



When Form Follows Function: A Pragmatic Analysis of Portmanteau Words in Everyday Discourse

Asst.Prof.Atyaf Hasan Ibrahim (PhD.)

Al-Iraqia University, College of Arts, Department of English, Iraq

Abstract

This research paper examines the formation and implications of portmanteau words across different communities, with a particular focus on everyday interactions. Generally, portmanteaus are compound words that combine elements from two or more sources while retaining recognisable phonological traits. They reflect the linguistic adaptation of these communities as they navigate a new linguistic landscape. The investigation highlights how these linguistic blends emerge as a response to the rapid cultural transition from minority to majority status, prompting interlocutors to use these expressions in new contexts. This research adopts a pragmatic framework to investigate the main pragmatic functions of portmanteaus and how they are used effectively in communication. Furthermore, it discusses the linguistic theories underpinning word formation, illustrating how portmanteaus encapsulate the dynamism of language within the social context. By studying these existing expressions, the findings reveal a significant understanding of the processes of language change and cultural amalgamation, ensuring the role of portmanteaus as both linguistic novelties and replications of the complex relationship between identity, language, culture, and context.

Keywords: Portmanteau Words, Form, Function, Pragmatic Analysis, discourse, Interaction.

Introduction

A portmanteau is a compound word whose two (or more) constituents have changed form. Still, at least one of them retains a phonological item that can be recognised from its independent, older, or simpler form as part of a word (Durrant & Mathews-Aydinli, 2013). Migrant communities worldwide inevitably encounter conditions of existence that differ from those they left behind. In such a group of exiles, interlocutors begin making changes to their language, leading to the creation of portmanteaus. Given a very close encounter with a new language community, there is a rapid shift from minority to majority status. In such a community, the newly arrived speakers would likely want to suppress their mother tongue, possibly due to both social and psychological reasons. They tend to become acculturated to the new environment and experience difficulty working with the language of their origins. Besides, the principal historical factors led to portmanteaux-maximising formation at the beginning of the twenty-first century, resulting from that condition of existence. There are many of these portmanteau expressions, formed from English words that are discovered and perceived as Chinese by migrants arriving in English-speaking countries at the beginning of the twenty-first century, and they have already become active in Chinese communities. The types of news sources in Hong Kong and mainland China refer to one of the most dominant groups, namely the Cantonese who migrated to the US and other countries.

Aims

This research aims at:

1. Identifying common portmanteau expressions.
2. Analyzing their constituents and the processes used in forming them.
3. Identifying their pragmatic functions.

The Problem



Portmanteau words were detected throughout the discourse in a variety of communicative situations and text types, both spoken and written; however, analysing the data to prioritise those that are productive proved problematic. While several texts did not exhibit any productive instances, carelessness in data processing may have unintentionally omitted some of them. To question why they chose these texts and why they permit further analysis as productive texts would also be curious.

Theoretical Framework

Portmanteau words are based on a typical convention and set of basic rules that ensure each construction is direct and obvious. In order for pragmatics to successfully unfold as a process of coded, needle-sharp communication, phrase mending must generally meet the criteria of adjacency, substitution, and non-collapsing. This fidelity to the basic elements of language word and clause is reflected in the types of portmanteau utterances, in which the worlds of form and meaning, phonetically and conceptually based, smoothly translate into one another.

In the case of adjacency, spoken language provides a singular communicative channel: the orderly sequence of clauses is inviolate (unless in rare instances, such as simultaneous uttering). Within a given portion of discourse, the mending act must occur only within the same clause. Breaching this constraint prompts a feeling of spam, forcing the listener to remain in a state of continual high alert while decoding. It ruptures not only the flow but also the bright state of mind necessary for pragmatics. Such usages as "Whatever happened to So-So? Come to think of it, there ought to be a portmanteau..." sound wrong and jarring. Non-compliance with this criterion does occur, for instance, when a mistaken portmanteau is overlooked. However, such a lapse is readily forgiven during the transition period, when the addressee is attempting to assimilate new knowledge.

Onomatopoeia, metaphors, metonymy, and other linguistic units reflect the human view of the environment in its development and dynamics. One type of new word is the portmanteau word, a combination of two or more words that results in a unique lexical unit and a new meaning (Cheng & Hoe, 2022).

