INVESTIGATION OF ANIMATED FILM BLENDS IN ENGLISH DISCOURSE

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Abstract. *The current paper focuses on an empirical study of one of the most prominent morphological word-formation processes in the English language in animated films, the process of lexical blending. The aims of the study are to explore lexical blends in the English of animated films, and to determine to what extent, if at all, they are used in different corpora. The change within the language is the result of morphological rule-governed creativity, and thus it lends itself to both quantitative and qualitative linguistic analyses. The research presents the identification of blends in animated films and their morpho-semantic analysis. The linguistic items identified in animated films are cross-checked against two sources - the technology-based language tool (COCA) and selected dictionaries of contemporary English. The study reveals that the language of animated films contains lexical blends, and that they are used in corpora to some degree.*

Key words: *lexical blending, animated films, native discourse, Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), dictionaries*

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most dynamic processes of word formation today is lexical blending. The corpus of lexical blends is being enriched on a daily basis due to their popularity. Blending has become a trend both in fiction and non-fiction discourse, especially in the media and the Internet. Although many lexical blends appear on a daily basis, there is always a significant number of them which never get assimilated and used in English discourse. New coinages may be found in specific environments, for example the tabloid (online) press, various TV programmes for entertainment, everyday gossip between young people, and so on. Since many lexical blends are purposefully humorous with frequent punning effects, it is supposed that they are used in animated films.

Since animated films have an educational purpose besides simply entertainment, much attention is paid to the language that animated characters use, but this does not mean that the cartoon language is restrictive. It is educational in the sense that it shows masterful creativity and ingenuity of the language users and language-makers. Thus, animated films provide a framework for experimenting with this specific multimodal language.

In this paper the assumption is adopted that the language of cartoons is different to some extent from other language genres and styles, since the way animated characters communicate and use language demands harmony and an accurate balance of different language elements. Concerning this, the research goes into three directions; the first direction leads to identifying, explaining, and linguistically analysing lexical blends in animated films; the second direction deals with research carried out on the COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English) in order to show the frequency and distribution of the same blend samples found in the selected animated films; the third direction involves investigation of the representation of animated film blends in selected dictionaries of contemporary English.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For more than a century, animated films have been used not only for the entertainment of children, but for all age groups, with vivid characters of various culture backgrounds that conquer the hearts of an army of fans. With myriad content they elicit pleasant moods and take us back to our childhood. The reason for our long-running affair with cartoons, according to Lenburgh (2009: 1), is the embodiment of a fantasy world worth treasuring, worth enjoying and, most of all, worth remembering over and over again, no matter what the place or the time is or what changes have occurred in the real world around it.

Film historian William Moritz (1988: 21) suggests that the animated form is best represented by the creation of the film which concentrates purely on using and developing a unique vocabulary available only in animation which, therefore, distinguishes it from any other style or approach to film-making. This positions animated films as an experimental or principally avant-garde form of expression, both culturally and linguistically.

Authors and script writers carefully choose the subject for their cartoons and they present language characteristics in a lavish, exuberant, often highly original, idiosyncratic and show-offish way (Gorcevic 2013: 75). Formal, informal, and colloquial styles with relatively frequent use of elements of jargon or even vulgar speech are characteristic for this specific type of language, and blends are recognized as a part of it since, as Campbell (1998: 118) describes them, they are intentionally humorous or sometimes sarcastic in their origin; others are more accidental, sometimes thought to originate as something like slips of the tongue which combine aspects of two related forms which then catch on. Even if they became more serious over time, they still may be puzzling and difficult to decode unless one is familiar with the context. Nevertheless, those words may find the way to contemporary dictionaries and thesauruses, and may eventually become institutionalized, thus becoming legitimate members of the English lexicon (Gorcevic 2013: 75).

Renner (2012: 9) in his introduction gives a retrospective review of blends. He points out that lexical blends were popularized in English by the Victorian author Lewis Carroll, who pondered on the process of lexical blending in his writings, though they did appear in Early Modern English. Lexical blends in earlier periods mostly had punning or colloquial characteristics, or sometimes they were terms of mockery. Even though they have been

known since the fifteenth century, blends significantly multiplied in the course of the twentieth century (Ayto 2003).

According to Renner (2015: 121), blending is a cross-linguistically widespread process which crops up in a variety of domains, from slang to technoscientific terminology, from popular media culture to the corporate world. Gries (2004: 201) roughly defines blending as intentional coinage of a new word by fusing parts of at least two 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.

