Of similarities and differences between English lexical blends in commercial names and newspapers

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This paper explores a number of formal similarities and differences between the two samples of intentional lexical blends in English, namely 100 blends in commercial names and 100 newspaper blends. By conducting qualitative, quantitative as well as statistical analyses, it aims to determine how different (or similar) the blends from the two qualitatively different domains – commercial names and newspapers – are as regards a number of their formal characteristics, namely: (a) blending techniques (based on their relative morphotactic transparency), (b) phonemic, graphemic and phonological similarity between the blend's source words, and (c) phonemic, graphemic and phonological similarity between each source word and the blend. Contour blending emerges as the most frequent technique in both domains, but commercial names favor morphotactically less transparent types (e.g., fragment and semi-complete blending), whereas newspaper blends prefer transparent strategies such as complete blends and overlapping structures. Hyphenation is notably more common in newspaper blends, likely to increase source word recognizability. Statistical analyses reveal that in both domains, source words are significantly more similar phonemically than graphemically, both to each other and to the resulting blend. While the difference in phonemic versus graphemic similarity between the two source words is more pronounced in commercial names, this difference between each individual source word and the blend is stronger in newspaper blends. Phonological analysis shows that blends tend to be longer than the first source word and typically match the second source word in syllabic length, with this tendency being more pronounced in newspaper blends. Stress pattern data reveal a strong cross-domain preference for the blend to inherit its primary stress from the second source word, again more prominently in the newspaper sample.

Keywords: *lexical blends*, *English*, *commercial names*, *newspapers*, *blending techniques*, *morphotactic transparency*, *phonemic similarity, graphemic similarity, phonological similarity*.

1 Introduction

In present-day English, lexical blends – i.e., forms such as *noctourism* 'tourist activities that are designed to take place at night' ← **noct**urnal × **t**ourism, *greenager* 'a teenager who is interested in green issues and takes part in activities that aim to help the environment' ← **green** × t**eenager**, or *techquity* 'the use of technology to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to access adequate healthcare, for example by ensuring resources are distributed fairly' ← **tech** × **equity** (Cambridge Dictionary blog) – in which "two or more words are merged into one so that the blended constituents are either clipped, or partially overlap" (Beliaeva 2019: n.p.), are virtually everywhere, from advertising and online communication to newspapers, science, arts, and literature. "The visual and audial amalgamation in blends is [normally] reflected on the semantic level" (Beliaeva 2019: n.p.), as evidenced by the above examples. These innovative formations exemplify how lexical creativity is increasingly shaping the contemporary English lexicon.

Given their ubiquity across such a wide range of communicative contexts, lexical blends have become increasingly prevalent in contemporary discourse. This growth coincides with broader societal processes such as democratization, liberalization, and globalization, which have fostered greater political, economic, artistic, and also linguistic freedom. Within such a sociolinguistic context, playful and creative forms of expression have gained visibility, and lexical blending has emerged as a particularly vivid manifestation of this trend. Often characterized by their non-concatenative structure and segmental overlap, blends represent a marked deviation from traditional word-formation processes in English. Their rising frequency in both formal and informal registers suggests that lexical creativity is no longer confined to specific domains or professional groups, but is now a widespread aspect of everyday language use.

Among the many areas where blends have become especially prevalent, advertising and newspapers – particularly newspaper headlines – have received significant scholarly attention as especially fertile grounds for their emergence (Pound 1914; Adams 1973; Bryant 1974; Lehrer 2007; Mattiello 2013; 2019; Danilović Jeremić & Josijević 2019a). These domains lend themselves to the playful and relatively unconstrained manipulation of lexical norms, with tabloids in particular acting as "lexical trendsetters" (Balteiro 2022). The most commonly cited reason for the abundance of blends in these contexts is their "attention-catching quality" (Adams 1973: 159; Baldi & Dawar 2000: 967; Lehrer 2007: 128; Ronneberger-Sibold 2010: 206–207; López Rúa 2012: 23), which aligns with the communicative intentions of both advertising and headline writing.

Even though a great many research studies have analyzed and discussed formal and/or semantic characteristics of intentional English blends – including examples from advertising and newspapers (e.g., Danilović Jeremić & Josijević 2019a; 2019b; Balteiro 2022) – to our knowledge, no study has been entirely devoted to systematically comparing formal and/or semantic features of English blends across these (or other) communicative domains. Some earlier works have, however, focused on identifying and describing characteristic features of English blends from particular domains (e.g., newspapers, online or electronic communication, literature, arts) (e.g., López Rúa 2005; 2007; Balteiro 2022), or their subdomains (e.g., cartoons or TV series for children, sitcoms, video games, alternative music, etc.) (e.g., López Rúa 2010; 2012; 2019; Balteiro 2013; Renwick & Renner 2019; Danilović Jeremić 2021). One relevant study focusing on a language other than English is Ronneberger-Sibold (2006), which compares satirical and brand name blends in German.[1]

Given the notable lack of empirical evidence as regards the similarities and differences between blends coming from qualitatively different samples of blends, the overall aim of this paper is to compare a few structural aspects of English blends from commercial names (i.e., trade names and brand names, as defined in Baldi & Dawar 2000: 966–967) and newspapers. Although, as previously mentioned, both these domains primarily tend to attract the attention of as many consumers or readers as possible, by exploiting a wide variety of linguistic means (e.g., wordplay, brevity) and non-linguistic means (e.g., distinctive spelling, typography, font size or color, and the use of symbols or visual markers – including graphological features such as *bicapitalization*; see Crystal 2001), they also differ in the requirements regarding the relative morphotactic and morphosemantic transparency of lexical forms they use. For instance, branding agencies aim to produce the names for companies or their products that not only stand

[1] It is also worth mentioning that the paper on German blends by Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) and the results obtained therein served as a motivation for the present research into English blends.

out in the market, since it is nowadays "not products that are sold but names", but are also unique enough to be registered in the first place (Piller 2001: 189–190; cf. also Robertson 1989: 61–63; Baldi & Dawar 2000: 967; Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 166). Accordingly, "the formation of brand names is […] subject to legal and marketing, ie [sic] social demands in more obvious ways than word formation in many other fields" (Piller 2001: 189). Closely related to this characteristic of commercial names is their memorability, since "the name that is different attracts attention and thus increases the probability of further cognitive processes which lead to long-term memory" (Robertson 1989: 62–63). In addition, desirable brand name characteristics include its (relative) shortness as well as the ease of pronunciation, since it is normally much easier to encode shorter and more easily pronounceable words in memory. This is yet another reason why some of the blending techniques, such as fragment blending (see §3 below), may be preferred over the others in the creation of commercial names. In comparison with newspapers where the length of linguistic forms is not of critical importance (as evidenced by some examples of the blends from our data – *skin-tervention*, *unbe-leaf-ably*, *Brextramarital*, *Coronaspiracy*, *Coronamencement*), commercial names are preferably shorter forms (e.g., acronyms, initialisms, etc.) (cf. Baldi & Dawar 2000: 966). Here are some examples of the blends from our sample of commercial names, such as *Chuice*®, *Kranch*, *PeaTos*®, *Zevia*®, and *Vrimp*, that testify to this preference.

On the other hand, in "literary" blends which can also include examples from journalistic sources (cf. Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 165, 175), there are no such (non-)linguistic pressures because the success of what is being communicated to the audience by means of, for example, new complex words like blends crucially depends on their intelligibility (Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 155) or, more specifically, their greater morphotactic and morphosemantic transparency (Balteiro 2022: 2).[2] It is probably for this same reason that there are normally no foreign words in (English) newspaper blends, in contrast to commercial names where such exotic words are even advantageous (cf. also Praninskas 1968: 15). Blends from journalistic sources are usually created in such a way that "one constituent echoes in some way the word or word-fragment it replaces" (Adams 1973: 150), thus producing a punning effect, as in *icecapade*, echoing *escapade* "[Evening Standard 3 October 1962, 15/6]" or *scrollduggery*, echoing *skullduggery* [Observer 13 November 1966, Magazine 19/3–4], as cited in Adams (1973: 150). In Balteiro's words (2022: 2, see also references cited therein), newspaper blends are normally intended to be witty and playful, especially the ones that appear in newspaper headlines.