Portmanteau words may arise from the names of people, places, and significant events. A whole trade theme can be generated by portmanteau words formed from the lexemes "name" (compressed as "moniker") and "oceanic" (represented as "pacific"). Named newsmakers by portmanteau combine first names and surnames, or first names and middle names, with appropriate fuzzing, replacing them with specific syllables or consonants. One feature of portmanteau names is their monotonous quality, which suggests a kinship with the original names. The academic theme of portmanteaus is examined from various angles by the scientific community, including professionals from diverse branches and disciplines. There exist chronic, encyclopedic dictionaries, lexicons, and handbooks devoted to new coinages (Sari et al., 2021). Here, the required specific element is at least a verbal unit, a portmanteau with a clause or group base, such as "downward" and "portmanteaux" (Rastelli, 2009).

On the Concept of Portmanteau

Portmanteau is originally derived from French to mean "to carry something" and "a coat." The item was brought to England in the 1600s and referred to as a two-compartment case for carrying clothes. Subsequently, "portmanteau" was adopted to describe words that were literally back-to-back, building a repertoire of amusing and artful neologisms. Most likely coined to describe the playfulness of other portmanteaus, "portmanteau" was later reinterpreted as a deliberate process of reduction by compression. The occurrence of portmanteau words not only reflects creativity of language but reveals the cognitive abilities of the speakers. Combining two or more forms to give a new expression was first known in certain languages and distinguished by classical grammarians. At different times, in different places, and for different reasons, speakers of different tongues have resorted to the same union of form and meaning. The productive derivation from the union of two roots with overlapping sounds remains a highly productive source of new forms in modern languages. Moreover, compounding is not expected to remain strictly constrained. However, similar forms have not independently and synchronously occurred in many unrelated languages (McCarthy, 2021).



The earliest lexical broadening emerged through the portmanteau formation of ad hoc words in functional and occasional contexts, the earliest examples of portmanteaux date back to the Middle Ages. However, at this time, they were not necessarily portmanteaux in their modern sense. In the Old English period and until the early 14th century, words like “fleddyng” or “Renuel” showed no evidence of any internal structure being recognised among the components. These were simple words such submorphemic elements were obscured by their phonological form. In this sense, they differed from modern portmanteaux. At this early stage, the formation of blends was motivated by prosodic factors (Fandrych, 2016). Blends were rhyming pairs of phonologically similar or identical words of different meanings. Freely formed and used, these blends were still more or less ad hoc, occasional afterthoughts to the discourse. They were invented extemporaneously, through momentary inspirations or performers' reactions in the dialogic context. Generally, they were not recorded and existed only in oral form. Ultimately, at this early stage of development, a blend was not yet considered a new word of mainstream communicative power. There were no attempts to record their resurgence in a congruent manner. The first record dates back to the 1350s or somewhat later, long after the expected time of their vernacular diffusion. Though some early portmanteaux were found in literary works, they were insufficiently numerous to be seen as part of the vernacular.

Until the Renaissance and the beginning of the 16th century, the blending of words remained rare and incidental, an insignificant afterthought in the mainstream of word formation processes. Initially, bilingualism was a source of such curiosity as the witticism fashion of the Renaissance Courts. The new humour of such blends was either of the trivial sort or of obscene religion. At this time, functionally insignificant blends merely make passing comments on etymologically interesting words.

A well-known definition dates back to 1960 and describes portmanteau words as “words that combine two separate words, whose meanings are blended by the new word.” This definition captures the basic idea of portmanteau words. However, it is nevertheless misleading because it conflates two types of terms: one for words (portmanteau words) and the other for the phenomenon (portmanteau). Other definitions include a recommendation “a large suitcase or handbag for carrying clothing and personal effects” and a suggestion “a long word created from parts of two other words.” Although these definitions do help in specific ways, they are still incomplete or partial. For example, some do not target the correspondence between form and meaning. Other types mainly focus on the concept of blend but not truncation or clipping, e.g., “smog” for “smoky fog,” “lab” for “laboratory” (Hill, 2023).

Types of Portmanteau Words

Portmanteau words are classified into three main types: blends that appear in mass media and popular culture; quasi-blends adopted into technical vocabulary; and blends that occur in everyday language or slang. Blend words are abundant, especially in mass media. Most tend to reflect humour and creativity. Coinages are made either for parodying or mimicking like ‘aerotropolis’ for ‘airport metropolis’, ‘canopy road’ for ‘porch road’, etc. Some need to be catchy and easy to remember, like ‘McWord’ for ‘word scavenging’, ‘Blaxploitation’ for ‘Black exploitation’, ‘shocker’ for ‘stunning news’, and ‘Churched’ for ‘sacralised’ or ‘churchified’.