Blending is the merging of two words in which at least one of them is distorted phonologically, often not at a morpheme boundary; the result of blending is a blend or portmanteau word which is a new lexeme formed from parts of two or more other lexemes (Milojevic 2000: 23). Lexical blends are formed of irregular fragments of two or more words, and there are general rules about the form that the fragments are likely to take – sometimes there are full morphemes in the source word, but most often they are just arbitrary parts of the original words. López Rúa (2004) says that the constitutive fragments of a blend are unable to stand in isolation.

Sometimes the words which are the source of the parts that go into the new coinage can be semantically related in some way (brunch – breakfast + lunch, smog – smoke + fog, stagflation – stagnation + inflation, spork – spoon + fork, dramedy – drama + comedy), meaning they are supposedly made up of words where the blend denotes something which has feature of both elements, so that this category is the blend equivalent of the co-compound forms (Bauer, in Renner et al. 2012: 18).

Animated film discourse should be taken in consideration in the context of multimodality. As Murray (2013: 6) puts it, multimodality is a theory of communication and social semiotics; it describes communication practices in terms of the textual, aural, linguistic, spatial, and visual resources, or modes, used to compose messages. Meaning in animated film arises out of the multiple interaction of various modalities such as images, sounds, music, gestures of animated characters, visual effects, etc., which are put together in linear order. The combination of the modalities results in a narrative text whose understanding and interpretation requires the viewer's active participation. According to Wildfeuer (2014: 1), film interpretation is an active process of relational meaning-making and inferring its propositional content in terms of assumptions and hypotheses, which the recipient makes according to concrete cues within the text. The meaning-making involves selecting from different modes (written language, sound, gesture, and visual design) and media (face to face, print, film/animated film) and combining these selections according to the logic of space (a sculpture), time (a sound composition), or both (a film) (Kress, 2010: 54).

The notion of film as text today can be seen as a new starting point for an investigation that bridges the gap between general approaches to film interpretation on the one hand and modern linguistic analysis of how meaning in multimodal texts is created on the other (Wildfeuer, 2014: 1).

As cartoon characters' names are part of their image, in most cases they seem to imply their capabilities or superpowers. Their names are purposely devised to catch the audience's attention by appealing to the senses; in other words, they try to strike the eye and the ear by resorting to all types of linguistic deviation: typographical, phonological and morphological (López Rúa in Renner et al. 2012: 24).

3. METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in order to find out if English in animated films contains lexical blends. The need for this research came from the fact that English in animated films is different to some extent from English native discourse. Despite there being numerous existing articles on blending, this research responds to the need for new studies on this subject from different aspects and in different environments and corpora.

This research has the following goals:

- To explore if lexical blends are used in the English of animated films.
- To analyse their morpho-semantic background and demonstrate the usage by their identification and explanation.
- To determine to what extent, if at all, animated film lexical blends are used in native discourse (COCA) and contemporary dictionaries of English by cross-checking them.

The general hypothesis of this research is that *the English language in animated films contains lexical blends*. If the outcome of the first part of the research is positive, meaning that if the English in animated films contains lexical blends, then a sub-hypothesis needs to be proven – *they are characteristic only for this language register and cannot be found in native discourse*. The investigation in this paper is corpus-based dealing with three different corpora – *animated films*, *a native language corpus*, and *contemporary dictionaries*. The following animated films, the source of examples of blends, have been used for the research – *Antz, Aristocats, Felix the Cat, Madagascar, The Incredibles*, and *The Simpsons*. All of these animated films were obtained on DVD, making it possible to pause whenever it was needed. Some parts of the films were played several times in order to provide an accurate analysis.

Since one of the aims of the study is to determine the frequency and distribution of the blends in native discourse, the question remains as to which corpora may provide an adequate source for comparison. Corpus linguistics, as the study of language as expressed in corpora, is becoming one of the dominant methods used to analyse language today. In contrast to the opinion of some linguists that vocabulary may represent so called 'real English', there are also opposite viewpoints. Leitner (1993: 50), for example, doubts that dictionaries come close to representing 'real English' or that they give appropriate examples to illustrate the meaning. Gries (2006: 4), on the other hand, claims that corpus-based study interlaces the dictionary meaning of the words with real, authentic and natural language (real English) since corpora are based on naturally-occurring language samples. Thus, because of the unsynchronised standpoints of linguists in this matter, the authors of this paper included an additional highly significant corpus – the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), along with selected dictionaries. The reason for using this language corpus in this paper is because it is empirical, analysing patterns of language used in natural texts; it is also representative since it utilizes a large and principled collection of natural texts, with its 520 million words equally divided into categories – spoken, newspapers, fiction, magazines and academic – as the basis for the analysis. It relies on computer software to count linguistic patterns as part of the analysis and it depends on both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques to interpret the findings (Biber et al. 1998: 4).

