morphological blends using concepts from Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT, cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980) and Blending Theory (Ruiz de Mendoza 1998). This will enable us to provide some preliminary remarks on the meaning predictability of specific subtypes, and blends from personal names used in journalese and media language in particular (e.g. *Berlusconi* < *Berlusconi* + *Bertinotti*, *Berlingotti* < *Berlinguer* + *Bertinotti*), from the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics (cf. Langacker 1987, Kemmer 2003).

2. BLENDS FROM NAMES AND NOUNS

On a narrow definition of the term (Bat-El 2006: 66), lexical blends are word formations in which the inner edges of the SWs are truncated, which excludes clipped compounds (*sitcom* < *situation* + *comedy*, *mocamp* < *motor* + *camp*). The most widely accepted view, summarized by Gries (in press), is that an intentional lexical blend is:

an intentional fusion of typically two (but potentially more) words where a part of a first source word (sw_1) – usually this part includes the beginning of sw_1 [left base word] – is combined with a part of a second source word (sw_2 [right base word]) – usually this part includes the end of sw_2 – where at least one source word is shortened and/or the fusion may involve overlap of sw_1 and sw_2 ,

which excludes speech error blends and clipped compounds (Gries, in press: *complex clippings*).

Following Migliorini (1949), Italian blends are typically addressed under the heading *parole macedonia* (literally, Eng. fruit-salad words, cf. Thornton 1993: 153).¹ Italian *parole macedonia* (Thornton 2004b) appear to be mainly coined juxtaposing SW beginning and SW, or beginning plus beginning. A few recent creations are:

- splinter² + SW: *docuromanzo* < *documentario* [documentary]/*docu*³ + *romanzo* [novel] (possibly based on *docufiction*, a borrowing from Eng. *docu-fiction* < *documentary* + *TV fiction*, cf. GRADIT: DOCUFICTION);

¹ More recent terms for *blend* are *incrocio* [intersection] and *fusione* [blending] (Bertinetto 2001: 62, footnote 1).

² With Lehrer (2003), we define splinters as parts of truncated words that do not necessarily coincide with syllables or morphemes.

³ We specify ‘combining form’ for combining forms that started out in a blend and are now recorded in the *Grande Dizionario Italiano dell’Uso* (GRADIT) under separate entries, and/or are listed among Italian ‘elementi formativi’ [combining forms] in Grossman/Rainer (eds) (2004). Where the form is not recorded in the dictionary and yet it already appears to be forming new word families by analogical extension from the blend, the combining form follows the corresponding SW.

- splinter + splinter: *Edilplast* < *edilizia* [building trade]/combining form *-edil-* + *plastica* [plastic]; *Enervit* < *energia* [energy] + *vitamina* [vitamin]/combining form *-vit*; *Cerealvit* < *cereali* [cereals] + *vitamina* [vitamin]/combining form *-vit*; *colf* < *collaboratrice* [assistant] + *familiare* [family, A]; *Tipolito* < *tipografia* [printer's]/combining form *-lito-* + *litografia* [litographer's]/combining form *-tipo-*).
- SW + splinter: *Mentadent* < *menta* [mint] + *denti* [teeth].

By contrast, word-internal shortening and partial overlap would be features of English blends (e.g. *brunch* < *breakfast* + *lunch*, *motel* < *motor* + *hotel*, or *smog* < *smoke* + *fog*). While cross-linguistic comparison shows that these appear to be highly dispreferred techniques in Italian (Bertinetto 2001: 66), they are nevertheless used in a number of novel Italian blends as adjectives and, most often, nouns and names, e.g.:

- with overlap: *semplogica* < *semplice* [simple/plain] + *logica* [logical]/combining form *-logica*; *gastronauta* < *gastronomo* [gourmet]/neoclassical compound *gastro-* + *astronauta* [astronaut]/combining form *-nauta*, *oroschifo* < *oroscopo* [horoscope] + *schifo* [disgust]; *Sarlusconi* < *Sarkozy* + *Berlusconi*;
- without overlap: *modtro* < *moderno* [up-to-date] + *rétro* [retro]; *radicalsauro* < *radicale* [politically radical] + *dinosauro* [dinosaur]/combining form *-sauro*.

Bauer (1983: 233) loosely defines blends as “new lexeme[s] formed from parts of two (or possibly more) other words in such a way that there is no transparent analysis into morphs”, though “in many cases some kind of analysis can be made” and “at least one element is transparently recoverable”. Blends thus comprise so-called portmanteau words, which exhibit truncation at inner boundaries and optional overlap at the switchpoint (*chunnel* < *channel* + *tunnel*, *guestimate* < *guess* + *estimate*, *mimsy* < *miserable* + *flimsy*). Less core items tend to shade off and merge into word formations such as clipped compounds or extended acronyms when: SW₁ is clipped and SW₂ remains unaltered (*cremains* < *cremate* + *remains*, *mocamp* < *motor* + *camp*); the blend might be processed in terms of a neoclassical compound (*arcology* < *architectural* + *ecology*) or a combining form that started out in blends is present (e.g. *-burger*, *-rama*, *-teria*); or both SWs are truncated at the right edge (*linac* < *LINear* + *ACcellerator*) (all examples from Bauer 1983: 233-238).