Ad content in the high-tech world and other news items nowadays also make extensive use of an enormous variety of technical vocabulary, many of which are quasi-blends. In current authoritative dictionaries, many quasi-blends have already been incorporated. Terms like ‘aerodynamics’, ‘nanotechnology’, and ‘biotechnology’ for aerodynamical, pasting ‘high’, ‘tech’, and its inverse order ‘techo-high’ all stand for ‘high technology’. Some old terms have even changed and are now used to express new meanings, such as ‘cyberspace’, ‘cyber-punk’, ‘space’, ‘archivism’, ‘phreak’, and ‘geosat’, which were invented to describe cyberspace, cyberpunk, spacemen, archivists, phreakers, and geo-satellites, respectively. Such terms were borrowed, speculative, or coined for ‘less hardcore’ digital news items which resemble Newest Breeds. Blends in everyday language or slang abound, too, especially Internet slang. Many are adaptations of existing forms like ‘benwa’ from ‘been there, done that’, ‘brav’ from ‘bravo’, ‘broo’ from ‘brother’, ‘crapolla’ from ‘crap’ or ‘SantaCruz’ from ‘Santa Cruz’ which stand for ‘been there, done that’, ‘good job’, ‘bro’, ‘crap’, and ‘Santa Cruz’ or used to express a sense of patriotism. Due to the momentary character of portmanteau and dependence on extra linguistic circumstances, portmanteau words are prevalent in mass media, newspapers, journalistic, and sociopolitical styles. The



comprehension of a blend depends on the matching of conceptualisation and imagination processes, as the segments are recollected from the combined representation to restore independent elements, and several constituent words are inferred to unveil the conventional sense. Portmanteau words are widely used in the headlines of media to be economic in presenting the topic. (Lahlou and Ho-Abdullah2021) Invariant creative portmanteau forms are already widely popular in media and generally focus on non-technical, non-specialised, and playful neologisms. Borrowed portmanteau words also flourish in colloquial writing, yet again, no one discusses creative forms in technical writing. The common motivation behind the creative forms above likely undermines pragmatic-informed mechanisms in technical and scientific discourse. It is expected that less obvious discourse conditions are imposed on the portmanteau forms in highly specialised writing, such as academic papers. phenomena like “Over/Under+ term = term” and “Subterm-in-term” usage in writing, such as in computer science, linguistics, and mathematics, remain less prevalent. In addition to the expected literature, this pseudo-neologism situation urges scholars to be aware of embarrassment in writing and reading technical discourse, as the invention of portmanteau forms, imitative attempts to “glory” with borrowed terms, and borrowing from native discourse may impair transferability and common awareness of ideal sense. (Imperovich et al.2021) (Baigaskina & Erzhanova). Lahlou, Abdullah I. (2021) and Gangal et al. (2017) provide the following examples of portmanteau words/blends from various communities and across different domains, along with their origins and first attestation dates.

Portmanteau	Source Words	Community / Domain	First Known Use / Origin Details
Smog	smoke + fog	Environmental / Industrial / Public Health	Coined by H. A. Des Vœux around 1905 to describe atmospheric pollution that combines smoke and fog; popularised in Britain between 1910 and 1911. (explore.britannica.com)
Hangry	hungry + angry	Popular / Internet / Everyday speech	A blend that means "irritable due to hunger". Earliest evidence in the psychoanalytic journal American Imago in 1956; added to the Oxford English Dictionary in 2018. (ABC News)
Mansplain	man + explain	Feminist / Socio-political discourse	Coined around 2008 in US feminist commentary; earliest documented use in 2008. Became widely used online and then in dictionaries. (wordsmith.org)
Brangelina	Brad + Angelina	Pop culture/celebrity gossip	The celebrity-couple name. Shows how names combine.
Infotainment	information + entertainment	Media & Journalism	Used to comment on media that mix serious information with entertainment.
Cosplay	costume + play	Fandom/subculture	Originated in Japanese fan culture and spread internationally.
Blog	web + log	Technology / Internet	Early to mid-1990s: used as a personal online journal.
Webinar	+ seminar	Education / Business	Used when seminars are held online.
Franglais	French (français) + English	Sociolinguistics/code-mixing	Used to describe a mixture of English and French in speech.
Spanglish	Spanish + English	Sociolinguistics / bilingual communities	Similar to Franglais, it describes code-meshing between Spanish and English.
Bollywood	Bombay + Hollywood	Film / Global Pop Culture	Name of India's Hindi film industry; coined in the mid-20th century.
Brexit	Britain + exit	Political discourse (UK / EU)	Coined ahead of the 2016 UK referendum; now a



Portmanteau	Source Words	Community / Domain	First Known Use / Origin Details
			standard term.
Ginormous	gigantic + enormous	Informal/colloquial English	Blend for “very large.”