Besides their role to enhance vocabulary and language, dictionaries, both general and specialised (thesauruses), can be used in various types of research. In this research the lexical blends from animated films were explored in the following dictionaries - *Oxford dictionary* (online), *Merriam-Webster's d.* (online), *Dictionary.com* (online), *Cambridge d.* (online), *McMillan d.* (online), and *Longman dictionary of Contemporary English*.

The methodological approach to this investigation of lexical blends involved the following objectives:
- diachronic selection of animated films (from 1913 to 2014),
- identification of blends,
- morpho-semantic analysis,
- examination of blends in a corpus (COCA) and contemporary dictionaries, and
- assessment of the frequency of blends from animated films found in the COCA.

4. CASE STUDIES

4.1. Identification and analysis of animated film lexical blends

The words which give the fragments from which a blend is built are usually termed as *source words* or *base words* (Bat-El and Cohen, see in Renner et al. 2012), and the constitutive fragments of a blend are commonly designated as *splinters* (López Rúa, see in Renner et al. 2012: 10).

According to the research methodology in this paper, the first step assumed the identification of specific lexical blends in the animated films and their analysis from a sociological and linguistic point of view. They are presented in Table 1; the first and the second column contain their constituent parts, splinters 1 and 2, the third column contains the blend itself, and the fourth column is the source of the blend, the name of animated film it was taken from.

Table 1 Process of lexical blending in animated films

Source word 1	Source word 2	Blend (splinter 1 + 2)	Source (Animated film)
Bomb	Bon Voyage	*Bomb Voyage*	The Incredibles
Incredible	Boy	*Incrediboy*	The Incredibles
Frost	Zone or Ozone	*Frozone*	The Incredibles
Stratosphere	Gale (*girl* as a homophone)	*Stratogale*	The Incredibles
Insurance	Care	*Insuricare*	The Incredibles
Dim(inish)	Wit	*Dimwit*	The Simpsons
Point	Dexter	*Poindexter*	The Simpsons
Brain	Maniac	*Brainiac*	The Simpsons
Dungeon	Sanitarium	*Dungeonarium*	The Simpsons
Crap	Spectacular	*Craptacular*	The Simpsons
Tomato	Tobacco	*Tommaco*	The Simpsons
Trauma	Remedy	*Traumedies*	The Simpsons
Euro	Terrific	*Euroific*	The Simpsons
Poindexter	Dextrose	*Poindextrose*	The Simpsons
Sacrilegious	Delicious	*Sacrilicious*	The Simpsons
Spooky	Spectacles	*Spooktackles*	The Simpsons
Marionette	Puppet	*Muppet*	The Simpsons
Fresh	Delicious	*Freshalicious*	Madagascar
Aristocracy	Cat	*Aristocats*	Aristocats
Insect	Utopia	*Insectopia*	Antz

Table 1 shows the process of lexical blending in cartoon dialogues where the output is a blend, resulting from merging two words, out of which at least one is distorted (splinter 1 + splinter 2). What follows is the analysis of the examples in Table 1.

Cartoon: The Incredibles

Bomb Voyage, *bomb + bon voyage*;
One of the characters in The Incredibles is Bomb Voyage, a French thief who is an explosives expert. In this particular case blending is combined with a metonymic shift. His name is a blend consisted of the words *bomb* and *bon voyage*, which means safe trip in French. This coinage leaves a comic effect in the way that it has symbolic meaning for saying goodbye for good after an explosion.

Incrediboy,
Incrediboy is a boy who would like to be Mr. Incredible's sidekick. Mr. Incredible is the main character and the hero in this animated film, and many boys dream about being a hero, or, at the very least his sidekick. His nickname, or alias, is made of two lexemes *incredible* and *boy*. Incredible means something extraordinary, something unbelievable (Oxford Dictionary) or of extra quality. Since heroes have incredible powers, *Incrediboy* thought this nickname was completely suitable for him.

Frozone,
Lucius Best, also known as *Frozone,* is one of the supporting characters in The Incredibles. He has the ability to create ice and freeze surfaces with his hands. Consequently, the constituent words of this blend are *Frost* and *(o)zone*.