In a similar vein, Thornton (1993) distinguishes between prototypical blends, with truncation and overlap, and various types of partial blends – or, better, blends that merge into other categories – which are created in extragrammatical morphology via other techniques, whereby: the final open syllable of SW₁ is deleted via haplology in case of overlap with the onset of the initial syllable of SW₂ (*eroicomico* < *eroico* [heroic] + *comico* [funny]); SW₂ remains unaltered while the truncated word has achieved morphological status as a quasi-prefix (*palaghiaccio* < combining form *pala-/palazzo* [palace/building] + *ghiaccio* [ice]); both SWs are truncated at the right

edge and the two splinters exceed one-syllable length (*Interpol* < *internazionale* [international] + *police* [polizia]/combining form *-pol*).

Whereas on a strict definition of the term blends and neighbouring categories appear to represent a cluster of related phenomena which exhibit family resemblance (Brdar-Szabó/Brdar 2008) within the radial category of subtractive word formations (López-Rúa 2002: *shortenings*), on a broad definition the related phenomena we mentioned above can be seen as less core blends, which differ from more core items along specific scales. Accordingly, Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) regards blending as deliberate extragrammatical compounding and scales German blends and clipped compounds (in her terms, *fragment blends*) by their morphotactic transparency.

Dealing as we do with Italian blends from names and nouns, we adopt Gries's (in press) definition of lexical blends for relatively more core items and allow for relatively less core items, also shading off into the neighbouring category of clipped compounds. The main emphasis, however, lies in the morphotactic transparency of relatively more core items, and, second, in morphosemantic transparency and conceptual motivation.

2.1. Identification and description

The approach outlined in this paper proceeds from the observation that blends from nouns and names are variously created for identifying and descriptive purposes. Along with prototypical personal names, bynames, place names, product names, names of abstract notions and names of numbers, days, months, etc., nicknames belong to the category *Name* (vs. *Noun*). Unlike nouns, they serve a *referential identificatory* function in referring to individuals when used as arguments in predications. Unlike nouns or pronouns, names have an indexical in their associated concept, thus exemplifying *direct reference*. Although names may undergo de-semantization and lose memory of their original descriptive, lexical meanings over time, they retain their original identificatory function (Anderson 2007).

Blends from names (and nouns) as names may (but do not necessarily) have a descriptive meaning to them as a result of the etymology of their source names or, more simply, may be created or chosen for their seemingly nice sound effect (e.g. *Josalind* < *Jocelyn* + *Rosalind*, *Tyrus* < *Tyrone* + *Cyrus*, cf. Marchand 1969). In other cases (e.g. celebrity (nick-)names such as *Brangelina* < *Brad (Pitt)* + *Angelina (Jolie)*), however, the choice is determined by *description* and blends are coined with careful attention to the semantic concepts related to the individual SWs. Understanding the blend does not rest exclusively on the recognizability of the two SWs, but correlates with their discriminatory, classificatory and expressive/evaluative functions, which are ultimately responsible for their denotations and connotations. *Description* has a role in fixing the referent, though not in making reference (cf. Kripke 1972/1981). Knowledge of the referent of a name is through direct or surrogate experience of the reference, by ostension or description in its *baptism* (Kripke 1972/1981; Lyons 1977: 217-218: *nomination*).

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Blending is not governed by rule-based grammar. Though the SWs are not fully nor immediately accessible to the decoder, the phonological make-up of the blend (size, syllable structure, segmental make-up, etc.) is not accidental: while SW₁ and SW₂ are still *similar* in various ways, similarity of blend and SWs (Gries, in press: *recognizability*) facilitates recognition. (For more on this point, see Bat-El 2006 and references therein; Gries, in press and previous work.) In Section 3.1, we'll be dealing with the recognizability of novel blends from nouns and names within the framework of Natural Morphology (Dressler et al. 1987; Dressler 1999). The *markedness* (as against *naturalness*) of lexemes illustrating different blending techniques will be assessed along the gradable semiotic parameter of *morphotactic transparency* (or morphological constituency of the morphs). *Morphosemantic transparency* (semantic compositionality of the constituent parts) (Dressler et al. 1987; Dressler 1999) and cognitive motivation will be touched upon in Section 3.2, where we provide some preliminary remarks on the role of knowledge in understanding this type of blends.

3.1. Morphotactic transparency

Competing factors which facilitate SW recognition in various ways comprise, among others, length and currency of the truncated words, as well as (Gries, in press, and references therein) a tendency of SW₁ to be more frequent than SW₂. Blends undergo reduction after being generated as partially predictable novel compounds. Whereas coiners tend to shorten words at their psycholinguistically motivated uniqueness points (with truncation of SW₁ nearly exactly at the selection point and truncation of SW₂ half a phoneme too early in SW₂, cf. Gries, in press) so as to facilitate analyzability, the semantic plausibility of the connective relation has a bearing on the morphosemantic transparency of the blend and favours identification of the non-head word. Thus, iconic blends based on a coordinative compound (*tigone* < *tigre* [tiger] + *leone* [lion], describing a hybrid (Thornton 1993), or, in our sample, *Berlingotti* < *Berlinguer* + *Andreotti*, describing a political coalition) are less marked than blends that instantiate other relations (*Eataly* < *eat* + *Italy*). Last, the presence of graphemic, phonological and morphemic overlap also works towards analyzability.