Pragmatic Functions of Portmanteau Words

Despite different forms, all languages share a common feature: the affirmation and negation of hypothetical situations. Through language, people think, feel, and act, and even behaviour aims to express inner worlds through outward forms such as gestures or voice (HUI et al., 2019). Each linguistic sign is tied to pragmatic factors, focusing on the function of language in context, rather than its form. The choice of mode of expression depends on who speaks, where, and to whom, and the communicative precision requires consideration of the pragmatic market. It has long been observed that no matter how creative the form of language is, it could be unsuitable and contain deformations. Portmanteau words are practical and understandable units of meaning in social communication, making the discourse more vivid and engaging. It is a type of word-formation rule that involves phonetic restructuring, semantic association, and morphemic analogy. According to the Chinese phonological system, semantic levels in the understanding of meaning and integration depths in morpheme bindings of portmanteau word formation can be used to classify portmanteau words. From the aspects of phonetic restructuring and morphemic analogy, portmanteau words are typically formed through polyphonism, abbreviation, similar morphemes, antonymy, and entailment. Nevertheless, from a semantic perspective, portmanteau words can be subdivided into unity-in-frame, proximity meaning, and zero cognates.

According to the various pragmatic functions, portmanteau words effectively draw attention through their inherent novelty and convey complex concepts through rich meanings; at the same time, they fulfil a significant utility through their parallel structures and enable a unique expressiveness through spatial mapping. As portmanteau words have become increasingly popular and widely used in everyday discourse, their adaptation and integration across various communicative modes are extensive and remarkably expressive, enriching our language and enabling greater creativity in our communication.

Portmanteau words are widely used in professional discourse. However, words used in a professional context typically have a more extended history of use and more established meanings. In contrast, some portmanteau words are mainly used in everyday discourse and thus possess the aforementioned features of newly coined words. The significance and challenge, therefore, are twofold. First, portmanteau words formed from short versions of basic words are used in everyday discourse. These are interesting and challenge expectations regarding patterns of word-formation. Second, these portmanteau words in everyday usage metamorphose the very language habits of adults, non-mint users of the portmanteaus. Unlike the generalisation of fixed referents commonly seen with professional portmanteau words, the referents of the portmanteaus are often perceived differently by different individuals, and the original meanings of these component words might not be precise to most people. Their topic-sensitive nature further complicates the emergence process of these new words: a portmanteau word might fall out of scope once the events that occurred during a specific period are no longer in the public notice. By examining the development of a portmanteau neologism from its birth until now and considering it as two networks, that is, the pattern of embedded words forming it and the semantic networks of those words and the word itself, insights are gained into these portmanteaus and their usage in discourse, and thus the adaptive strategies of language in communication. (Tillery & Bloomfield, 2022) (Goddard and Sadow, 2021).

In a study conducted on the students of English philology at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland about the usage of portmanteau words in everyday discourse, it is found out that humour is the most popular function of portmanteau words. Two mechanisms were followed: parodying the name of a musician for a kid's absurd cartoon with garbled dialogue and wordplay, where portmanteau words that express more than one referent can be understood in two ways simultaneously. Other functions, such as modelling and image-calling, are also noted to be amusing (Seewooster, 2009).



Among the mechanical sources of humour, incongruity and extreme wordplay flourish. Incongruity arises from the clash of characters, implying the co-existence of a ludicrous new entity. Many one-word portmanteau words involve integrating two referents whose relationship is atypical and counterintuitive. Thus, unusual references are used to accentuate the amusing effect. Additionally, extreme subtypes of wordplay tend to create playful portmanteau words. These include extending or replacing a sound pattern that becomes excessively long with the addition of syllables, jarring sounds, or hard-to-pronounce sounds. Stress distortion is also exploited, which can lead to the humorous word being pronounced on stress-prone parts of speech, inducing the de-stressing and de-accenting of preceding syllables.