Stratogale,
Stratogale is a super heroine gifted with the superpowers of flight, super strength and the ability to communicate with birds. The name itself is made of words *Stratosphere* (the part of the earth's atmosphere which extends from the top of the troposphere to about 30 kilometres) and *gale* (tempest, blow, wind, glee, joyfulness);

The last example taken from this animated film – *Insuricare* – is the name of the insurance company Bob (Mr. Incredible) worked for, but ultimately got fired from. *Insuricare* contains two constituents – *insurance* and *care*. The funny thing here is that in spite of the name of the company which implies that they take good care of their clients, they do not allow Bob to aid insured customers.

Cartoon: The Simpsons

After switching test papers with Martin, who is the smartest boy in the class, Bart gets the best score – IQ 219. Dr J. Loren Pryor advises Homer and Marge to send Bart to another school where he can employ his potential intelligence. Nevertheless, Lisa is not foolish:
Lisa: I don't care what that stupid test says, Bart. You're a *dimwit*.
Bart: Maybe so, but from now on this *dimwit* is on easy street.
Here *dimwit* is a blend coined from *dim(inish)* and *wit* that Lisa uses to describe Bart's intelligence. A *dimwit* is a stupid or mentally slow person. Along this blend there is another morphological process in progress involving the blend: *dimwit is on easy street* is an idiom which explains that in the future Bart might live very 'easy life'.

After attending a special school for gifted pupils, Burt gets back to his old friends, but he faces enmity:

Bart: Hi, guys. Great to see ya.
Milhouse: Get lost, *Poindexter*.
Bart's Former Friend: Yeah, beat it, Professor.
Bart's Former Friend 2: Why don't you go build a rocket ship, *brainiac*?

In this short dialogue two interesting blends may be found. The first one – *poindexter* – one who looks and acts like a nerd but does not possess the intelligence of a nerd. This blend consists of words *point* (to show, to display, purpose) and *dexter* (skilful, right, proper, favourable, etc.). Besides blending, here, in this particular dialogue, we can also find the process of metonymy. Poindexter is a character in the fictional Felix the Cat Universe. He is the young nephew of the Professor, the arch-nemesis of Felix. Poindexter is depicted as a stereotypical scientist; he is very intelligent and always wears thick glasses, a lab coat, and a mortarboard. The term Poindexter is applied to people who are overly nerdy, geeky or bookish. In the 'Bye Bye Nerdie' episode of The Simpsons, Lisa discovers a pheromone produced by brainy kids that attracts bullies. She dubs her discovery *poindextrose* (*poindexter* and *dextrose*). Homer also frequently refers to Bart's nerdy friend Milhouse as Poindexter. In the last line there is another blend – *brainiac*. Brainiac, which means a highly intelligent person, contains words *brain* and *maniac*.

Boy 1: Hey, what are you talking to her for? She's just gonna say somethin' weird.
Lisa: Not me.
Boy 2: You know I used to think you were some sort of *brainiac* but I guess you're okay.

The last example – *brainiac* - actually shows the negative background of the term, which means that it is used when one wants to be ironic or sarcastic. It seems to be very hard for Lisa to live in a mediocre environment.

There are also other blends found in The Simpsons (Waltonen and Vernay 2010: 165):

Dungeonarium, dungeon + sanitarium (episode MommieBeerest), *craptacular*, *crap + spectacular* (ep. Miracle on Evergreen Terrace), *tomacco*, which represents crossbreeds of two plants *tomato* and *tobacco* (ep. E-I-E-I), *Euroific*, *Euro + terrific* (ep. Bart Carny), *traumedies*, Dr. Hibbert's word for *traumas + comedy* (ep. Faith Off), *retirony*, *retire(ment) + irony*, chief Wiggum expects to be shot just several days before retirement (ep. Homer vs. Dignity) which is ironic, *sacrilicious*, *sacrilegious + delicious*, when Homer sells his soul to devil for a doughnut, *spooktacles*, *spooky + spectacles*, and so on.

The following examples are found in different animated films.

Cartoon: Madagascar
Marty: Oh, I'm gonna be fresh. Straight up the ground. Tasting fresh. *Freshalicious*. Zip lock fresh!
Freshelicious is a blend made of *fresh* and *delicious*. It means something new that is really good or cool.

Cartoon: *Aristocats*

The name of this cartoon is a blend itself: *Aristocracy + cats*. This blend refers to cats from 'the high society' – aristocracy.