Perceptual salience has a major role in determining morphotactic transparency. Broadly speaking, *perceptual salience* (Dressler 1987: 117) determines a preference for syllable-initial as against syllable-final consonants, as well as for suffixes over prefixes (which move roots/stems/lexical bases away from the beginning of the word). Additionally, word beginnings and word ends are more perceptually salient than word-internal segments, which excludes blends such as **torhot* (as against *motel* < *motor* + *hotel*). If this is so, then:

- i. In blends whose size (number of syllables) is identical to one of the SWs: we expect SW₂ to be longer (in terms of syllables) than SW₁, which is more perceptually salient and thus more easily analyzable (*Prodinotti* < *Prodi* + *Bertinotti*, *Happyfania* < Eng. *happy* + *Epifania* [Twelfth Night]).

Among the factors which operate to move the shorter SW to the right are grammatical category of the base words and/or graphemic and phonemic similarity of segments within the blend. E.g.: *Meditathe* < *medita/meditate* [reflect, 2nd sing./pl. Imperative] + *thè* [tea, variant from Fr. *thé* of It. *tè*], which retains the stress pattern of SW₁ (with stress on the antepenultimate syllable) and is based on a VN compound with instrument N.

In polysyllabic blends which are identical to the size of both SWs: we expect SW₁ not to be longer than SW₂ (*morbistenza* /morbi'stentsa/, where the onset of the stressed syllable is taken from SW₂, vs. **morbidenza* < *morbidezza* /morbi'dettsa/ [softness] + *resistenza* /resi'stentsa/ [strength]).

- ii. In polysyllabic overlap blends: we expect alignment at word edges (in Optimality Theory (OT), cf. Piñeros 2004: 215: ALIGN-MWd) and syllable boundaries. E.g., *Happyfania* /ɛppi'fanja/ results from superimposition of the most likely pronunciation for Eng. *happy* /'hæpi/, It. /'ɛppi/ (GRADIT: HAPPY)⁴ – with silent segment *h*, open-mid front vowel, and geminates – and *epifania* /epi'fanja/.
- iii. To facilitate recognition of the less perceptually salient SW₂, we predict the similarity-motivated preservation of SW₂'s recognizability to dominate recognizability-motivated preservation of letters and phonemes. Specifically, in blends with word-internal truncation:
- a. If blend's size is identical to both SWs, the so-called size constraint (in OT, cf. Bat-El/Cohen, in press: FAITH METRICAL STRUCTURE (FAITHMS)), would predict that metrical structure (number of syllables and stress pattern) of the blend and SWs are identical (*Berluscotti* < *Berlusconi* + *Bertinotti*; *mordistenza* < *morbidezza* [softness] + *resistenza* [strength], both with stress on the penultimate syllable). Under the principle of saliency, however, the stressed syllable and stress pattern in the blend correspond to the stressed syllable and stress pattern of SW₂ (Bat-El/Cohen, in press: position-based stress assignment. More technically: FAITHHEAD_R >> FAITHHEAD_L): *gastro-nauta* /gas'tronawta/ < *gastronomo* /gas'trɔnomo/ [gourmet]/neoclassical compound *gastro-* + *astronauta* /astro'nawta/ [astronaut]/combining form *-nauta* /'nawta/.⁵
- b. If blend's size is identical to the size of one SW, the stress pattern of that SW has priority over the other SW: *britaliano* /brita'ljano/ < *British* / briti */ (GRADIT: BRITISH) + *italiano* /ita'ljano/ [Italian]; *oroschifo* /o'rɔskifo/ < *oroscopo* /o'rɔscopo/ [horoscope] + *schifo* / skifo/ [disgust].

⁴ All phonetic transcriptions of base nouns, English borrowings and names recorded in the dictionary, are taken from the *Grande Dizionario Italiano dell'Uso* (GRADIT).

⁵ Bat-El/Cohen (in press) show that there is no priority between size- and position-based stress assignment in English blends whose size is identical to the size of the left base word. Although our data do not suggest intra-word variation here, our sample is too small to exclude non-crucial ranking between FAITHMS (size) and FAITHHEAD_R (position) in blends with longer SW₁.

- c. When blend's size differs from both SWs, if SW₂ is not truncated, SW₂ dominates (Bat-El/Cohen, in press: FAITHHEADW_R >> FAITHHEADW_L), as in *radicalsauro* /radical'sawro/ < *radical* /radi'cale/ [radical] + *dinosauro* /dino'sawro/ [dinosaur]/combining form -*sauro* /'sawro/.