Given the essentially different requirements of the two domains as regards relative morphotactic (and morphosemantic) transparency, the research question this paper aims to answer is: How different (or similar) are intentional English blends from commercial names and newspapers regarding some of their structural aspects?

To answer this research question, we analyzed and compared:

(a) the distribution of different blending techniques in the two samples of blends,

(b) graphemic and phonemic similarities between the blend's source words (SWs) as well as between each source word and the blend in commercial names with the graphemic and phonemic similarities in newspaper blends, and

[2] She (Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 175) concluded that "[i]n the 'literary corpus', the most transparent technique, i.e., complete blending, is vastly preferred over all other types, whereas in the brand names, the main emphasis is on techniques yielding medium or no transparency in almost equal proportions".

(c) phonological similarity (in terms of syllable number and stress pattern) between the blend's source words as well as between each source word and the blend itself, across two domains: commercial names and newspapers.

The paper is subdivided into five main sections. Section 2 discusses a theoretical background for functionally describing and explaining intentional lexical blends. In Section 3, the nature of the data used in the research as well as different methods of blend analysis are dealt with in more depth. Section 4 is entirely dedicated to the analysis and discussion of the results of the research, while Section 5 concludes the paper with a synthesis of the key findings and directions for future research.

2 Lexical blends: A theoretical background

Out of all the theoretical approaches to lexical blending, which is "generally [still] considered a marginal process of word formation" (Renner 2023: 251), extra-grammatical morphology (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994, as referred to in Mattiello 2013: 1; Dressler 2000) seems to be the most appropriate theoretical approach to functionally describing and explaining the nature of lexical blends.[3] Accordingly, in this research study, we will use Dressler's (2000) concept of extra-grammatical morphological operations (EMOs), which violate a number of morphological rules or "basic properties of morphological grammar" (Dressler 2000: 3), "as the background of a functional description and explanation of blending" (Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 160). Against this theoretical background, in the rest of this section, we will try to give a more detailed view of the nature of blending as an extra-grammatical phenomenon.

Drawing on Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi's (1994, as referred to in Mattiello 2013: 1) distinction between morphological grammar and extra-grammatical morphology, i.e., the distinction between morphological rules and extra-grammatical morphological operations, Dressler (2000) divided morphology into three components: prototypical grammatical morphology, marginal grammatical morphology and extra-grammatical morphology, which is the "antonym of morphological grammar" (Dressler 2000: 1). Based on this tripartite division, "the morphotactic devices for forming blends are also much less regular than those of grammatical compound formation, i.e. their final segmental make-up is often unpredictable, there are merely preferences" (Dressler 2000: 5, see also Mattiello 2013: 29). Similarly, but also more elaborately, Mattiello (2013: 1) defines extra-grammatical phenomena as "a set of heterogeneous formations (of an analogical or rule-like nature) which do not belong to morphological grammar, in that the processes through which they are obtained are not clearly identifiable and their input does not allow a prediction of a regular output". However, as Mattiello (2013) rightly argues, this does not necessarily imply that blends (or any other extra-grammatical phenomena, for that matter) are without their regularities or tendencies. Although the general nature of these regularities or tendencies is not comparable to that of morphological or word-formation rules, they are still indicative of some degree of predictability (Mattiello 2013: 39) – particularly in the formal aspects of blends. This partial predictability, as Mattiello (2013: 39) refers to it, also manifests itself in different types of similarity between blends and their source words (primarily the second source word), such as phonological similarity (i.e., prosodic structure) (e.g., Arndt-Lappe & Plag 2013) or phonemic and graphemic similarity

[3] But cf., for example, Bat-El (2000) or Plag (2003) for a completely different approach to blends, which they consider to be perfectly grammatical formations.

(e.g., Gries 2004a; 2004b; 2004c). In her study on extra-grammatical morphology in English, Mattiello (2013: 32–39) also details a number of criteria that can be used to relatively easily distinguish blends and other extra-grammatical phenomena from the products of marginal morphology and those of regular morphology.

Last but not least, it must be noted that, unlike Dressler (2000: 5), the term *blend* in this paper is not restricted to paradigmatic structures such as *greenager* (whose source words are in a paradigmatic relation), but also includes examples such as *nocturism*, whose source words are syntagmatically related. Pursuing a similar line of reasoning as Mattiello (2013: 71–72, 113), we see no reason why examples whose source words do not constitute a compound, i.e., which have independent meanings, should be excluded from the category of blends.

3 Data and methods

In the Introduction, we touched upon the nature of the data to be analyzed in this paper, also explaining that the choice of commercial names and newspaper blends was influenced by an ever-increasing number of products of intentional blending in these two domains and their different requirements as regards blends' relative morphotactic transparency.

The dataset used in this study consists of 100 commercial name blends and 100 newspaper blends, selected non-systematically from the collection presented in Tomić (2023).[4] This doctoral dissertation was chosen as the primary source because it contains a large collection of English lexical blends (400 examples in total), organized into four registers (or domains): advertising, newspapers, online communication, and arts and literature, with 100 blends in each. At the time of compilation, most of these examples appeared to be undocumented in published research (Tomić 2023: 90). The dataset reflects years of systematic collection and enables structured cross-register comparison – a feature that is relatively uncommon in previous studies on English blends. These qualities made it a particularly suitable starting point for compiling a diverse and representative dataset for the present analysis.

Specifically, 54 commercial names were taken directly from Tomić (2023), while 46 new examples of commercial names were collected by searching different corporate websites (see Sources). The reason for this distribution (rather than a 50–50 distribution) is methodological: while Tomić (2023) originally contained 100 items labeled "advertising blends", 46 of them had been coined not as proper brand or product names, but rather as parts of advertising slogans or for use in social media posts. Since these examples did not function as proper commercial names, they were excluded and replaced with actual commercial name blends to ensure consistency in the dataset. Accordingly, to maintain the original size of 100 items, 46 new commercial name blends were collected.

The process of collecting these 46 new items involved online searches of corporate websites. This task was performed by the author, given the methodological need to ensure consistency in the identification of what constitutes a lexical blend. As there is no universally agreed-upon definition of a blend, and the status of many candidates can be debated, it was necessary for the same researcher who adopted the working definition of a blend for this study to conduct the selection. The identification process involved not only formal criteria (such as segment overlap or clipping) but also a functional evaluation, i.e., whether the item was actually used as a commercial name. While this method improves the internal consistency of

[4] The full list of 200 blends and their respective source words analyzed in this study is available in the Appendix.

the dataset, it is acknowledged that it limits reproducibility. It is also worth noting that the country of origin of a commercial name was considered irrelevant in the process of data collection.

As for the dataset of newspaper blends, 91 examples were taken from Tomić (2023), while the remaining examples were collected from the online editions of, mostly, British tabloids, such as *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail* (see Sources). These examples were also selected non-systematically, but with an effort to represent a variety of structural types. Nine examples from the original collection were replaced in order to ensure that all blends in this sample were sourced specifically from newspapers, rather than magazines or other media.

An additional criterion applied to both datasets was recency: the majority of the selected blends were coined in the 21st century. However, a few older (from the 20th century) or defunct commercial names were also included, particularly when the form of the blend was revealing. The lexical status of the blends was also checked against current entries in major online English dictionaries (i.e., *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Merriam Webster*, *Cambridge Dictionary*, *Collins Dictionary*). As of September 2025, none of the 21st-century blends in the dataset are listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster*, or the *Cambridge Dictionary*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* includes four older blends coined in the 20th century – *Vegemite*, *Clamato*, *Mochaccino*, and *Thinsulate*. In contrast, *Merriam-Webster* does not list any of the 100 commercial names. The *Cambridge Dictionary* includes only *Vegemite*, while the *Collins Dictionary* lists *Vegemite*, *Thinsulate*, and the 21st-century blend *Broga*, with *Mochaccino* still under consideration as a "New Word Suggestion". These findings suggest that even long-term commercial blends are only inconsistently lexicalized across dictionaries, and that most of them remain unrecognized by standard dictionaries. Four additional newspaper blends – *wackaging* 'refers to the increasingly overly familiar, infantilized copy that's become ubiquitous ever since 'Innocent' adopted a wacky and distinctive tone of voice on their packaging in 2000', *shrobing* 'wearing one's coat as a cape or draped off the shoulder', *felfie* 'farmers taking selfies along with their livestock in a parody of selfies', and *locktail* 'a cocktail invented or enjoyed during lockdown' – appear in the *Collins Dictionary* as "New Word Suggestions", indicating they are being monitored for evidence of usage, but have not yet reached full lexical entry.[5] This supports the classification of the dataset as consisting primarily of emergent, non-standard formations, aligning with the study's focus on the innovative and experimental nature of blending.