Cartoon: Antz

Two drunk scout ants are talking in the worker bar:
Drunk Scout: Have you been to *Insectopia*? Have you?
Insectopia is a blend made of words *insect* and *utopia*. It should represent an imaginary place for insects in which everything is perfect.
Sometimes simple words may be interpreted as blends:

Cartoon: The Simpsons

Lisa wants to know the meaning of the word *Muppet*. Homer is explaining it to her in his own way:
Lisa: Dad, what's a Muppet?
Homer: Well, it's not quite a *mop*, it's not quite a *puppet*, but man…
[laughs hysterically] So to answer your question, I don't know.
Homer suggests that a word *Muppet* maybe a blend, a mixture of two other words – *mop* and *puppet*. His explanation is not valid, but is humorous and shows ingenuity. It is suggested by the Online Etymology Dictionary that the blend contains source words *marionette* and *puppet*.
Two of the major problems of blends are the morphological transparency and the transparency of meaning. Transparency means that a complex word can be semantically interpreted by its constituents and the way these are put together. A transparent word is a modification of the blended items (Ronneberger-Sibold, see in Renner et al. 2012: 118). But even if this is not the case, i.e., if the blended words are contained in the blend in full, morphological transparency is reduced because the hearer and reader cannot automatically rely on the regular models of compounding, as, by definition, these are not observed in a blend. Both elements in the blend must be recognizable if the blend is to be successful (Bauer, see in Renner et al. 2012: 13). Thus we cannot be sure whether a word counts as a blend or not and there is no way of guaranteeing that the description is an accurate one. It is generally accepted in the psycholinguistic literature that recognisability is easier for word beginnings than for word ends.

4.2. Investigation of animated film lexical blends in the COCA

As already stated, the reasons for using the COCA lie in its practicality, since it utilises a large and principled collection of natural texts as the basis for this analysis, it explores how speakers and writers exploit the resources of the language, it studies the actual language used in naturally occurring texts in language corpus, and so on. There are five text categories or sections within the corpus – spoken, newspapers, magazines, academic, and fiction, as seen in Table 2.

In order to interpret Table 2 (The usage of lexical blends in various sections of the COCA), it is necessary to explain the sections in the COCA.
The corpus is evenly divided between five genres: spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic journals. The texts come from a variety of sources. What follows is an explanation of the sections in the COCA given by its author Mark Davies.
- The *Spoken* section contains transcripts of unscripted conversation from more than 150 different TV and radio programs.
- The *Fiction* section contains short stories and plays from literary works, and movie scripts.

- The (Popular) *Magazines* section contains nearly 100 different magazines with a good mix between specific domains (news, health, home, home and gardening, women, financial, religion, sports, etc.).
- The *Newspapers* section contains ten newspapers from across the USA with a good mix between different sections of the newspaper (local news, opinion, sports, financial, etc.)
- The *Academic* (journals) section contains nearly 100 different peer-reviewed journals. These were selected to cover the entire range of the Library of Congress classification system (philosophy, psychology, religion, world history, education, technology, etc.)

Table 2 The usage of lexical blends in various sections of the COCA

Blend	Hits	Section
Poindexter	617	Spoken – 334
		Newspapers – 146
		Fiction – 57
		Magazines – 56
		Academic – 24
Muppet	195	Newspapers – 80
		Spoken – 57
		Magazines – 42
		Fiction – 13
		Academic – 3
Brainiac	56	Magazines – 19
		Fiction – 17
		Spoken – 11
		Newspapers – 6
		Academic - 3
Dimwit	54	Fiction – 37
		Magazines – 8
		Newspapers – 6
		Academic – 2
		Spoken – 1
Insectopia	25	Fiction – 24
		Spoken – 1
Frozone	2	Magazines – 2
Sacrilicious	1	Magazines – 1
Aristocats	1	Fiction – 1
Bomb Voyage	0	0
Craptacular	0	0
Dungeonarium	0	0
Euroific	0	0
Freshalicious	0	0
Incrediboy	0	0
Insuricare	0	0
Poindextrose	0	0
Spooktacles	0	0
Stratogale	0	0
Tomacco	0	0
Traumedies	0	0

Out of twenty lexical blends found in animated films, the following ones occur in the COCA as well – The frequency of *poindexter* – 617 hits, *muppet* – 195, *brainiac* – 56, *dimwit* – 54, *insectopia* – 25, *Frozone* – 2, *sacrilicious* – 1, and Aristocats – 1.