3.1.1. A typology of Italian blends

Under the *principle of saliency*, Italian bars maximally opaque end-end concatenations. Other blending techniques are available to Italian. Framing our typology within Naturalness Theory and adapting Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) we distinguish three blending techniques, which range from relatively more morphotactically transparent to relatively opaque: i. *complete blending* (*telescope blending* and *inclusive blending*), or the most easily analyzable into constituents; ii. *contour blending*, where blend size is identical to one of the SWs; iii. *semi-complete blending*, with one truncated word and one full SW. Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) also devises another category, *fragment blending* (Gries, in press: *complex clipping*), which combines SW beginnings in clipped compounds. Based on insights from research in Optimality Theory (Bat-El/Cohen, in press) and on their lack of transparency, we suggest viewing *fragment blending* as a neighbouring, though separate category along the continuum from relatively transparent to opaque (cf. Section 3.1.2).

Broadly speaking, although overlap of graphemes and/or phonemes across words represents a marked option (while *biuniqueness*, or one-form one-meaning correspondence, is its opposite on the naturalness scale, cf. Dressler et al. 1987), the more the overlap, the more transparent the blend.

Type ia. TELESCOPES

Within *complete blending*, *telescope (syntagmatic) blends* (Algeo 1977) are created via overlap or truncation juxtaposing at converging edges SWs that are initially generated as subsequent words within a phrase. Telescopes are highly infrequent in the corpus, possibly because they represent the most transparent (and, thus, the less memorable and effective) type. Transparency correlates positively with overlap of graphic and sound shapes and, most importantly, morphemes, e.g.: *RavennAntica* /ra'vennan'tika/ < *Ravenna* /ra'venna/ + *antica* /an'tika/ [historical]; *Cooptima* /kɔ'optima/ < *coop* /kɔ'op/ [co-op, originally from It. *cooperativa*] + *ottima* /'ɔttima/ (also It. *optimum* + -*a* fem. sing., or Lat. *optimus*, -*a*, -*um*); or the more peripheral member *Futurauto* < *futura* [next generation, A] + *auto* [car], based on the NP *auto futura/del futuro* [next generation car].

Type ib. INCLUSIVE BLENDS

Inclusive blends are a feature of written language. They are *associative* (or *portman-teau* cf. Algeo 1977) *overlap blends* in which one constituent includes the other phonologically though not graphemically (Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 167). Examples from our collection only comprise blends with foreign monosyllabic words, mainly based on exocentric VN compounds, e.g.: *EATaly* < *eat* + *Italy* for an Italian slow food

market, restaurant and now restaurant brand; or the less transparent *Meditathe* /medi'tate/, trade mark for Italian literary coffee mugs, where the blend retains stress pattern and stressed syllable of SW₁ to facilitate analyzability (in line with point iib, Section 3.1). Another example is *Happyfania*, a reduction from AN compound, where phonological similarity replaces phonological identity in the pretonic segment (/ɛppi'fanja/ vs. /epi'fanja/ (cf. Section 3.1, point ii).

Type ii. CONTOUR BLENDS

This type comprises blends which retain stress pattern and stressed syllable of one SW (*matrix word*, cf. Ronneberger-Sibold 2006), which is not entirely present in the blend, while the non-matrix can be inserted in full. Generally speaking, adopting the stress pattern of the matrix word (most often SW₂) facilitates recognition. Other factors that contribute transparency are identical size of blend and matrix word, maximization of SW₁-SW₂ overlap, inclusion of the SW in the pretonic part of the blend or in the rhyme. Since overlap at word end is relatively marked, inclusion of material from SW₂ in the onset of the stressed syllable might facilitate recognition.⁶ Some examples:

- Blend's size and stress pattern are identical to the size and stress pattern of both SWs; size-based stress assignment: *Draquila* /'drakwila/ < *Dracula* /'drakwla/ [Dracul] + (*L*)*Aquila* /'lakwila/; *morbistenza* /morbi'stentsa/ < *morbidezza* /morbi'dettsa/ [softness] + *resistenza* /resi'stentsa/ [strength]; *Berluscott* /berlu'skotti/ < *Berlusconi* /berlu'skoni/ + *Bertinotti* /berti'notti/; *Itagnolo* /itan'ɲolo/ < *Italiano* /ital'jano/ [Italian] + *Spagnolo* /span'ɲolo/ [spanish].
- Blend's size is identical to the size of both SWs; position-based stress assignment: *gastronauta* /gas'tronawta/ < *gastronomo* /gas'trɔnomo/ [gourmet]/neoclassical compound *gastro-* + *astronauta* /astro'nawta/ [astronaut]/combining form *-nauta* /'nawta/ (cf. Section 3.1, point iia).
- Left-hand alignment of SWs in blends whose size is identical to the size of one SW; size-based stress assignment: *mocaccino* /mokat'tʃino/ < *moca* /moka/ + *cappuccino* /kapput'tʃino/ (without overlap); *frappuccino* /frapput'tʃino/ < *frappé* /frap'pe*/ + *capuccino* /kapput'tʃino/ (with overlap).⁷
- Right-hand alignment of SWs in blends with overlap whose size is identical to the size of one SW; size-based stress assignment: *Enterogelmini* < *Enterogelmina* /,ɛnerodʒel'mi-

⁶ Monosyllabic blends in Italian are loanwords from other languages, e.g. Eng. *smog* or *brunch*, which are not (or are not any longer) analyzed as complex words that combine the inner part of two SWs. Blend size is identical to the size of one SW in complete blends and of both SWs or one of the SWs in contour blends. When blend size differs from both words, the blend retains the stressed syllable of the matrix word, e.g. *Biografilm* /biogra'film/ < *biografia* [biography] /biogra'fia/ + *film* /'film/.