All 200 blends were first subjected to a detailed qualitative analysis, which consisted of identifying the blending technique and overlapping segments, as well as determining the stress patterns of the new examples of blends. In identifying the blending technique, we used the typology of German blends based on their morphotactic (and morphosemantic) transparency developed by Ronneberger-Sibold (2006: 168–169) and complemented by Tomić (2023). Ronneberger-Sibold's (2006) blending techniques included COMPLETE BLENDING, CONTOUR BLENDING, SEMI-COMPLETE BLENDING and FRAGMENT BLENDING.[6] In complete blending, "two lexemes are juxtaposed as in a compound, but the end of the first overlaps with the beginning of the second" (Ronneberger-Sibold 2012: 119). Contour blending usually involves inserting one (normally) full word into the matrix word, which, although not complete, "can be traced […] by several phonological features of high importance for its recoverability" such as its number of syllables or the position of the primary stress (Ronneberger-Sibold 2012: 121). In

[5] Definitions for *wackaging*, *shrobing*, *locktail*, and *felfie* are taken from the *Collins Dictionary* (https://www.collinsdictionary.com), accessed September 2025.

[6] For more detailed information about each blend type, see Ronneberger-Sibold (2006: 167–175).

semi-complete blending, "one word is contained in full, the other only in fragments, but, unlike the matrix word of a contour blend, the reduced word does not provide the contour and often not even the rhyme of the blend" (Ronneberger-Sibold 2012: 124). Finally, fragments of the source words are blended to produce a fragment blend (Ronneberger-Sibold 2012: 124). According to Ronneberger-Sibold (2012: 124), fragment blending "is mostly used for the deliberate creation of pseudo-exoticisms characterized by their typical foreign sound shape". As previously mentioned, this typology was complemented by Tomić (2023), in that a new subtechnique of complete blending (namely, SUPERIMPOSED BLENDING) was added. Superimposed blending involved superimposing one full source word over the other (e.g., *Coronaspiracy* ← **co**r**o**n**a** × **con**s**piracy**).

The identification of segment overlapping was determined both for graphemes and phonemes of the two source words. An analysis of overlapping was not limited to word-medial segments (as happens to be the case with many research studies), but included all overlapping segments in the blend, i.e., discontinuous overlaps, as well as word-initial and word-final ones, since word-medial overlapping is a rather narrow understanding of similarity between the two words (Gries 2004b: 207, 213; 2004c: 653; cf. also Renner 2023: 252).

The stress pattern of the blend was determined by identifying the placement of the primary stress only, following the rules in Renner & Lalić-Krstin (2011). Secondary stress was not considered in the analysis, as the primary aim was to detect alignment with the main prosodic prominence of the source words. In the case of some specific blend types, namely contour blends, it was determined with the help of a number of native English speakers. In case of disagreement among the speakers as to how a blend should be pronounced, the pronunciation produced by the majority of the speakers was taken into consideration. The pronunciation of the source words of the new 55 blends was checked in the *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (Wells 2000), as was the case with the source words of the blends presented in Tomić (2023).

In addition to the phonological analysis, a quantitative investigation was conducted to examine the formal similarity both between the source words themselves and between each blend and its respective source words. As part of the quantitative analysis, (average) Levenshtein distance (LD) was calculated for the blends and their source words. Levenshtein distance represents a metric for measuring the difference between two strings. It is "[t]he smallest number of insertions, deletions, and substitutions required to change one string […] into another" (Dictionary of Algorithms and Data Structures).[7] A lower Levenshtein distance implies a higher similarity between the two strings. Additionally, the quantitative analysis involved determining the number of syllables in the blends and their source words, as well as the frequency distribution of different blend groups. These groups were formed on the basis of a number of structural parameters (e.g., the relation between the source words or between the source word and the blend based on the number of syllables, etc.).

In addition to the above qualitative and quantitative analyses, we also conducted a statistical analysis of a number of formal characteristics of blends to see if the observed tendencies (if any) are actually statistically significant or are due to chance alone. For the sake of clarity, the statistical tests such as the Chi-square for goodness-of-fit test (Pearson 1900) and Wilcoxon signed-rank test (Wilcoxon 1945), as well as the corresponding effect size measures used in the statistical analyses will be elaborated in the relevant subsections of Section 4 below.

[7] The algorithm has already been used by Gries (2012) in his investigations of graphemic, phonemic and phonological similarities. More precisely, Gries (2012) focused on comparing intentional and non-intentional (or (authentic) speech-error) blends in English with respect to different types of similarity, or on comparing intentional blends and random word pairs.

All statistical tests and effect size calculations were performed in R (version 4.4.3) (The R Project), specifically in the RStudio integrated development environment, using only base R functions from the `stats` package (version 4.4.3). To ensure reproducibility, the computational environment, including all package versions, was documented using the `devtools` (version 2.4.5) and `sessioninfo` (version 1.2.3) packages. A complete list of package versions is available in the supplementary file submitted together with this paper.

Finally, a close comparative analysis of the statistical results in the two datasets was conducted to identify the similarities and differences between the blends in commercial names and newspapers and, consequently, gain a better understanding of the structural tendencies (if any) of blends in the two qualitatively different samples.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 *Frequency distributions of the blending techniques in the two samples of blends*

With the aim of determining possible tendencies or regularities in the frequency distribution of the blending techniques (following Ronneberger-Sibold's (2006) typology of blends, supplemented with one additional blending technique) in the two samples – commercial names and newspaper blends, a quantitative analysis of the blending techniques was carried out first. As shown in Table 1, contour blending is the most frequent blending technique in both corpora, occurring in 44 commercial names (e.g., *shampure*™) and 47 newspaper blends (e.g., *hu-moan-ity*). Fragment blending, by contrast, is marginal in both samples, with only eight instances in commercial names (e.g., *ficoco*™) and one in newspapers (e.g., *Coronopticon*). The key difference lies in the second-most common technique: in commercial names, semi-complete blending (37 instances, e.g., *Ketchili*) is more than three times as frequent as complete blending (11 instances, e.g., *rawsome*); whereas in newspapers, complete blending (44 instances, e.g., *gin-tuition*, *ink-redible*) occurs more than five times as often as semi-complete blending (8 instances, e.g., *locktober*).

This contrast suggests that, while both domains strongly favour contour blending, they differ markedly in their secondary blending preferences – possibly reflecting differences in communicative intentions between commercial branding and journalistic wordplay.

Table 1: Frequency distributions of different blending techniques in the two samples of blends

	Complete blending	Contour blending	Semi-complete blending	Fragment blending
Commercial names	11	44	37	8
Newspapers	44	47	8	1

The frequencies of the blending techniques in our data of commercial names are not compatible with the tendencies observed in Danilović Jeremić & Josijević (2019a: 8–11), who analyzed 602 English blends in brand names and trademarks collected from Thurner's (1993) *Portmanteau Dictionary: Blend Words in the English Language, Including Trademarks and Brand Names*. Specifically, they report that the blends they analyzed are predominantly formed

by telescope blending (309 examples).[8] Danilović Jeremić & Josijević's (2019a: 9) findings further suggest that morphotactic transparency of the blends in trademarks and brand names which date from the 1990s was of supreme importance (cf. also Praninskas 1968 for similar findings, as reported in Danilović Jeremić & Josijević's 2019a: 9). However, similarly to our data, as little as 8% of the blends in their dataset are products of what Ronneberger-Sibold (2006) refers to as fragment blending in her typology. Another similarity we find between the two datasets is that semi-complete blends are the second most frequent type of blends – 35% in Danilović Jeremić & Josijević's (2019a) dataset and 37% in our dataset. Contour and superimposed blends, or in Danilović Jeremić & Josijević's (2019a: 9) terminology – the "intercalative blends", were practically non-existent in their data (less than 1%).