In advertising and media, portmanteaux are often used creatively to attract attention. With a wealth of platforms to target audiences, advertisers and journalists alike are innovating ways to convey information or align with past trends. Often, this leads to the adoption of portmanteaus to capture the audience's attention and convey information in a whimsical, humorous way. A notable example of a successful portmanteau advertising campaign was "Doritos Locos Tacos." The ad drummed up months of campaign and commercials across multiple platforms, utilising memes, hype, and even celebrity appearances. The portmanteau itself jostles the playful nature of both products, keeping its market in mind. Somewhat similarly, the sporting apparel brand's "Niketown" is another portmanteau that hints at the product's nature. The brand sought to establish physical locations for dedicated fans to purchase merchandise. By attaching the portmanteau "Niketown" to the name, the outside world imagined a utopian city of running shoes and jerseys. In both cases, the portmanteau breaks traditional usage rules in favour of creativity (Lahlou and Ho-Abdullah, 2021).

However, just as a portmanteau raises expectations, it may also be riskier. One brand employed the portmanteau "smusic" for their launch of the first music-centred phone, a monumental occasion in the 2000s. However, any attempts to pigeonhole the phone as a "smusic phone" flopped as the word sounded similar to a swath of objects. Another cautionary tale and common misuse of portmanteaux is the spelling of "meme." The put-together "meme," a notion spread virally across social media, started with the spelling "meem." When adopted in many languages, every translation kept the spelling while adopting the phonetics as they saw fit. Through pun-like iterations, "meme" stuck. Despite the publicity and adoption, the spelling itself bestowed little context to the word, a failure in the field of advertising.

With ever-increasing platforms for connection, social media and internet slang continue to evolve. Since the coining of the term "meme," it seems that the youth of every generation has, through exhilaration of technology and communication, found ways to differentiate their speech and existence through new onomatologicals, portmanteaux being a core staple. Subcultures blossom and thrive, many spawning new languages and those dedicated to their office. Just as "LOL," "bruh," and "meme" have conquered the common tongue, all manner of words infiltrate social media codes and interactions. Sometimes new words begin quite plain before going on to decorate themselves with new syllables. For instance, "sus," is an abbreviation of "suspicious." At first used primarily within the subsection of players in a video game, the scope soon expanded to encompass others' actions in a variety of settings. However, as all trends do, "sus" gradually turned stale. To disguise its original meaning, "sus" was extended into longer forms, such as "sus" + "sy," "sussy," or "suspect." These expressions epitomize a fun, albeit chaotic, embracing of growing up in the 21st-century world (Huseynova et al., 2024).

Methodology

A pragmatic analysis of portmanteau words is conducted quantitatively and qualitatively.

Data Selection

The study focuses on portmanteaus used in spoken and digital discourse. The target language is English, and the data consists of 20 English-language YouTube recorded videos. Randomly selecting YouTube videos has increased the authenticity of the data. Everyday life topics including entertainment, lifestyle, technology, food, education, journalism and documentary.

Model of Analysis



A pragmatic, morphological, and sociolinguistic level is mixed in the construction of the model as follows: Morphology concerns how elements merge (adjacency, substitution, non-collapsing), while pragmatics concerns the communicative intent and contextual meaning. Finally, the sociolinguistic level shows how word formation is linked to identity, globalisation, and cultural hybridity. Parc (2018) suggests the following morphological processes for the formation of portmanteau words:

1. Overlap blend (shared-segment blend): Two source words overlap on shared phonological or orthographic material; the overlap point is retained only once (e.g., brunch = breakfast + lunch).
2. Concatenative blend (clipping + full word): One source is clipped (usually initial or final segment) and concatenated with the other word (e.g., staycation = stay + vacation; brinner = breakfast + dinner).
3. Syllable-wise fusion / polysyllabic blend: Whole syllables from each source are combined (sometimes with prosodic constraints), e.g., Spanglish (Span- + -glish), often preserving syllable boundaries for prosodic well-formedness.
4. Compounding with phonological assimilation: Two full stems are joined but phonological adjustments (vowel insertion, consonant assimilation) occur for ease of pronunciation (e.g., infotainment = information + entertainment).
5. Acronymic / letter-plus-word blends: A letter sequence (or acronym) fuses with a word (e.g., FOMOfest would be FOMO + fest).
6. Proper-name / celebrity fusion: Two proper names are fused (e.g., *Brangelina*). Often functions as media shorthand.
7. Brand lexicalization (commercial blends): Corporate/branded blends that may become lexicalized as proper nouns (e.g., Frappuccino, Pokémon). Often opaque semantically.