⁷ Because SW₁ is monosyllabic and aligns with the stressed syllable of SW₂, the distinction between size-based and stress-based assignment is not relevant in *Billary* /'billari/ < *Bill* (*Clinton*) /'bil/ + *Hillary* (*Rodham Clinton*) /'illari/

- ni/ < *Enterogermina* /ɛnterodʒer'mina/ + *Gelmini* /dʒel'mini/; *oroschifo* /o'rɔskifo/ < *oroscopo* /o'rɔskopo/ [horoscope] + *schifo* /'skifo/ [disgust].⁸
- Blends without overlap whose size is identical to the size of one SW; position-based stress assignment: *Berlingotti* /berlin'gotti/ < *Berlinguer* /berlin'gwer/ + *Andreotti* /andre'otti/.

Type 3. SEMI-COMPLETE BLENDS

In semi-complete blends the truncated word precedes a full word which tends to determine the stress pattern of the blend, and follows a complete word in less transparent blends. Graphemic and phonemic overlap of splinter and SW, length and currency of the former, and stress pattern of the full word, facilitate recognition. Some examples: *docuromanzo* /dokuro'mandzo/ < *documentario* /dokumen'tarjo/ [documentary]/*docu-* + *romanzo* /ro'mandzo/;⁹ *Edilcasa* /ɛdile'kasa/ < *edile* /'ɛdile/, /e'dile/ [building trade, A]/*edilizia* /edi'littsja/ [building trade]/*-edil-* + *casa* /'kasa/; *Devitalia* /devi'talia/ < *dev-* (from Eng. *development*) + *Italia* /i'talia/; *britaliano* /brita'ljano/ < *British* /'britiʃ*/ (GRADIT: BRITISH) + *italiano* /ita'ljano/ [Italian]; *Brangelina* /brandʒe'lina/ < *Brad (Pitt)* + *Angelina (Jolie)*, a loanword. *CLEANAP* /klin'ap/ can be seen as a less transparent blend which combines full word and splinter, if analyzed (with a bit of an effort) by the average Italian as *clean* /'klin/ + *Napoli* /na'poli/ [Naples], as against *CLEANAP* /klin'ap/ < *clean up* /klin'ap/ (cf. GRADIT: CLEAN UP) + *Napoli* /na'poli/ [Naples].¹⁰

3.1.2. Clipped compounds

Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) devises one last and least transparent category, *fragment blends* or concatenations of SW beginnings in clipped compounds. Turning now to Italian, fragment blending accounts for the vast majority of subtractive word formations and is extensively used for company service and product names, also brand names and trade marks, e.g.: *Dicloream* /diclo'rewm/ < *Diclofenac sodico* /diklofe'nak 'sɔdiko/ [diclofenac sodium] + *reumatismo* /rewma'tizmo/ [rheumatism]; *Edilplast* /edil'plast/, /'ɛdilplast/ < *edile* /'ɛdile/, /e'dile/ [building trade, A]/*edilizia* /edi'littsja/

⁸ *Sarkozy* /sarko'zi/ and *Berlusconi* /berlu'skoni/ overlap in two attested blends, *Sarlusconi* /sarlu'skoni/ and *Berluscozy* /berlusko'zi/, which retain the stress pattern of SW₂ (position-based stress assignment). Though the matrix word in the contour blend is shorter than the inserted word, we suggest *Berluscozy* is a relatively more transparent coinage in that the segment /ko'zi/ has very few neighbours in Italian.

⁹ *Vaffapensiero* can be analyzed as a blend of *vaffanculo* [fuck off, Fig: refusal] and *pensiero* [political view] or, most probably, as an endocentric compound /vaffapens'jero/, from *vaffa* /'vaffa/ (interjection; shortening, *vaffanculo*, cf. GRADIT: VAFFA) and *pensiero* /pen'sjero/.

¹⁰ It is apparent that *clean up* has not gained currency nor replaced its Italian dictionary equivalents (*risanamento/pulizia/bonifica ambientale*). Indeed, although *clean up* was first attested in 1996 (GRADIT: clean up) in the sense 'ecological clean up', a simple search in the *la Repubblica Corpus (RC)* – a large, annotated corpus of newspaper Italian (380M tokens) – only returns 3 hits for ecological *clean up* and 5 hits for other types of clean-up. Further evidence for analyzing *Cleanap* as a reduction of *Clean Nap* comes from the alternating use of *CleaNap* and *CLEANAP* in the names of the corresponding webpages.

[building trade]/-*edil*- + *plastica* / plastica/ [plastic]; *Finedil* /fine'dil/ < *finanziaria*/fin-/finan'tsjarja/ [consumer credit provider] + *edile* /'ɛdile/, /e'dile/ [building trade, A]/*edilizia* /edi'littsja/ [building trade]/-*edil*-; *Findomestic* /findo'mɛstik/ < *finanziaria*/fin-/finan'tsjarja/ [consumer credit provider] + *domestico* /do'mɛstiko/ [personal/family, A].