It can be concluded that the blend *poindexter* is the most widely distributed one. The reason for this may be in that the blend *poindexter* was used for the first time in the animated film Felix the Cat back in 1913 and it has been used ever since. It is most frequent in spoken – 334, and least frequent in the 'academic' section – 24.

Muppet is a specific blend whose etymology, according to the Online Etymology Dictionary, goes back to 1972. The name was coined by creator Jim Henson, who said, despite the resemblance to *marionette* and *puppet*, it has no earlier etymology. He just liked the sound. Jim Henson was an American puppeteer, artist, cartoonist, film director and producer who achieved international fame as the creator of *The Muppets*. This blend is most frequent in the newspapers section – 80, and the least in the academic section – 3.

According to Merriam Webster's Etymology Dictionary, *brainiac* dates back to 1982. *Brainiac* was the superintelligent villain in the Action Comics series and its spin-offs. Etymologists think Superman's brainy adversary was probably the inspiration for this term. It is most frequent in the magazine section – 19, and least in the academic section – 3.

The first known use of *dimwit* was in 1921. This word may be problematic for the analysis in the sense that it can easily be a blend or a compound word depending on the source and context it was taken from. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, *dimwit* (or *dim-wit*) is a compound word consisting of *dim* (adjective) and *wit* (noun), which defines a stupid or mentally slow person. *Dimwit* is a fully assimilated word in English lexicon which has derivatives such as *dim-witted* (adjective), *dimwittedly* (adverb), *dim-wittedness* (noun) and so on. This blend is most frequent in fiction – 37, and least in spoken – 1.

All forms of *insectopia* can be found in fiction – 24, except for one example in spoken.

Frozone has 2 hits, both found in magazines.

The blends *Aristocats* and *sacrilicious* only occur once respectively in fiction and magazines.

The other blends cannot be found in the COCA.

Figure 1 presents data for *poindexter*, only from the COCA itself. It contains sufficient data for detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis of the sections this blend is taken from, the frequency of distribution of the blend, the total size of each section shown in millions of words, the frequency of the blend per million words (normalized frequencies), and the tabular frequencies.

SECTION (CLICK FOR SUB-SECTIONS) (SEE ALL SECTIONS AT ONCE)	FREQ	SIZE (M)	PER MIL	CLICK FOR CONTEXT (SEE ALL)
SPOKEN	334	109.4	3.05	
FICTION	57	104.9	0.54	
MAGAZINE	56	110.1	0.51	
NEWSPAPER	146	106.0	1.38	
ACADEMIC	24	103.4	0.23	

Fig. 1 Frequency of *poindexter* in the COCA

The findings from the investigation for the following blends – *poindexter*, *muppet*, *brainiac*, *dimwit*, *insectopia*, *frozone*, *sacrilicious*, and *aristocats* – are illustrated in figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.
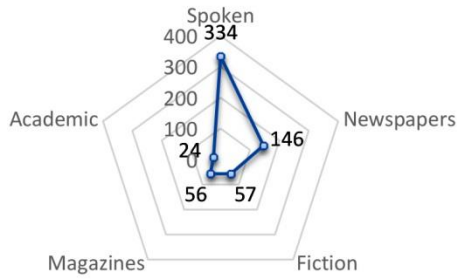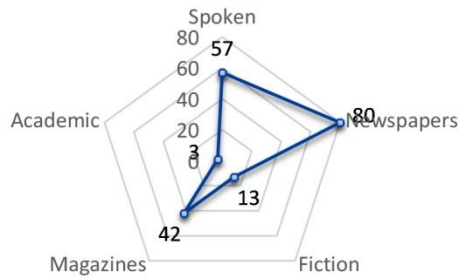
Fig. 2 Blend *Poindexter* in the COCA