There seems to be more compatibility between our results and those of Bryant (1974), although Bryant's and our blends also come from rather different time periods. Even though she does not elaborate the results of her analysis of blends in trademarks, a closer look at her examples of 63 trademarks (excluding the eight examples whose one constituent is a combining form) suggests that the great majority of them are characterized by medium to no morphotactic transparency, that is, that they closely correspond to the products of, in Ronneberger-Sibold's (2006) terminology, either semi-complete blending (31 examples) (e.g., *Diamonair*, *Lumist*, *Permacrease*) or fragment blending (e.g., *Cineversal*, *Exercycle*, *Plenamin*) (17 examples).

Our findings are also partially in line with the results obtained by Ronneberger-Sibold (2006: 175, see the figure therein) for German blends in the satirical corpus, where "the most transparent technique, i.e., complete blending, is vastly preferred over all other types", and the brand name corpus, in which "the main emphasis is on techniques yielding medium or no transparency in almost equal proportions".

However, the tendencies observed herein agree with the above-mentioned requirements for commercial names to be morphotactically less transparent, as well as relatively short, and for newspaper blends to be, above all, relatively transparent, which is normally achieved by the techniques whose outputs are characterized by complete or medium transparency, such as complete or contour blending.

Further, out of the three subtypes of complete blends, inclusive blends are least productive in the sample of commercial names, which is unsurprising, considering the fact that in this type one source word "includes the other(s) as part of its sound chain", which is, normally, "only revealed by the orthography of the blend" (Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 167) and consequently not a desirable name for a company or a product that aims to be distinguished in the market by its name, too. Here are some examples of inclusive blends from our sample of commercial names – *HURRAW!*® /hə.ˈrɔː/ ← hurrah /hə.ˈrɔː/ × raw /rɔː/ and *YipPEA!*™ /jɪ.ˈpiː/ ← yippee /jɪ.ˈpiː/ × pea /piː/. On the other hand, out of 44 complete blends in the newspaper sample, the most productive subtype (17 examples) is indeed inclusive blends (e.g., *brew-tal* /ˈbruː.təl/ ← brew /bruː/ × brutal /ˈbruː.təl/, *eye-dea* /aɪ.ˈdɪə/ ← eye /aɪ/ × idea /aɪ.ˈdɪə/, *loo-dicrous* /ˈluː.dɪ.krəs/ ← loo /luː/ × ludicrous /ˈluː.dɪ.krəs/, or *repli-kate* /ˈrep.lɪ.keɪt/ ← replicate /ˈrep.lɪ.keɪt/ × Kate /keɪt/ (Middleton)), since in newspapers it is much more important that the blend is relatively transparent and therefore intelligible for its readers (cf. Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: passim). What can also be observed with regard to the inclusive blends in our sample of newspaper blends is their extensive use of a hyphen. Namely,

[8] Note, however, that Danilović Jeremić & Josijević (2019a) did not use Ronneberger-Sibold's typology of blends, although most of the patterns they used in their classification of blends have their counterparts in Ronneberger-Sibold's typology of blends.

it is used in all 17 newspaper examples, most probably to further facilitate their understanding. The tendency towards using a hyphen is also observed for other types of newspaper blends, which is evidenced by as many as 46 such examples in the analyzed dataset. Contrary to this, as few as five hyphenated examples of blends are attested in the sample of commercial names. Interestingly enough, in Danilović Jeremić & Josijević's (2019a: 10) dataset of trademarks and brand names, hyphenated blends were also conspicuously absent.

While this analysis focuses on written data, it is worth noting that, in spoken language, speakers have other means at their disposal to achieve effects similar to those of the hyphen. Prosodic features such as pauses, pitch modulation, changes in tone (e.g., from fall to high-fall), and variations in volume can all be used to emphasize the way blends are uttered. These strategies can help clarify structure and meaning in ways parallel to visual punctuation in writing.

In order to determine whether the observed differences in the frequency distributions of the four blending techniques in the two qualitatively different samples of blends are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit was performed using R version 4.4.3. This statistical hypothesis test evaluates whether a random sample is representative of the whole population. The null hypothesis assumes that there is no significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies. Accordingly, all expected proportions are 0.25. The alternative hypothesis assumes that there is a significant difference between the observed and expected values, and that it is due to the specific morphotactic transparency requirements of the domain in question. To ensure reproducibility, the analyses were conducted using R's built-in `chisq.test()` function from the base `stats` package, and the computational environment (including R and package versions) was documented using the `devtools` (v2.4.5) and `sessioninfo` (v1.2.3) packages.

Table 2: Results of the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit in the two samples of blends

	Results
Commercial names	$\chi^2 = 39.6$, df = 3, *p*-value = 1.295e-08
Newspaper blends	$\chi^2 = 68.4$, df = 3, *p*-value = 9.393e-15

As can be seen from Table 2 above, both results are significant at $p < 0.05$. Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, it can be concluded that, with the exception of the technique of contour blending, which seems to be used to a similar extent in both samples:

(a) the significantly higher frequency of morphotactically transparent techniques (i.e., complete blending) in newspaper blends indicates a systematic preference in this domain, whereas

(b) the significantly greater use of less transparent or non-transparent techniques (i.e., semi-complete or fragment blending) in commercial names suggests a distinct pattern of blending in this domain.

To determine the importance of the obtained results, we additionally calculated the effect size for the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit, i.e., the Cramér's V measure of effect size (Cohen 1988), and summarized it in Table 3.[9] The effect size was computed manually based on the Chi-square statistic, total sample size, and number of categories, using the formula $V = \chi 2/n(k-1)$. All calculations were performed in base R (version 4.4.3) using built-in functions, without relying on external packages. In the sample of commercial names, the Cramér's V was 0.36, while in the newspaper blend sample it was 0.48; both values represent large effect sizes according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines. This indicates a strong association between blending technique and domain.

Table 3: Summary of Chi-square test results and effect sizes (Cramér's V) for the distribution of blending techniques across the two samples

	χ^2	df	*p*-value	Cramér's V	Effect size interpretation
Commercial names	39.6	3	1.295e-08	0.36	Medium-to-large
Newspaper blends	68.4	3	9.393e-15	0.48	Large

Since the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit test is significant for both samples, a post-hoc analysis was conducted to determine which of the observed values differ from their expected proportions. One way of doing this is to analyze the standardized residuals from the chi-square analysis (Mangiafico 2016: 574). "Cells with a standardized residual whose absolute value is greater than 1.96 indicate a cell differing from theoretical proportions" (Mangiafico 2016: 574). In the case of commercial names, the cells with standardized residuals whose absolute value is greater than 1.96 are all four blending techniques (complete blending -3.233162, contour blending 4.387862, semi-complete blending 2.771281, fragment blending -3.925982). Similarly, in newspaper blends, the cells with standardized residuals whose absolute value is greater than 1.96 are all four blending techniques (complete blending 4.387862, contour blending 5.080682, semi-complete blending -3.925982, fragment blending -5.542563), which implies that the observed values in these cells differ from their theoretical proportions.

The tendency towards greater morphotactic transparency in newspaper blends is further supported by the significantly larger number of overlapping blends (in relation to non-overlapping ones) in the newspaper sample, compared to the commercial name sample (Table 4). Overlapping blends are examples in which the source words share vowels, consonants, or even whole syllables, "with or without a proper shortening" (Mattiello 2013: 121). It is therefore believed that overlapping increases the transparency of the resulting blend (see, e.g., Ronneberger-Sibold 2006: 168–169). According to Mattiello (2013: 121), the source words may overlap both graphemically and phonemically, "with no other shortening", as in complete-telescope blends where the final fragment of the first source word (SW1) overlaps with the initial fragment of the second source word (SW2). Overlapping can also be partial, in that the segments which overlap are either graphemes or phonemes.