The pragmatic functions of the portamnteau words covers:

1. Branding / identity construction: Signal channel, event, or product identity; memorable labels (e.g., Techmas, Snackzilla). Also, strategic and distinctively focused.
2. Humor / hyperbole / play: Create comic effect, exaggerate, or use irony (e.g., Glamageddon, Sharknado). Often prosodically marked (elongation, stress).
3. Genre-labeling / discourse economy: Compactly name hybrid genres or media practices (e.g., mockumentary, blogumentary, motovlog).
4. Metadiscourse facilitated. Affective / evaluative shorthand: Emotion or bodily states (hangry), evaluative stance (ginormous), and empathy or stance alignment.
5. Sociolinguistic indexing / community membership: Group identity or insider knowledge (e.g., Spanglish signals bilingual identity, fandom blend Pokémon).
6. Pedagogical / explicative: Teaching or exemplifying neologisms (education channels may define the blend explicitly). Useful for analyzing prosody and definition framing.
7. Technicalization / lexical condensation: Shorten technical/descriptive phrases for ease (e.g., in smog discourse), public communication, and uptake.
8. Memetic / viral utility: Coinages used in ways that favour spread. Advertising and online content analyses treat this as a distinct communicative aim.

Data Analysis

	Portmanteau	Primary Pragmatic Function	Justification / Example Context
1	Vlog	Genre-labeling / discourse economy	Used as noun ("in my vlog") or verb ("I'm vlogging today") to define a hybrid media practice (video + blog). Facilitates concise metadiscourse about digital genres.
2	Techtember	Branding / identity construction	Functions as a coined event name ("Techtember is here!"). Marks seasonal identity for tech creators and viewers; strategic distinctiveness.
3	Hangry	Affective / evaluative	Used adjectivally ("I'm so hangry!"). Expresses a



	Portmanteau	Primary Pragmatic Function	Justification / Example Context
		shorthand	mixed emotional-physiological state, inviting empathy and humor.
4	Glamazon	Humor / hyperbole / play	Functions as a humorous nominal label ("She's a total Glamazon"). Hyperbolic description that playfully exaggerates glamour.
5	Snackfection	Branding / identity construction	A coined noun for a hybrid food item indicating creative identity and brand association in food content.
6	Clickbait	Genre-labeling / discourse economy	A metalinguistic noun that names a hybrid online practice and supports critical discourse about digital media.
7	Brunch	Socio-cultural indexing / community membership	A lexicalized noun for a middle-class leisure culture and group identity; normalized community term.
8	Glamageddon	Humor / hyperbole / play	Used dramatically to create humorous intensity and exaggeration; aligns with entertainment tone.
9	Techmas	Branding / identity construction	A festive period for tech videos indicating an event branding and an identity signal within the tech community.
10	Ambivert	Affective / evaluative shorthand	A psychological self-label to give a concise self-description balancing introversion/extroversion; signals introspective stance.
11	Snackzilla	Humor / hyperbole / play	Exaggerated food nickname that adds comic effect and memorable energy to food-related discourse.
12	Spanglish	Sociolinguistic indexing / community membership	A mixed linguistic variety that reflects bilingual identity and shared cultural belonging.
13	Sharknado	Humor / hyperbole / play	A humorous cultural reference that gives a parodic exaggeration and hyperbolic entertainment.
14	Blogumentary	Genre-labeling / discourse economy	A hybrid film form that labels an emerging digital genre and supports metadiscursive talk.
15	Brangelina	Memetic / viral utility	A collective name for a celebrity couple created for a rapid media diffusion and recall. It serves as a meme-like shorthand.
16	Infotainment	Technicalization / lexical condensation	A hybrid content that supports information-entertainment mixture.
17	Brinner	Humor / hyperbole / play	Lighthearted culinary term that expresses humor and domestic creativity.
18	Frappuccino	Branding / identity construction	A trademarked product name that encodes brand identity and cultural consumption patterns.
19	Pokémon	Sociolinguistic indexing / community membership	A fandom and shared cultural identity term that indicates brand and in-group marker within gaming culture.
20	Staycation	Socioeconomic / lifestyle framing → Technicalization / lexical condensation	A noun that is used a socio-economic adaptation concept (vacation at home); promotes relatable lifestyle narrative.