Because fragment blends combine SW beginnings and allow closed syllables at syllable and word endings, they allow word-internal consonant cluster that are not well-formed in Italian (e.g. *lp* in *Edilplast*). Additionally, whereas in the majority of Italian non-derived nouns the stress is placed on the penultimate syllable, fragment blends do not show any regularity in this respect because truncation can occur at any point within SW₁ and SW₂. Truncation can thus minimally affect the nucleus of the word-final syllable and retain syllable onsets of one SW (*Findomestic*, which, however, comes close to semi-complete blends such as *Finconsumo* /finkon'sumo/ < *finanziaria*/fin-/finan'tsjarja/ [consumer credit provider] + *consumo* /kon'sumo/ [consumer]), or result into significant departures from partial transparency and semi-complete blends, maximally deleting the stressed syllable in both SWs (*Dicloream*).

In other words, fragment blends show different degrees of departure from the regularities observed for complete blends, contour blends, and (to a lesser degree) semi-complete blends (cf. Sections 3.1 and Sections 3.1.1). We therefore suggest adopting the term *clipped compounds* for fragment blends and treat blends and clipped compounds as two separate though neighbouring categories within extragrammatical subtractive word-formations.

3.2. Morphosemantic transparency and cognitive motivation

As suggested above (cf. Section 3.1), among the factors that have an impact on the morphosemantic transparency of the blend there is the semantic plausibility of the correspondence relations (Langacker 1987: *valency relations*) between SWs (Langacker 1987: *components*) within the composite structure. In the case of subordinate endocentric blends from nouns such as *Finconsumo* (< *finanziaria*/fin- [consumer credit provider] + *consumo* [consumer]), a consumer credit provider, the correspondences are quite prominent and the blend serves both an identificatory and a categorizing function. In *L'oroschifo* [the bad horoscope], *oroschifo* (< *oroscopo* [horoscope] + *schifo* [disgust]) is used metonymically to name a live radio programme broadcasting bad horoscope predictions. In *Il gastronomo* [the well travelled gourmet], *gastronauta* (< *gastronomo* [gourmet] + *astronauta* [astronaut]) is used metonymically to name a radio programme during which Davide Paolini, also known as *il gastronomo*, provides expert information on what to eat and where to eat in Italy.

Based on analogical extensions from creative blends, the truncated word originally used in a blend may be analyzed as a word string on its own and form new word families. As such, it illustrates the productive use of symbolic constructional schemas (see Kemmer 2003 for English). Some examples in our sample are not only *-edil-* and *fin-* but also *gastro-*, a neoclassical compound, whose use is extended via *gastronauta* from specialist terminology in medicine and the life sciences to word formations such as *gastro-*

avvertito [gastro-aware], *gastrocolto* [gastro-expert] vs. *gastroignorante* [gastro-illiterate], *gastrocritico* [gastroreviewer], *gastrodevolution*, *gastro-follia* [unusual and bizarre dish, Ironic], *gastro-maker* [a person who decides on up-to-date gastronomic trends], etc.

Often, however, valence relations in blends as names depend on idiosyncratic features that are not easily nor immediately recognizable. This is especially the case of novel naming units from names. Coining and understanding blends from names essentially relies on encyclopaedic knowledge: inability to understand a name rather than a noun, adjective or verb is a failure in encyclopaedic knowledge of the language (Recanati 1993, in Anderson 2007: 158). Based on a highly entrenched schema (cf. Langacker 1987), male names and female names combine in English exocentric compounds naming couples (e.g., *Josalind* < *Jocelyn* + *Rosalind*, *Tyrus* < *Tyrone* + *Cyrus*, cf. Marchand 1969). Our sample comprises loan names from English that are analyzed into their constituent parts, e.g. *Brangelina* < *Brad (Pitt)* and *Angelina (Jolie)* and *Billary* < *Bill (Clinton)* + *Hillary (Rodham Clinton)*. Both represent extensions of the English Name [+MALE] – Name [+FEMALE] schema for couples and are easily accounted for within Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT, cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980) and Conceptual Blending theories (Ruiz de Mendoza's 1998 Combined Input Hypothesis, Fauconnier/Turner 2002), which incorporate CMT. Its fixed, generic domains are replaced by the schematic and specific knowledge dynamically structured in the language user's partial, specific mental spaces. CB theories see word formation and the interpretation of the underlying semantic motivation in terms of the language user's online language processing: elements within contextually relevant source inputs (SIs) are activated on the basis of long-term supra- and extralinguistic knowledge, they (can) evoke common abstract schemas and images in the Generic Space (GS) and yield a Projection Space (PS) (Fauconnier and Turner 2002: blended space, or blend) which accommodates the selected elements from the SI(s), and can contain new meanings (emergent signification).