[9] Although this effect size was originally intended for Chi-square tests of independence, it can also be used for Chi-square tests for goodness-of-fit (Mangiafico 2016: 572–573). In the case of the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit, the degree of freedom is equal to the number of categories minus one.

Table 4: Frequency distributions of (non-)overlapping blends in the two samples of blends

	Overlapping blends	Non-overlapping blends
Commercial names	72	28
Newspapers	94	6

As can be seen in Table 4, despite the fact that in both samples overlapping blends are far more frequent than non-overlapping ones and that both these frequency distributions are determined to be statistically significant by the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit (for commercial name blends – $\chi^2 = 19.36$, df = 1, *p*-value = 1.083e-05; for newspaper blends – $\chi^2 = 77.44$, df = 1, *p*-value = 2.2e-16), the effect size (Cramér's V) for newspaper blends is 0.88, indicating a large effect (Cohen 1988)), which is twice that for commercial names (V = 0.44, indicating a medium effect), strongly suggests that overlapping more frequently occurs in newspaper blends than in commercial names.

The post-hoc analysis of standardized residuals was also conducted here. For commercial names, the cells with standardized residuals whose absolute value is greater than 1.96 are 4.4. for overlapping blends and -4.4 for non-overlapping blends, which implies the observed values in these cells differ from their theoretical proportions. For newspaper blends, the cells with standardized residuals whose absolute value is greater than 1.96 are 8.8 for overlapping blends and -8.8 for non-overlapping blend, implying that the observed values in these cells differ from their theoretical proportions, too.

4.2 *Graphemic and phonemic similarity*

4.2.1 *Graphemic and phonemic similarity between the source words of commercial names and newspaper blends*

In this subsection, the results of quantitative, statistical, as well as comparative analyses of intentional English blends in commercial names and newspapers as regards the graphemic and phonemic similarity between their source words, as well as between the individual source words and the blend are presented and discussed. Table 5 below details the results of the average Levenshtein distance between the graphemes and phonemes of the two source words of blends in commercial names and newspapers, both on the graphemic and phonemic levels. Under this quantitative analysis, the source words of blends in commercial names and newspapers seem to be, on average, phonemically more similar to one another than graphemically.

The only other relevant data we can actually compare our results to are those obtained by Gries (2004a), although it must be noted that Gries's focus was intentional English blends in general and, more importantly, that he used different word similarity indices, namely Dice and X Dice coefficients.[10] Specifically, our results are not compatible with those of Gries, since the source words of the blends in his research "exhibit more graphemic than phonemic similarity" (2004a: 420), although the effect size is rather small.

[10] According to Gries (2012: 150), these two are less sophisticated measures of distance than Levenshtein distance.

Table 5: Average Levenshtein distance between the source words of blends in commercial names and newspapers

	Average LD between SWs – graphemes	Average LD between SWs – phonemes
Commercial names	6.76	6.17
Newspapers	6.87	6.22

To statistically test for the significance of the observed differences in the Levenshtein distance between the blend's source words on the graphemic and phonemic levels in each sample, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was performed. This nonparametric test is used to compare two related samples and was implemented using the `wilcox.test()` function with the `paired = TRUE` argument from base R's `stats` package (version 4.4.3) (R version 4.4.3). The null hypothesis assumes no difference between graphemic and phonemic similarity within blends, while the alternative hypothesis assumes a difference between the two. As no external packages were required for the analysis, the procedure is fully reproducible using base R.

As to commercial names, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test (V = 1817.5) gives a *p*-value of < 0.00001, indicating a statistically significant difference in the similarity between the source words of blends in commercial names on the graphemic and phonemic levels. We can thus reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the level of phonemic and graphemic similarity differs significantly in this sample. The effect size for the Wilcoxon signed-rank test – the so-called rank-biserial correlation – is 0.20, which indicates a medium effect (Funder & Ozer, 2019). Since Levenshtein distance measures dissimilarity, this result suggests a moderate tendency for the source words in commercial blends to be more similar phonemically than graphemically.

Similarly, for newspaper blends, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test (V = 1869, $p < .000001$) reveals a statistically significant difference in the similarity between the source words on the graphemic and phonemic levels. We can thus reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the level of phonemic and graphemic similarity differs significantly in this sample. This result suggests that the source words of newspaper blends also tend to be more similar phonemically than graphemically. The effect size for the test – the so-called rank-biserial correlation – is 0.13, indicating a small effect (Funder & Ozer, 2019).

A comparison of the two domains reveals that while both commercial and newspaper blends show a statistically significant difference between graphemic and phonemic similarity of their source words, the strength of this tendency varies. In both cases, source words are more similar phonemically than graphemically, suggesting that phonemic similarity between two source words may play a stronger role in blend formation. However, the effect is more pronounced in commercial names (r = 0.20, medium effect) than in newspaper blends (r = 0.13, small effect), indicating a stronger preference for phonemic similarity between the source words in the commercial name domain.

4.2.2 *Graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW1 and the blend in the two samples*

In this and the next subsection, we look at graphemic and phonemic similarity between the individual source words and the blend in commercial names and newspapers, and whether the observed differences in the similarities on the graphemic and phonemic levels (if any) reach statistical significance. Below (Table 6) are presented the results of a quantitative analysis of the average Levenshtein distance between SW1 and the blend.

Table 6: Average Levenshtein distance between SW1 and the blend in the two samples of blends

	Average LD between SW1 and the blend – graphemes	Average LD between SW1 and the blend – phonemes
Commercial names	4.07	3.49
Newspaper blends	4.89	4.15

As can be seen from Table 6, the LD between SW1 and the blend in both blend samples is, on average, greater on the graphemic than phonemic level. This means that SW1 and the blend in commercial names as well as in newspapers are more similar to each other on the phonemic than graphemic level, as is the case between the source words themselves (cf. 4.2.1).

To determine whether the observed difference in similarity between SW1 and the blend is statistically significant on the graphemic and phonemic levels, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was performed on the commercial name sample of blends. The null hypothesis assumes no difference between graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW1 and the blend, while the alternative hypothesis assumes a difference between the two. The test yielded a statistically significant result ($V = 1775$, $p < 0.000000021$), indicating that the difference between graphemic and phonemic Levenshtein distances is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is strong evidence for a real difference in similarity between SW1 and the blend on the graphemic and phonemic levels in commercial name blends. The rank-biserial correlation ($r = –0.76$) suggests a large effect size, meaning the difference is not only statistically significant, but also practically meaningful. The negative value of the rank-biserial correlation indicates that phonemic similarity tends to be greater than graphemic similarity between SW1 and the blend. In other words, commercial blends are, on average, phonemically closer to their first source word than they are graphemically.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was also performed on the newspaper blend sample ($n = 100$) to determine whether the similarity between SW1 and the blend differs significantly on the graphemic and phonemic levels. The null hypothesis assumes no difference between graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW1 and the blend, while the alternative hypothesis assumes a difference between the two. The results show a highly significant difference ($V = 1863$, $p < 0.000000000072$), suggesting that the observed difference is unlikely to be due to chance. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is strong evidence for a real difference in similarity between SW1 and the blend on the graphemic and phonemic levels in newspaper blend sample. The rank-biserial correlation ($r = –0.91$) indicates a very large effect size, with the negative value once again showing that phonemic similarity is greater than graphemic similarity in this dataset. This finding reinforces the trend observed in commercial name blends and provides a strong empirical basis for further comparisons across blend types.

Comparing the two domains, the difference between phonemic and graphemic similarity between SW1 and the blend is more pronounced in newspaper blends ($r = –0.91$) than in commercial name blends ($r = –0.76$), though both results indicate the same direction. This suggests that, across both types of blends, phonemic similarity to the first source word tends to be more consistently preserved than graphemic similarity, although to different degrees. Unfortunately, there are no relevant results we can compare our results to, since Gries

(e.g., 2004a; 2004b; 2004c; 2012) in his case studies on similarity did not report graphemic and phonemic similarities between each source word and the blend, but rather focused on contrasting the similarities among various types of blends (e.g., intentional blends, speech-error blends, etc.), as well as random word pairs.