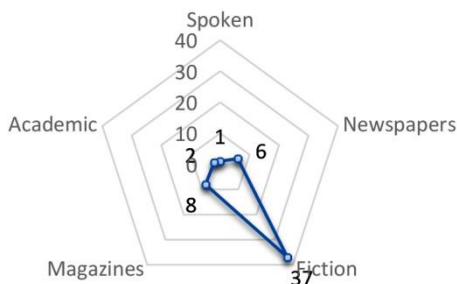
Fig. 3 Blend *Muppet* in the COCA

Fig. 4 Blend *Dimwit* in the COCA
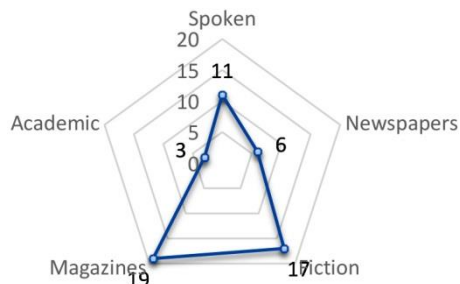

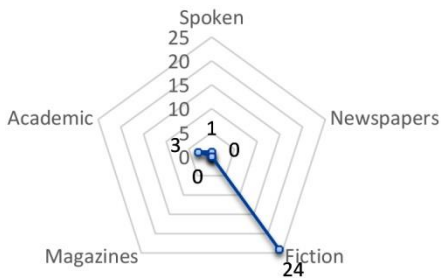**Fig. 5** Blend B*rainiac* in the COCA

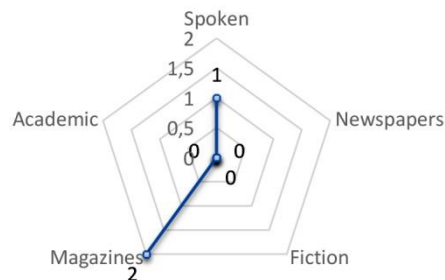**Fig. 6** Blend *Insectopia* in the COCA

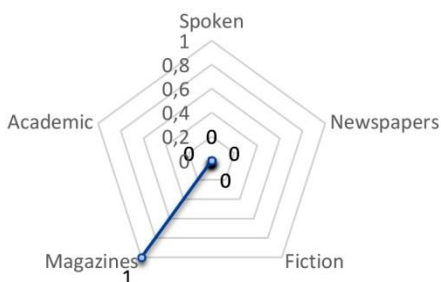**Fig. 7** Blend *Frozone* in the COCA

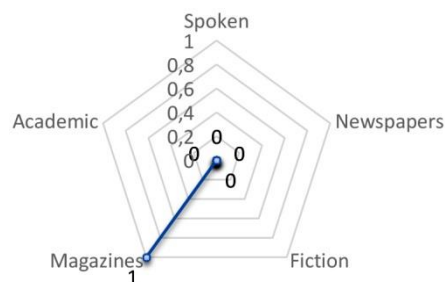

Fig. 8 Blend *Sacrilicious* in the COCA

Fig. 9 Blend *Aristocats* in the COCA

4.3. An investigation of animated film blends in selected dictionaries of contemporary English

Table 3 shows the distribution of blends used in animated films in various selected dictionaries.

Table 3 Distribution of animated film blends in dictionaries

Blend	Oxford d. (online)	Merriam-Webster's	Dictionary. com	Cambridge dictionary	McMillan dictionary	Longman dictionary of Contemporary English
Poindexter	√	X	√	X	X	X
Muppet	√	X	√	√	√	X
Brainiac	√	√	√	X	X	X
Dimwit	√	√	√	√	√	√
Insectopia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Frozone	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sacrilicious	X	X	X	X	X	X
Aristocats	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bomb Voyage	X	X	X	X	X	X
Craptacular	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dungeonarium	X	X	X	X	X	X
Euroific	X	X	X	X	X	X
Freshalicious	X	X	X	X	X	X
Frozone	X	X	X	X	X	X
Incrediboy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Insuricare	X	X	X	X	X	X
Poindextrose	X	X	X	X	X	X
Spooktacles	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stratogale	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tomacco	X	X	X	X	X	X
Traumedies	X	X	X	X	X	X

From the results shown in Table 3 we can conclude that the blends found in the COCA – *poindexter*, *dimwit, brainiac*, and *muppet* also occur in some of the dictionaries. The blends *insectopia, frozone*, *sacrilicious*, and *aristocats*, which occur in the COCA, do not appear in any of the dictionaries. Whereas in the previous part of the research, some of the animated lexical blends are found in the COCA, here, in the contemporary dictionaries, very few of them can be found.