Very briefly, *Brangelina* is a reduction from a coordinate compound which extends the Name [+MALE] – Name [+FEMALE] schema for couples combining selected information from SI1 (Brad Pitt: celebrity, handsome US actor; Hollywood superstar; married to Angelina Jolie;...) and SI2 (Angelina Jolie: stunning US actress; Hollywood celebrity; married to Brad Pitt;...). Based on re-categorization from Name to Noun to Adjective via metonymy and cued inferencing (Ruiz de Mendoza 2000), in the PS the blend identifies and describes the greatly admired (and much envied) Hollywood superstar couple, thus taking on evaluative connotations. *Billary* is a slightly different example. It is based on selected idiosyncratic features epitomized by Bill Clinton and characterizing Hillary Clinton against Western cultural keywords (Williams 1973/1986) such as FAMILY, HOME (for women) and CAREER, WORK, JOB (for men) within specific schemes, frames and scenarios related to Clinton's US presidency. In the PS *Billary* can thus be interpreted as: i. a derogatory lexical blend with identificatory, descriptive and expressive meanings, which reduces an exocentric compound describing via metonymy the former First Lady and career woman Hillary Clinton; or ii. a metonymic blend based on an exocentric compound which describes a marriage which is also a joint venture.

Turning now to the Italian blends for names of individuals, applying (entrenched) schemas might work towards morphosemantic transparency and increase meaning predictability. The Name [+FEMALE] – Name [+FEMALE] schema applies to Italian female names, whereby two female names can combine in a coordinate endocentric blend (e.g. *Marilena/Malena* < *Maria* + *Maddalena*, cf. Thornton 2004a). However, based on coordinate compounds, the blends in our sample, from journalese, media language and politics metonymically combine Family names [+MALE] to denote a coalition between political parties, with LEADER OF A PARTY FOR THE POLITICAL PARTY. One example is *Berlingotti* < *Berlinguer* + *Andreotti*. Context-dependent, selected features for Berlinguer in SI1 are: leader of the major opposition party till the early eighties, working with Andreotti (leader of the Christian Democracy, the majority party) and Aldo Moro (repeatedly Prime Minister) to reach a historic compromise whereby the largest European Communist Party would have taken part in the majority coalition. Likewise, in SI2 Andreotti is the leader of the Christian Democratic Party. Based on encyclopaedic knowledge, the motivated, contextually determined metonymic reading of *Berlingotti* in PS is thus: the leaders' attempts at reaching the historic compromise and forming a coalition, or the political period at large.

Although other blends might appear to apply the schema for the 'coalition' reading, on closer inspection this reading turns out to be too context-dependent to develop into a productive constructional schema. Consider *Prodinotti*, which foregrounds opposition within a given coalition. More specifically, *Prodinotti* < *Prodi* + *Bertinotti* names Prodi's coalition government, brought down by the minority party within the coalition, led by Bertinotti. As a result, Bertinotti and his Communist Party ended up supporting the opposition coalition, led by Berlusconi (hence, *Berluscottti* < *Berlusconi* + *Bertinotti*).

Yet another example is *Sarlusconi* < *Sarkozy* + *Berlusconi/Berluscozy* < *Berlusconi* + *Sarkozy*,¹¹ where both Prime Ministers are identified by source names that are re-categorized via metonymy (NAME FOR QUALITY) to reduplicate similar features in the two prime ministers' private lives. Based on the metaphor MORE OF FORM IS MORE OF CONTENT, the blend describes and criticizes both prime ministers and their celebrity life style.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this paper has been to examine Italian unfamiliar lexical blends from names and nouns, which serve an identificatory function. Although we are aware of the drawbacks of a qualitative investigation based on a restricted sample, we can now draw some preliminary conclusions. Working on the assumption that blends reach a compromise between morphotactic and morphosemantic transparency on the one hand, and the need to be memorable on the other, we placed special emphasis on the principle of saliency (cf. Dressler 1987), which turns out to motivate a number of phonological regularities better described within Optimality Theory (Bat-El/Cohen, in press) and ultimately responsible for size-based and position-based stress assignment within the blend.

¹¹ See Cacchiani (2010) for extensive analysis of *Billary*, *Brangelina* and *Berluscozy/Sarlusconi*.

On a gradient from more to less morphotactically transparent, we distinguish *complete blends* (*telescope blends* such as *RavennAntica* and *inclusive blends* such as *Eataly*), *contour blends*, where blend size and stress pattern are identical to the size and stress pattern of the matrix SW (*Berluscottti*, *frappuccino*), and the more peripheral subtype of *semi-complete blends*, which tend to juxtapose SW beginning and SW (*Devitalia*). Because *clipped compounds* (*Findomestic*, *Dicloream*) combine SW beginnings and show different degrees of departure from blends (especially in terms of the similarity between SW stress pattern and stress pattern of the blend), we view clipped compounds and blends as neighbouring types within the prototypical category of extragrammatical subtractive word-formations.

As far as morphosemantic transparency is concerned, although the plausibility of the semantic relation between SWs has a bearing on the semantic analyzability of the blend, processing unfamiliar naming blends from names and nouns relies on the encyclopaedic knowledge of the decoder. While, based on schemas, generalizations can only be made for combining forms that started out as blends (e.g. *fin-*, *gastro-*), one recurrent pattern was observed in Italian journalese, the language of the media ad politics, where Family names [+MALE] are integrated in lexical blends such as *Berlingotti*, *Prodinotti* or *Berluscozy/Sarlusconi*. However, the valence relations depend on idiosyncratic properties or are too context-dependent to instantiate or develop into a productive constructional schema, which ultimately reduces their meaning predictability.