4.2.3 *Graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW2 and the blend in the two samples*
Based on the results of a quantitative analysis of the graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW2 and the blend in commercial names and newspaper blends presented in Table 7 below, it appears that the similarity between SW2 and the blend in the sample of commercial names as well as in newspaper blends is, on average, also greater on the phonemic than graphemic level.

Table 7: Average Levenshtein distance between SW2 and the blend in the two samples of blends

	Average LD between SW2 and the blend graphemes	Average LD between SW2 and the blend phonemes
Commercial names	3.73	3.3
Newspaper blends	3.04	2.5

Additionally, to determine whether the similarity between SW2 and the blend differs significantly on the graphemic and phonemic levels in commercial name blends, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was performed on the relevant sample. The null hypothesis assumes no difference between graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW2 and the blend, while the alternative hypothesis assumes a difference between the two. The test revealed a statistically significant difference ($V = 1419.5$, $p < 0.000002$), indicating that the difference between graphemic and phonemic Levenshtein distances is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is strong evidence for a real difference in similarity between SW2 and the blend on the graphemic and phonemic levels in commercial name sample. The rank-biserial correlation ($r = –0.66$) points to a large effect size, with the negative value indicating that phonemic similarity tends to be greater than graphemic similarity between SW2 and the blend. This pattern mirrors the findings observed for SW1, suggesting that, in commercial blends, phonemic similarity is more strongly preserved than graphemic similarity across both source words.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was also performed to determine whether the graphemic and phonemic Levenshtein distances between SW2 and the blend differ significantly in newspaper blends. The null hypothesis assumes no difference between graphemic and phonemic similarity between SW2 and the blend, while the alternative hypothesis assumes a difference between the two. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is strong evidence for a real difference in similarity between SW2 and the blend on the graphemic and phonemic levels in the newspaper blend sample. The result ($V = 1315.5$, $p < 0.0000002$) shows a statistically significant difference in similarity on the two levels. The rank-biserial correlation ($r = –0.77$) indicates a large effect size, with the negative direction once again reflecting that phonemic similarity is typically greater than graphemic similarity. This pattern reflects the findings observed for SW1, suggesting that, in newspaper blends, phonemic similarity is more strongly preserved than graphemic similarity across both source words.

Across both source words (SW1 and SW2) and both domains (commercial names and newspaper blends), the results consistently show that phonemic similarity between the source

word and the blend is significantly stronger than graphemic similarity. This pattern holds for both SW1 and SW2, with all comparisons yielding statistically significant results and large effect sizes.

4.3 *Phonological similarity*

In the following few subsections, we present and compare the results of both quantitative and statistical analyses of the phonological similarity (in terms of syllable number and stress pattern) between the source words of blends from the two samples, as well as between the individual source words and the blend.

4.3.1 *Phonological similarity (syllabic length) between the source words of blends in commercial names and newspapers*

This subsection analyzes and compares the phonological similarity between the source words of blends in terms of their syllabic length. More specifically, it examines whether syllabic length of source words influences their selection, and whether there are any differences between the two samples in that respect.

Based on the distributions shown in Table 8, and given that the data consist of independent observations that are not normally distributed, the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit was performed for each sample. The null hypothesis assumes that the three groups (SW1<SW2, SW1=SW2, SW1>SW2) are equally distributed, while the alternative hypothesis assumes unequal distribution.

Table 8: Frequency distributions of blends based on the relation between their source words' syllabic lengths in the two samples

	SW1 < SW2	SW1 = SW2	SW1 > SW2
Commercial names	51	10	39
Newspaper blends	70	5	25

Table 9: The Chi-square test results and effect sizes

	χ^2	df	*p*-value	Cramér's V	Effect size interpretation
Commercial names	26.66	2	1.625e-06	0.52	Large effect
Newspaper blends	66.50	2	3.628e-15	0.82	Very large effect

As shown in Table 9, the Chi-square test for the commercial name sample yielded a significant result ($\chi^2 = 26.66$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the three groups are not equally distributed. The effect size (Cramér's V = 0.52) suggests a large effect. Post-hoc analysis of standardized residuals shows that the observed frequency for SW1<SW2 is significantly higher than expected (z = 3.75), while SW1=SW2 is significantly lower (z = -4.95); the difference for SW1>SW2 is not statistically meaningful (z = 1.20). These results suggest that syllabic length similarity between the source words does not strongly influence blend formation in commercial names; instead, SW2 tends to be significantly longer than SW1.

The newspaper blends follow a similar trend, but with more extreme values: the Chi-square test is highly significant ($\chi^2 = 66.50$, $p < 0.001$), and the effect size (Cramér's V = 0.82)

indicates an even larger effect. Residuals again indicate a greater-than-expected frequency of SW1<SW2 (z = 7.78) and a lower-than-expected frequency of SW1=SW2 (z = -6.01), with no significant deviation for SW1>SW2 (z = -1.77). These findings suggest a strong preference in newspaper blends for the second source word to be longer than the first one.

In general, these results are in line with the findings by Gries (2004a: 421; 2012: 148–149), who reports similar tendencies for the source words of intentional English blends (regardless of their source) – although using different similarity metrics (e.g., the Dice coefficient in 2004a, and Levenshtein distance in 2012). Despite these methodological differences, the same asymmetry in the syllabic lengths of the two source words is evident across our two domains.

4.3.2 *Phonological similarity (syllabic length) between SW1 and the blend in the two samples*

Subsection 4.3.1 showed that, as far as the relation between the syllabic lengths of SWs in the two samples is concerned, phonological similarity between the source words in terms of syllable number does not play a role in the selection of the source words in commercial names and newspaper blends. However, it is also necessary to investigate whether the two samples differ with respect to the phonological similarity – in terms of syllabic length – between each source word and the blend.

This subsection examines the relationship between the syllabic length of SW1 and the blend in both samples. The aim is to determine whether the blend tends to be longer than, equal in length to, or shorter than SW1, and whether there are any differences between commercial names and newspaper blends in that respect.

As shown in Table 10, in both samples, blends are more frequently longer than SW1. This tendency is particularly pronounced in newspaper blends, where 72 out of 100 examples show SW1<blend. In the commercial name sample, the trend is similar, though slightly less extreme (57/100 cases). Blends that are equal in length to SW1 occur less frequently (36 in commercial names, 27 in newspapers), while blends shorter than SW1 are rare, especially in newspapers.

Table 10: Frequency distributions of blends based on the relation between the syllabic length of SW1 and the blend in the two samples

	SW1<blend	SW1=blend	SW1>blend
Commercial names	57	36	7
Newspaper blends	72	27	1

To determine the statistical significance of these distributions, the Chi-square goodness-of-fit test was performed for each sample (Table 11). The null hypothesis assumes that the three categories are equally distributed, while the alternative hypothesis assumes unequal distribution. Results show highly significant differences from equal distribution in both samples. For commercial names, $\chi^2 = 37.82$ ($p < 0.001$), and for newspaper blends, $\chi^2 = 77.42$ ($p < 0.001$). In both cases, the effect sizes are large (Cramér's V = 0.61 for commercial names; Cramér's V = 0.88 for newspapers), indicating clear trends. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis which states that the three SW1–blend length relationships occur with equal frequency. Instead, blends predominantly tend to be longer than SW1, particularly in newspaper blends, where the SW1>blend pattern is nearly absent. The SW1=blend category accounts for 36 cases in commercial names and 27 in newspaper blends, suggesting that in

more than a quarter of blends, the length of SW1 may determine the structural length of the blend as a whole.