Findings

Findings reveal contextual variations for these constructions and the prevailing view is that portmanteau words are new or even fashionable. Nevertheless, the analysis shows that such constructions with language maturation are likely to have become productive variants of standard words, if not to have enjoyed versatility and broader uses than other morphological processes. In everyday language, these portmanteau formations become mundane. However, they remain relevant and usable across contexts.

There are some usual portmanteau words that are linguistically conventionalized and are frequently used. The speakers rely heavily on this type of portmanteau word. Some words appear for a while then may disappear and vice versa, because speakers tend to find more lexical substitutes and constantly innovate words.

From a linguistic perspective, the pragmatic analysis suggests that portmanteau words in everyday discourse are forms of neologism. In addition, portmanteau words are formed in response to communication needs, specifically, when people want to convey a meaning that two or more words can express, but they wish to use an economical expression due to the existence of the overcrowded words or creating new and more creative words. Such words are formed based on possible patterns of meanings, namely, a meaning gap of a more general concept and a specific concept; a meaning gap of two concepts but only one word of each gap; and a feeling of similarity between the original two objects, the duplicated portmanteau word, and one remaining after being made into a portmanteau word.

Pragmatic Function	Tokens	% of Total	Dominant Grammatical Category
Branding / identity construction	4 (Techtember, Snackfection, Techmas, Frappuccino)	20%	Proper Noun / Noun
Humor / hyperbole / play	4 (Glamazon, Glamageddon, Snackzilla, Brinner, Sharknado)	25%	Noun
Genre-labeling / discourse economy	3 (Vlog, Clickbait, Blogumentary, Infotainment)	20%	Noun / Verb
Affective / evaluative shorthand	2 (Hangry, Ambivert)	10%	Adjective / Noun
Sociolinguistic indexing / community membership	2 (Spanglish, Pokémon)	10%	Noun / Proper Noun
Technicalization / lexical condensation	2 (Infotainment, Staycation)	10%	Noun
Memetic / viral utility	1 (Brangelina)	5%	Proper Noun
Pedagogical / explicative	0	0%	

Pragmatic / Functional Distribution

In relation to the morphological processes used in the formation of portmanteau words, overlapping and concatenative blends recorded (60%), overlapping and concatenative blends as morphological processes in forming portmanteau words are found. This reflects that brevity and phonological smoothness are key characteristics in naturally-formed portmanteaux. Most YouTube portmanteaux resemble their root words which gives clue as to meaning, comprehension, and accessible humor for the audiences. The YouTube portmanteau holders for the opaque, branded ones giving meaning and clarity in favor of serving identity or commercial purposes. As for the pragmatic functions applied, humor and branding stood out with 45%. This shows that portmanteaux are created mainly for purposes of entertainment, self-promotion and not for any linguistic necessity.

From the 20 YouTube videos analyzed, it is clear that the primary guiding principles for portmanteau creation are phonological economy, social utility, and the purpose is to entertain, reveal brand, and provide digital audiences with a sense of identity. The creation of fresh morphemes aligns with YouTube's affective engagement and use of algorithmic visibility (meme, catchy and friendly words). YouTube encourages creativity in shape-making. Particularly, the use of blending morphs to communicate hybrid



ideas is very prevalent. The hybrid ideas merge food, technology, and media. The aim here is not linguistic efficiency, but relational performativity. Portmanteaux create engagement and signal identity.

Conclusions

Analyzing YouTube portmanteau words qualitatively and quantitatively shows the following points:

1. Portmanteau words flourish in everyday language and are created as a reflection of language creativity.
2. Pragmatic and contextual elements play decisive roles in the production, reception, and understanding of portmanteau words.
3. Blending is a productive morphological process that achieves linguistic economy and social performativity simultaneously.
4. The blends of words to form portmanteau words serve sociolinguistic functions aim to creatively communicate, express identity, and engage with audiences, rather than a need for efficient word formation. Morphological Productivity and Form Overlapping and concatenative blending predominates constitute about 60% of forms. This indicates that English is used mostly in the form of blends that are phonologically seamless, compact, and easy to remember. This structural compactness is also a characteristic of digital speech which is fast and informal. Fusions of brands and proper names (e.g., Brangelina, Frappuccino) demonstrate that the blend model can easily be used for commercial and cultural lexicalization where newly coined blends become fixed cultural identifiers.
5. Most have this morphological pattern (clippings + full words), others are formed by affixal blending (e.g., *-lish*, *-glish*).
6. Portmanteau words often obtain a new meaning that varies in part or as a whole from the meanings of its parts.
7. Some portmanteau words can have different interpretations based on the context.
8. Some portmanteau words are changeable while others seem to be relatively timeless in avoiding changing or being abandoned.
9. Once portmanteau words are localised, they become global such as *cosplay*, *Pokémon* and *Hallyu*..
10. Portmanteau words can indicate negative aspects, such as a call for courtesy, elimination from certain social groups, rejection, mockery or dissatisfaction.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cheng, H. M. & Hoe, S. Z. (2022). Using Portmanteau to Create Meanings in New Physiology Words. *AMEI's Current Trends in Diagnosis & Treatment*. 6 (2), 45–51. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Association of Medical Education Institutions of Malaysia (AMEI).
- [2] Darrell, H. A. R. D. Y. (2009). Product naming in the classroom: a case study of word formation.
- [3] De Silva, C. (2018). Where Truth Lies in Advertising. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(6), 573–589. Abingdon, England: Routledge / Taylor & Francis Group.
- [4] Durrant, P. & Mathews-Aydinli, J. (2013). A Function-First Approach to Identifying Formulaic Language in Academic Writing.
- [5] Fandrych, I. (2016). Submorphemic Elements in the Formation of Acronyms, Blends, and Clippings. In K. Allan (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Linguistics* (pp. 245–260). London, England: Routledge / Taylor & Francis Group.
- [6] Goddard, C., & Sadow, L. (2021). "It is the Economy, Stupid": The Everyday Semantics of a Geopolitical Key Word. *Journal of Postcolonial Linguistics*, 5(1), 226–238.
- [7] Hill, T. (2023). Spectacle, Fashion and the Dancing Experience in Britain, 1960–1990 (Jon Stratton). *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*. *Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 15(1), 119–122. Melbourne, Australia: Monash University Publishing.
- [8] HUI, M., LIU, J., & HUI, Y. (2019). A Pragmatic Study on the Conversational Functions of Internet Catchwords. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 9(12), 1495–1503. Finland: Academy Publisher (Helsinki).



- [9] Huseynova, R., Aliyeva, N., Habibova, K., & Heydarov, R. (2024). The evolution of the English language in the Internet and social media era. *Cadernos de Educação, Tecnologia e Sociedade*, 17(se4), 299–314. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- [10] Imperovich, V., Alekseev, A., & Lazarenko, A. (2021). The Use of Portmanteau Words in the Modern English Language. Baigaskina, Z. & Erzhanova, Z. (Eds.), *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature*, 10(5), 55–61. Almaty, Kazakhstan: International Journal of Applied Linguistics Press.
- [11] Lahlou, H., & Ho-Abdullah, I. (2021). The Fine Line between Compounds and Portmanteau Words in English: A Prototypical Analysis. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(4), 1684-1694. Ankara, Turkey: Turkish Association for Applied Linguistics.
- [12] MacCarthy, M. (2021). Using Dialectic Thematic Analysis in Dark Tourism: Combining Deductive and Inductive Reasoning in a Modular Mmethod. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 48, 386-394. Perth, Australia: Edith Cowan University / Elsevier Australia.
- [13] Parc, C. (2018) *Ingo Plag, Word-Formation in English*. Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics, 2018. *Book review published in Language*, 94(2), e236–e238. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Rastelli, S. (2009). Learner Corpora without Error Tagging. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*, 5(2), 183–205. Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter Mouton.
- [15] Rimmer, J., Wakeman, I., Sheeran, L., & Sasse, M. A. (1999). Examining Users' Repertoire of Internet Applications. *Interacting with Computers*, 11(5), 495–509. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press / Elsevier Science.
- [16] Sari, S. W., Martiwi, R., & Nisa, B. (2021). Portmanteau Words of English Food and Beverage Names in Indonesia. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 5(S1), 735–749. Jakarta, Indonesia: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia / Lingcure Press.
- [17] Seewoester, S. (2009). Linguistic Ambiguity in Language-based Jokes. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 22(2), 145–163. Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter Mouton.
- [18] Tillery, D. & Bloomfield, E. F. (2022). Hyperrationality and Rhetorical Constellations in Digital Climate Change Denial: A Multi-Methodological Analysis of the Discourse of Watts Up with That. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 31(2), 135–152. Philadelphia, PA, USA: Taylor & Francis / Routledge.