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Abstract

ON UNFAMILIAR ITALIAN LEXICAL BLENDS FROM NAMES AND NOUNS

Italian has recently witnessed a steady increase in the use of unfamiliar lexical blends from names and nouns. While they serve an identificatory and descriptive function (in the sense of Anderson 2007), blends are created in extragrammatical morphology with careful attention to the semantic concepts encoded by the individual SWs, understanding blends from names and nouns depends on the decoder's direct or surrogate experience of the related reference.

Significantly, blends are coined out of the need to be relevant (Sperber/Wilson 1990) and show various degrees of morphotactic and morphosemantic transparency (Thornton 1986; Dressler 1987, 1999), which makes them memorable (Lehrer 2003). In this paper we therefore address blends from names and nouns within the framework of the Naturalness Theory (Thornton 1986; Dressler et al. 1987; Dressler 1999). As will be seen, although blends are not created in rule-based grammars, some overall preferences and regularities can be observed for more core items (cf. Bat-El/Cohen, in press, within the framework of Optimality Theory) under the principle of saliency (Dressler 1987).

Focusing on their morphosyntactic transparency, we provide a typology of Italian unfamiliar blends from names and nouns functioning as naming units in order to delimit the category and reassess current typologies. While we allow for a continuum of morphotactic transparency within the prototypical category of extragrammatical subtractive word-formations, we slightly adapt

Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) and suggest we distinguish between blends on the one hand and the neighbouring category of clipped compounds on the other. Moving on to morphosemantic transparency and conceptual motivation, we use concepts from Cognitive Grammar, Cognitive Metaphor Theory and theories of Conceptual Blending (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980; Langacker 1987; Ruiz de Mendoza 1998, 2000; Kemmer 2003) to provide some preliminary remarks on specific subtypes, and blends from personal names used in journalese and media language in particular (e.g. *Berluscotti* < *Berlusconi* + *Bertinotti*, *Berlingotti* < *Berlinguer* + *Bertinotti*). The data shows that we cannot as yet talk about instantiations or extensions of entrenched schemas.

Povzetek

O MANJ POGOSTI VRSTI LEKSIKALNIH SPOJENK IZ IMEN IN SAMOSTALNIKOV

V italijanščini v zadnjem času opažamo nenehen porast rabe manj pogoste vrste leksikalnih spojenk iz lastnih imen in samostalnikov. Čeprav so spojenke v službi poimenovalne in opisne funkcije (v smislu Andersona 2007), so tvorjene znotraj nesistemske morfologije, pri čemer posebej pomembno vlogo igrata pomenska koncepta, katerih nosilka je vsaka od izhodiščnih besed. Razumevanje spojenk iz lastnih imen in samostalnikov je odvisno od razvezovalčeve neposredne ali posredne izkušnje z dano zunajjezikovno resničnostjo.

Pomembno je, da spojenke nastajajo iz potrebe po relevantnosti (Sperber/Wilson 1990) in kažejo različne stopnje morfolaktične in morfosemantčne transparentnosti (Thornton 1986; Dressler 1987, 1999), zaradi katere si jih je moč zapomniti (Lehrer 2003). V pričujočem članku se vprašanja spojenk iz imen in samostalnikov lotevamo v okviru teorije naravnosti (Thornton 1986; Dressler et al. 1987; Dressler 1999). V nadaljevanju bomo videli, da, čeprav spojenke niso tvorjene na podlagi gramatikalnih pravil, vseeno lahko v skladu z načelom jasne prepoznavnosti /ang. *salience*/ (Dressler 1987) za najbolj prototipične primere ugotovimo nekaj splošno veljavnih teženj in smernic.

Omejili smo se na morfosintaktično transparentne spojenke in podali tipologijo italijanskih manj pogostih spojenk iz imen in samostalnikov, ki delujejo kot poimenovalne enote. Naš namen je bil na eni strani zamejiti kategorijo, na drugi pa ovrednotiti že obstoječe tipologije. Čeprav se zavedamo kontinuuma morfolaktične transparentnosti znotraj prototipiske kategorije zunajsistemskih besednih krajšav, smo se rahlo oddaljili od pristopa Ronnenberger-Siboldove (2006) in predlagali, da bi razlikovali med spojenkami (ang. *blends*) na eni strani in zloženimi krni (ang. *clipped compounds*) na drugi. Na ravni morfosemantične transparentnosti in konceptualne motiviranosti se opiramo na koncepte kognitivne slovnice, kognitivne teorije metafore in teorij konceptualnega spajanja (cf. Lakoff/Johnson 1980; Langacker 1987; Ruiz de Mendoza 1998, 2000; Kemmer 2003), kar nam bo služilo za oblikovanje nekaterih uvodnih opazanj glede specifičnih podvrst in spojenk iz osebnih imen, kakršne najdemo še zlasti v časopisnem in medijskem jeziku (npr. *Berluscotti* < *Berlusconi* + *Bertinotti*, *Berlingotti* < *Berlinguer* + *Bertinotti*). Analiza pokaže, da zaenkrat še ne moremo govoriti niti o aplikaciji niti o razširitvi obstoječih shematskih vzorcev.