Table 11: The Chi-square test results and effect sizes

	χ^2	df	*p*-value	Cramér's V	Effect size interpretation
Commercial names	37.82	2	6.13e-09	0.61	Large effect
Newspaper blends	77.42	2	2.20e-16	0.88	Very large effect

A post-hoc analysis of standardized residuals provides further insight into which categories contributed most to these significant results. In the commercial name sample, two categories show significant deviation from expected frequencies:

– SW1<Blend: z = 5.02
– SW1>Blend: z = -5.59
– SW1=Blend: z = 0.57 (non-significant)

In newspaper blends, the same trend holds:

– SW1<Blend: z = 8.20
– SW1>Blend: z = -6.86
– SW1=Blend: z = -1.34 (non-significant)

These findings indicate that blends are significantly more likely to be longer than SW1 and rarely shorter, in both samples – especially in the newspaper blends. In the next subsection, we will take a look at the phonological similarity – in terms of syllabic length – between SW2 and the blend in the two samples, using the same methods as before.

4.3.3 *Phonological similarity (syllabic length) between SW2 and the blend in the two samples*

This subsection examines the relationship between the syllabic length of SW2 and the resulting blend in both samples. Specifically, it aims to determine whether the blend tends to be shorter than, equal in length to, or longer than SW2, and whether this distribution differs between commercial names and newspaper blends.

As shown in Table 12, blends that are equal in syllabic length to SW2 are the most frequent type in both samples. This tendency is particularly strong in the newspaper sample, where 69 out of 100 blends match the syllable number of SW2. In the commercial name sample, the majority is less pronounced (51/100), but still notable.

Table 12: Frequency distributions of blends based on the relation between the syllabic length of SW2 and the blend in the two samples

	SW2<blend	SW2=blend	SW2>blend
Commercial names	44	51	5
Newspapers	30	69	1

To test whether these distributions are statistically significant, the Chi-square test for goodness-of-fit was performed for each sample (Table 13). The null hypothesis assumes that the three categories are equally distributed, while the alternative hypothesis assumes unequal distribution. In both samples, the test revealed significant deviations from a uniform distribution across the three categories. For commercial names, $\chi^2 = 36.86$ ($p < 0.001$), with a large effect size (Cramér's V = 0.61). For newspaper blends, the results were even more pronounced: $\chi^2 = 69.86$ ($p < 0.001$), with a very large effect (Cramér's V = 0.84). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis which states that the three SW2–blend length relationships occur with equal frequency. Instead, blends most frequently match the syllabic length of SW2 – especially in newspaper blends, where this pattern appears in 69% of examples. The SW2=blend category is also the most common in commercial names (51 examples), though the difference is less pronounced. Examples where blends are longer than SW2 (SW2<blend) are also relatively common, particularly in commercial names (44 cases), while blends shorter than SW2 are rare across both samples.

Table 13: The Chi-square test results and effect sizes

	χ^2	df	*p*-value	Cramér's V	Effect size interpretation
Commercial names	36.86	2	9.91e-09	0.61	Large effect
Newspaper blends	69.86	2	6.76e-16	0.84	Very large effect

To understand which categories contributed most to the overall significance, standardized residuals were examined. For commercial names, all three categories significantly deviated from the expected values (SW2<blend: z = 2.26; SW2=blend: z = 3.75; SW2>blend: z = -6.01), suggesting that blends are more frequently the same length as SW2 than would be expected by chance. In newspaper blends, only two categories showed significant deviation (SW2=blend: z = 7.57; SW2>blend: z = -6.86), with no meaningful deviation in the category SW2<blend (z = -0.71). This confirms a strong tendency in newspapers for blends to match SW2 in length.

These results are in line with previous findings by Gries (2004a: 425; 2004c: 664), who, in his studies of intentional English blends, noted a "significant tendency to blend source words such that the length of the blend corresponds to that of SW2". The current data reinforce this conclusion for both commercial and newspaper blends, but suggest that the preference is stronger in newspapers.

4.3.4 *Phonological similarity (stress pattern) between the source words as well as between the individual source words and the blend in the two samples*

This subsection investigates the similarity between the primary stress patterns of the equisyllabic source words, as well as between the equisyllabic source words and the blend in the two samples. Table 14 summarizes the frequency distributions across five possible stress pattern relationships.

Table 14: Frequency distributions of blends in the two samples based on the relations between the stress patterns of the source words, as well as between each source word and the blend

	SW1=blend	SW2=blend	SW1=SW2	SW1=SW2=blend	SW1≠SW2≠blend
Commercial names	32	47	6	3	12
Newspaper blends	22	67	1	2	8

In both corpora, blends most frequently share the stress pattern with SW2, supporting prior findings by Gries (2004a) and Arndt-Lappe & Plag (2013), who argued that SW2 often governs the blend's prosody.

To determine whether the observed distributions differ significantly from chance, we performed Chi-square tests for goodness-of-fit. The null hypothesis assumes equal distribution across the five categories; the alternative hypothesizes that the distribution was non-uniform. The results (Table 15) show that the distributions for both datasets are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), with large effect sizes: Cramér's V = 0.49 for commercial names and 0.71 for newspaper blends. There is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis for both datasets and conclude that the blends have a significantly strong tendency to share the same prosodic contour as at least one of their source words – most notably SW2. This pattern is more pronounced in newspaper blends than in commercial names.

Table 15: The Chi-square test results and effect sizes

	χ^2	df	*p*-value	Cramér's V	Effect size interpretation
Commercial names	71.10	4	1.33e-14	0.49	Large effect
Newspaper blends	152.10	4	2.20e-16	0.71	Very large effect

Given these significant results, a post-hoc analysis of standardized residuals was conducted to identify which categories contributed most to the deviation. For commercial names, SW2=blend (z = 6.75) and SW1=blend (z = 3.00) were significantly more frequent than expected. In contrast, SW1=SW2 (z = -3.50), SW1=SW2=blend (z = -4.25), and SW1≠SW2≠blend (z = -2.00) occurred significantly less often. For newspaper blends, SW2=blend dominated (z = 11.75), while all other categories occurred significantly less often – except for SW1=blend (z = 0.50), which did not differ from chance. These results confirm a strong tendency for the blend to align prosodically with SW2, especially in newspaper blends. The dominance of SW2 in determining the blend's stress pattern aligns with prototypical English stress behavior, where suffixes – unlike prefixes – frequently govern the placement of primary stress. This suggests that blends, despite their hybrid nature, tend to conform to established stress assignment rules in English, possibly to ensure fluent and natural pronunciation.

This apparent regularity, however, may seem to contradict the idea that blends aim to "stand out" or maximize recognizability. One possible interpretation is that prosodic regularity

contributes to phonological well-formedness, while recognizability is preserved by means of other strategies such as graphemic novelty, lexical creativity, or phoneme choice. As Kemmer (2003: 75–76) notes, "[p]honological properties are highly relevant to blending: phonological similarity of the blend with part or whole source words increases the likelihood or felicity (the 'goodness') of a blend". In this sense, blends strike a balance between innovation and conformity – being distinctive enough to attract attention, but also regular enough to remain intelligible.

5 Conclusions

This study set out to compare structural aspects of lexical blends from two distinct domains – commercial names and newspapers – and to investigate how their formal characteristics reflect different communicative intentions and constraints. The findings confirm that while blending remains a largely extra-grammatical process, as theorized by Dressler (2000) and elaborated by Mattiello (2013), its manifestations are shaped significantly by domain-specific pressures. That is, newspaper blends tend to maximize morphosemantic transparency as well as phonological resemblance for the sake of wit, memorability, and immediacy – aligning with the broader sociolinguistic trend of increasing linguistic playfulness in public discourse. In contrast, commercial blends are typically shorter, more phonetically simplified, and often less transparent – attributes which reflect branding imperatives such as uniqueness, legal protectability, and memorability.

Across all levels of analysis, newspaper blends consistently show a preference for greater length, phonemic similarity, and phonological similarity, with a particularly strong phonemic and prosodic similarity to SW2. These patterns suggest a prioritization of recognizability and prosodic naturalness, aligning with the communicative aims of newspaper discourse: immediacy, memorability, and linguistic playfulness. By contrast, commercial name blends, while also tending to align phonemically and phonologically with SW2, show a less pronounced contrast between SW1 and SW2. They tend to be shorter, often favoring brevity, compactness, and relatively lower morphotactic transparency – patterns that likely reflect branding imperatives such as distinctiveness, marketability, and legal protectability.