4.4. Frequency of lexical blends in different corpora

Figure 10 shows the frequency of lexical blends in different corpora. Twenty lexical blends found in animated films were cross-checked against the COCA and selected dictionaries of contemporary English in order to find out to what extent they are represented in these corpora. The COCA recognizes 8 blends, and the dictionaries only 4. Figure 10 shows the usage of the lexical blends presented in this study in animated films, but it also reveals that some of those animated film lexical blends are used in English native discourse.
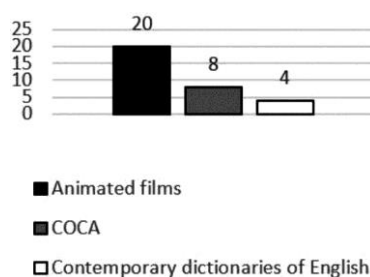

■ Animated films

■ COCA

□ Contemporary dictionaries of English

Fig. 10 Frequency of lexical blends in different corpora relevant to the study

4. CONCLUSION

The goal of the research was fulfilled; a number of examples of lexical blends were found in selected animated films, identified, explained and analysed, and the frequency of their usage was compared to the COCA, a computer-based language, and selected contemporary dictionaries of English.

The semantic analysis in the first part of the research showed that they were used in animated cartoons with informal and colloquial language such as *The Simpsons* or *The Incredibles* with their illustrations of a broad range of linguistic concepts including blends. On the other hand, in *The Aristocats*, Duchess uses an educated type of speech, a 'high society' language style, and consequently, we did not come across any blend forms in it, except for the title of the film itself, since they are not characteristic for this style. Lexical creativity, however, is a matter of degree and the newly formed words differ as to the degree of their acceptability (*craptacular, freshalicious,* and *spooktacles* are highly creative, but hardly acceptable in daily use, which can be seen in Tables 2 and 3).

According to the results of the research, through both the COCA and the dictionaries, the following can be concluded. The general hypothesis was confirmed in the sense that *the English language used in animated films contains lexical blends*. In *Aristocats*, *Antz*, *Felix the Cat*, *Madagascar*, *The Incredibles*, and *The Simpsons*, animated films in which modern language is used, twenty of these linguistic units were found, thus confirming their presence. They were later cross-checked against the corpora. Having them analysed in corpora, it can be concluded that the sub-hypothesis – *English lexical blends in selected animated films are specific only for this register and genre*, *and cannot be found in native discourse* – was partly concluded. This conclusion is based upon the fact that out of 20 animated film lexical blends, 8 were found in the COCA, and only 4 in selected dictionaries. The other blends, 12 of them, are said to be characteristic only for the language of animated films since they do not belong to the corpus and dictionary inventory for several reasons:

- Some of those terms are cartoon characters' names, e.g. in *The Incredibles* – *Incrediboy*, *Bomb Voyage*, *Stratogale*, and *Frozone*. The name of the cartoon itself – *The Incredibles* – is actually a surname of the superpower family members.
- Some of them are ad hoc expressions made for a particular purpose, status or specific need – e.g. *freshalicious*, *euroific*, *insuricare*, *tomacco*, *traumedies*, *aristocats*, *spooktacles*, *dungeonarium*, etc.
- The language of animated films has many layers, different styles and registers, but one prevalent characteristic is its rather informal tone and mode. The background of blends found in dialogues in animated films is their colloquial and humorous use, also sometimes for the purpose of mockery. Words are used loosely, and their meaning is not very strict. That is how the language of cartoons sounds in most films – direct, simple, funny, humorous, offhanded and personal, with colloquial and slang vocabulary.

Future research may be oriented towards studying blends in different genres or registers, from linguistic and sociological aspects.

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ISTRAŽIVANJE BLENDOVA KARAKTERISTIČNIH ZA JEZIK ANIMIRANOG FILMA U IZVORNOM DISKURSU

Predmet istraživanja ovog rada zasniva se na jednom od najznačajnijih morfoloških procesa u engleskom jeziku – slivanju reči. Ciljevi istraživanja jesu proučavanje leksičkih blendova u engleskom jeziku animiranog filma, kao i da se odredi u kojoj meri se koriste, ako uopšte, u različitim jezičkim korpusima.

Promena koja se javlja unutar jezika rezultat je morfološke kreativnosti, stoga podleže proučavanju sa lingvističkog aspekta. Ovo istraživanje predstavlja identifikaciju leksičkih blendova u animiranim filmovima i njihovu morfo-semantičku analizu. Ove lingvističke jedinice uočene u animiranim filmovima su potom istražene u dva različita izvora – tehnološki baziranom jezičkom alatu (COCA) i odabranim rečnicima savremenog engleskog jezika. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da jezik animiranog filma sadrži leksičke blendove, kao i da oni čine deo jezičkog korpusa do nekog stepena.

Ključne reči: *slivanje, leksički blend, animirani film, svakodnevni diskurs, Korpus savremenog američkog engleskog jezika (COCA), rečnici*