

Blends as Word-Templates

Main Claim We argue that blends are the result of affixing a templatic morpheme that consist of an empty prosodic word. Different types of blends are derived from mechanisms and constraints that are independently motivated in the grammar rather than from “extragrammatical” mechanisms (as e.g. in Piñeros 2002).

Data Two structurally different types of blends are often distinguished in the literature (e.g. Algeo 1977, Piñeros 2000, Piñeros 2002): “telescopes” are the result of the conflation of two juxtaposed words with some shortening at their peripheries, e.g. Spanish [kwernasjonales] (from /kwernos/ + /nasjonales/, (Piñeros, 2002, 4)). “Portmanteaus” on the other hand combine two source words that have some shared property (in meaning or phonological form) and replicate the prosodic structure of one of the source words, e.g. Hebrew [kokoláda] (from /kókus/ + /šokoláda/, (Bat-El, 1996, 248)). Two important generalizations about the general structure of blends are that 1.) the phonemes at the juncture between two source forms are phonologically similar and are often subtracted in one word and 2.) the boundary between two blended words fall primarily between phonological constituents (e.g. Kubozono 1990, Kelly 1998, Bertinetto 2001 or Lopez Rua 2004).

Framework We adopt the Coloured Containment version of Optimality Theory (van Oostendorp 2006) where underlying elements are distinguished from epenthetic material by morphological colour (indices in 2). As in Classical Containment, underlying material is never literally deleted in the output but marked as unparsed if it is not dominated by the highest prosodic node. Blends are assumed to have the morphological structure of compounds and combine two words that are already parsed into prosodic structure.

Analysis All different types of blends follow from independently motivated constraints if one assumes that the blending morpheme is a prosodic word template that must be realized through dominating some segmental material. The unparsing of underlying material results because prosodic nodes strive to avoid dominating prosodic elements with different morphological colours (ensuring the integrity of morphological=prosodic words: 1a). It is therefore impossible to integrate both source forms under the morphemic prosodic word node (2a) and in addition it is impossible to unparse the content of one morphemes completely (due to REALIZE MORPHEME, excluding 2b). Realizing segmental content of both morphemes is possible if (colourless) prosodic nodes are inserted as in 2c and 2d under violation of the faithfulness constraint PARSE- μ (van Oostendorp 2006). Or morphologically coloured prosodic nodes could reassociate leaving some segmental material unparsed and integrate segmental material from the other source word (2d). Such a structure violates PARSE- ϕ that demands realisation of all morphologically affiliated elements. This constraint is specified for the head/non-head status of the source words in a blend (cf. e.g. Kubozono 1990 or Piñeros 2002). Ranking PARSE- ϕ_{N-HD} above PARSE- μ_{σ} derives a telescope (Spanish: 2c) whereas the reverse ranking yields a portmanteau that “packs” the segmental material of two stems under the prosodic structure of one (the Hebrew pattern: 2d). The fact that the (subtracted) edges of the source word of a blend are phonologically similar follows from an OCP-constraint demanding that syllable positions belonging to different morphemes integrated under one prosodic word should be phonologically different. This ensures that (morphologically) different elements that are conflated phonologically tend to be as phonologically distinct as possible in order to ensure recognizability. Therefore it is the phonologically more similar syllable that remains unparsed in telescopes: 2c wins over 2d.

Discussion The OT analyses given in Piñeros (2000), Piñeros (2002) and Bat-El (1996) only account for either portmanteaus or telescopes. Piñeros (2002) justifies this with the emphasis that both structures are quite different and their forming is driven by different underlying psychological processes. In contrast, we argue that the derivation of both structures 1.) follow from the same general mechanism and 2.) are derived by general phonological constraints. This is supported by the fact that typological and statistical investigations like Lehrer (2007) or Gries (2004) find structurally different types of blends in one and the same language and therefore questions the clear-cut distinction into two different structures that are generated by different mechanisms.

- (1)
 - a. **INTPRWD**: A prosodic word node must not dominate prosodic elements with different morphological colours.
 - b. **REALIZE MORPHEME**: Phonological material from every morphological colour must be parsed in the output, i.e. be associated with the highest prosodic word node.
 - c. **PARSE- ϕ_{S-NHD}** : Coloured segmental material of the non-head in a compound must be realized in the output (dominated by the highest prosodic node).
 - d. **PARSE- μ_{σ}** : No colourless syllable nodes.
 - e. **M-OCP_{Ons}**: In a prosodic word onsets that are integrated under syllable nodes of different morphological colour must not be associated with identical material.

(2)

$k_i w_i e_i r_i n_i o_i s_i + n_j a_j s_j j_o_j n_j a_j l_j e_j s_j + \text{PrWd}_m$	M-OCP _{Ons}	RM	INT PRWD	PARSE- ϕ_{S-NHD}	PARSE- μ_{σ}
<p>a.</p>			*!		
<p>b.</p>		*!			
<p>c.</p>					*
<p>d.</p>				*!*****	
<p>e.</p>	*!				*