These observations do not only support the idea that extra-grammatical morphological operations are governed by functional and communicative needs, but also emphasize the importance of context-sensitive analysis in morphological research. That is, they suggest that linguistic creativity in blend formation does not operate in a vacuum, but interacts dynamically with social, legal, and pragmatic forces. This encourages a view of blending as a flexible, adaptive strategy rather than a marginal linguistic anomaly or deviation.

Further research could examine blending practices in other domains – such as social media, political discourse, or literature and arts – to determine whether similar domain-specific constraints shape the balance between creativity and intelligibility. Such research could deepen our understanding of how extra-grammatical morphology functions across different domains of contemporary language use, and how blending continues to shape the dynamic, fast-evolving lexicon of English.

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Appendix

Commercial names

Blend	SW1	SW2
Appletiser	apple	appetizer
AussieMite	Aussie	Marmite
Vegemite	vege	Marmite
barnana®	bar	banana
Bluetiful	blue	beautiful
Broga®	bro	yoga
Brograms®	broga	programs
Buffaranch	buffalo	ranch
beanfinity	bean	infinity
Bisquick®	biscuit	quick
bubblicious	bubblegum	delicious
caulipower®	cauliflower	power
Chipwich®	chip	sandwich
Clamato®	clam	tomato
Cornados	corn	tornados
Craisins	cranberry	raisins
Cranapple™	cranberry	apple
Fabanaise®	aquafaba	mayonnaise
Grapetiser	grape	appetiser
Grinola	grin	granola
FURminator®	fur	terminator
Chuice®	chewable	juice
ClariTEA	clarity	tea
Collagenesis®	collagen	regenesis
CollEGGtibles™	collectibles	EGG
CreativiTEA	creativity	tea
follicool	follicle	cool
ultraceuticals	ultra	pharmaceuticals
EGGniter™	EGG	igniter
EGGspander	EGG	expander
Eggxactly	EGG	exactly
EQUI-SENTIALS™	equine	essentials
Facefinity	face	infinity
ficoco™	fig	cocoa
Fooducate	food	educate
Fookie™	fudge	cookie
Foyalty	Foyles	loyalty

Freezerator	freezer	refrigerator
Froogle™	frugal	Google
Kombrewcha	Kombucha	brew
Hatchimals™	hatch	animals
Hippeas®	hippies	chickpeas
Honeyracha	honey	Sriracha
Frappuccino®	frappé	cappuccino
HURRAW!®	hurrah	raw
Incogmeato®	incognito	meat
Ketchili	ketchup	chili
Kranch	ketchup	ranch
Longeviteas®	longevity	teas
Luvimals™	luv	animals
Mayochup	mayo	ketchup
Mayocue	mayo	barbecue
Mayomust	mayo	mustard
Mayoracha	mayo	Sriracha
Mochaccino	mocha	cappuccino
PeaTos®	pea	Doritos®
tofurky	tofu	turkey
possibiliteas	possibilities	teas
potaTOASTS	potatoes	TOAST
convEGGtor	convector	EGG
ProductiviTEA	productivity	tea
pure-formance™	pure	performance
pure-fume™	pure	perfume
rawsome	raw	awesome
rEGGulator	regulator	EGG
SCENTsory™	scented	sensory
shampure™	shampoo	pure
Snapscara®	snap	mascara
Sugarpova™	sugar	Sharapova
RAWganics	raw	organics
Thinsulate™	thin	insulate
Baconnaise	bacon	mayonnaise
vEGGie	veggie	EGG
Veggitizers™	veggie	appetizers
Vegums	vegan	gums
Vrimp	vegan	shrimp
Zebrew	zebra	brew
WiTricity™	wireless	electricity
Wraptiles	wrap	reptiles
YipPEA!™	yippee	chickpea
Nuxellence®	Nuxe	excellence
Nuxuriance®	Nuxe	luxuriance
Pup-Peroni®	pup	pepperoni

Shakesbeer™	Shakespeare	beer
Zevia®	zero	stevia
ATLeisure®	ATL	leisure
Beefamato	beef	tomato
Serenitea	serenity	tea
Activitea	activity	tea
Vitalitea	vitality	tea
Infinitea	infinity	tea
Beautea	beauty	tea
Festivitea	festivity	tea
Spiritualitea	spirituality	tea
rawsage	raw	sausage
petsentials	pet	essentials
petoneer	pet	pioneer
go-gurt	go	yogurt
SkinCeuticals	skin	pharmaceuticals
naturaw®	natural	raw

Newspaper blends

Blend	**SW1**	**SW2**
alco-haul	alcohol	haul
a-mail-zing	amazing	mail
amoonzing	amazing	moon
app-dicted	app	addicted
app-solutely	app	absolutely
ashtronaut	ashes	astronaut
berlu-scolded	Berlusconi	scolded
Bluedini	blue	Houdini
limb-credible	limb	incredible
breastseller	breast	bestseller
brew-tal	brew	brutal
Brextinct	Brexit	extinct
Brextramarital	Brexit	extramarital
matri-money	matrimony	money
broc-odiles	broccoli	crocodiles
bradigan	bra	cardigan
brrrilliant	brrr	brilliant
bra-zarre	bra	bizarre
cattellite	cat	satellite
chimpstagram	chimp	Instagram
remarkleable	remarkable	markle
conf-eu-sion	confusion	EU
Cor-bin	Corbyn	bin
Coronamencement	corona	commencement
Coronaspiracy	corona	conspiracy

Coronopticon	corona	panopticon
cringe-stagram	cringe	Instagram
diet-bolical	diet	diabolical
dis-ice-ster	disaster	ice
fresh-tive	fresh	festive
dye-saster	dye	disaster
emoji-onal	emoji	emotional
eye-dea	eye	idea
felfie	farm	selfie
finstagram	fin	Instagram
flapple	flexible	Apple
apoca-lips	apocalypse	lips
fur-eezing	fur	freezing
gin-tuition	gin	intuition
gradu-slay-tion	graduation	slay
do-pill-gangers	doppelgangers	pill
grrr-eat	grr	great
heir-ticulture	heir	horticulture
fuel-rious	fuel	furious
hu-moan-ity	humanity	moan
ink-redible	ink	incredible
in-sprog-nito	incognito	sprog
in-spur-ational	inspirational	spur
jabulous	jab	fabulous
jar-vellous	jar	marvellous
jawsome	jaw	awesome
kar-cash-ians	Kardashians	cash
knee-diculous	knee	ridiculous
lashonistas	lash	fashionistas
locktail	lockdown	cocktail
locktober	lockdown	October
loo-dicrous	loo	ludicrous
loo-nacy	loo	lunacy
mal-tease-rs	Maltesers	tease
Maybotic	May	robotic
mesmer-eyes	mesmerize	eyes
mince-piration	mince	inspiration
mutt-iply	mutt	multiply
nosh-talgia	nosh	nostalgia
pain-gillers	painkillers	gill
poutrageous	pout	outrageous
pup-arazzi	pup	paparazzi
pupgrade	pup	upgrade
purr-fect	purr	perfect
re-eely	really	eel
repli-kate	replicate	Kate

road-ents	road	rodents
roar-some	roar	awesome
scamdalous	scam	scandalous
Scariants	scary	variants
serumdipity	serum	serendipity
sex-cruciating	sex	excruciating
Sham-sung	shame	Samsung
shecession	she	recession
shrink-fection	shrink	infection
shrobing	shoulder	robing
shu-nicorn	shoe	unicorn
siri-ously	Siri	seriously
skin-tervention	skin	intervention
smobriety	smoking	sobriety
snowbergines	snow	aubergines
spy-brator	spy	vibrator
squeally	squeal	really
Tan-uary	tan	January
tech-cellent	tech	excellent
tech-cessive	tech	excessive
thinfluencer	thin	influencer
trumpidation	Trump	trepidation
tutan-cat-mun	Tutankhamun	cat
ulstermatum	Ulster	ultimatum
un-beer-lievable	unbelievable	beer
unbe-leaf-ably	unbelievably	leaf
wackaging	wacky	packaging
Zutors	Zoom	tutors
sea-cret	sea	secret

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