

# SEMANTIC MOTIVATION IN WORD FORMATIONS OF THE LANGUAGE REFORM MOVEMENT<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

*From the last decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century on to the 1840s, a cultural movement intended to “re-vitalise” the Hungarian language, i.e. to update its lexicon and semantic networks in order to cope with recent European intellectual, economic and technical innovations. The present paper focuses on non-spontaneous word formations invented by the language reform movement, presented as instantiations of universal modes of construal also adopted in Hungarian. The noun fogalom ‘concept’ is partly a calque, partly a result of metaphorisation, anyag ‘material’ is a calque, könnyelmű ‘light-minded’ represents conceptual integration (blend), while alak ‘form’ marks the renovation of an obsolete Hungarian word. Each semantic structure is conceptually strongly motivated, providing sufficient reason for the language reformers to invent these lexemes. A much larger part of words created by the language reform movement conforms to conventionalised conceptual and linguistic construal patterns of Hungarian (to the “nature of the Hungarian language”) than has been recognised in the specialised literature on the basis of evaluative criteria. The semantic analyses show that artificial word formation follows general cognitive schemas, albeit with a naïve linguistic knowledge.*

**Keywords:** conceptual integration (blend), metaphor, motivation, language reform movement, word formation, calque

1. It is widely known that the Hungarian language reform movement of the late 18th and early 19th centuries brought with it a high number of new word formations. Furthermore, it is also common knowledge that the newly formed words following varied patterns prompted several debates. Typical reactions to new word formations included outright rejection (with the new words considered incompatible with the nature of the language) and amazement at the curious, exotic word formation processes.

Upon closer inspection, however, at least certain types of word formation popular in the language reform movement display widely used patterns of semantic construal both with regard to the history of Hungarian and to universal tendencies. Thus, a semantic analysis produces the (otherwise not particularly surprising) conclusion that the word formations in question are neither incompatible with the nature of the language nor especially exotic. In what follows, I will discuss four examples in detail, each instantiating a characteristic type of word formation.

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The word *fogalom* 'concept' is an instance of calque and metaphorisation at the same time, *anyag* 'material' is a calque, *könnyelmű* 'light-minded, frivolous' is the result of conceptual integration (blending), whereas *alak* 'form' comes from the restoration of an archaic, obsolete word. I will illustrate the basically consensual views of Hungarian language historians with excerpts from Géza Bárczi's influential presentation of the "biography" of Hungarian as part of cultural history (Bárczi 1966), and contrast these views with cognitive semantic analyses (see Langacker 1987, 2008; Tolcsvai Nagy 2011, 2013).

As a prerequisite for the analysis, it is necessary to outline what meaning is, how it relates to knowledge of the world and to the form of linguistic expressions. Through their meanings, linguistic expressions represent and symbolise some part of the world. Meaning is conceptual in character. Concepts are formed via processes of human cognition. Concepts have an experiential basis, they are derived from experiences. As part of cognition, percepts are processed by the human mind, abstracting crucial components (e.g. properties) and schematically arranging them into groups, categories, i.e. concepts. A concept thus derived or a part thereof constitutes the semantic pole of a linguistic sign, standing in symbolic correspondence to the phonological pole.

As a function of human cognition, linguistic sign represent conceptually structured, mentally construed contents. Language does not reflect entities of the world, but rather represents them as they are re-construed mentally via cognition. The speaker is not searching for or employing meanings of ready-made expressions, but rather conceptually processes comprehended things and phenomena of the world, and expresses them by more or less conventional conceptual structures, i.e. semantic structures associated with symbolic linguistic expressions. As the semantic poles of linguistic expressions, concepts can still undergo adjustments in the wake of newly processed experiences.

The conceptual patterns underlying semantic structures follow general patterns of cognition. Cognitive processes shape the semantic structures of linguistic elements in several ways. Key semantic factors resting on cognitive processes include categorisation, the directing of attention, perspectivisation, figure/ground alignment and construal.

2. Bárczi (1996: 308) has the following to say about calques, i.e. translations of words on a morpheme-by-morpheme basis: "As in the case of derivations of the language reform movement, the results of compounding can also be criticised for the fact that many new words are literal translations, or calques, of foreign words, and reflect views which are alien [from Hungarian]".<sup>2</sup> Our first example, the noun *fogalom* 'concept' demonstrates the dual nature of calques with its semantic structure. On the one hand, the pattern is "alien", coming from another language. On the other, it is also well-integrated into the Hungarian way of construing the concept in question, supported by semantic networks.

The noun *fogalom*, symbolising the concept of CONCEPT, is a morphological and semantic structure constituted by the verb *fog* and the nominalising suffix *-alom* according to the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of Hungarian (Benkő ed. 1967: 936). The noun was the product of the language reform movement (with its first record coming from 1828), based on artificial (non-spontaneous) word formation. The dictionary lists the following, historically documented meanings of the word: i. knowledge, comprehension, ii. a basic contentful unit

<sup>2</sup> „Mint a nyelvújítási szóképzés esetében, az összetétellel kapcsolatban is joggal lehet kifogásolni, hogy számos új szó más nyelvek szavainak szó szerinti fordítása, tükörszava, és idegen szemléleten alapszik.”

of thought, iii. ability to comprehend, iv. composition, formulation v. a person or object that is an outstanding specimen of its kind.

The creation of the Hungarian noun *fogalom* was supported by the analogy of Latin, where the noun *conceptus* is derived from the verb *concipere* 'hold together'. The other morphological and semantic schema at work was the German equivalent *der Begriff*, derived from the verb *begreifen* 'grasp, comprehend'. Even at first sight it may be obvious that the Latin word *conceptus* and its family (such as *conceptio*) are related to the concept of CONCEIVE. In Hungarian, the words *fogan* 'conceive (of a baby)' and *fogantatás* 'conception' also come from the verb *fog*, this derivation going back to a much earlier period.

Here, only two factors can be discussed in detail that motivate the production and comprehension of the semantic structure of *fogalom* 'concept'. One is the metaphorical basis of the noun *fogalom* 'concept' (this must have played an important role in the semantic history of the corresponding Latin, German and English nouns). The other is the supporting matrix, the immediate conceptual network surrounding the word in Hungarian.

The morphological root of *fogalom* is the verb *fog*, an ancient element of Hungarian whose primary meaning is 'grasp, hold in one's hand'. What is the semantic relationship between HOLDING IN ONE'S HAND and CONCEPT? From the point of view of objectivist, logical semantics, they seem to have nothing in common. However, human cognition, the mental processing of the world's phenomena operates on the principle of analogy: the cognising human mind connects two different conceptual domains if there is sufficient reason for it. Metaphor is one of the most overt and frequent example for this conceptual structure. The central semantic component of *fogalom* is a metaphorical correspondence.

Metaphor is among other things the key operation at work for understanding a mentally less accessible concept with the help of more accessible ones (cf. Lakoff–Johnson 1980; Kövecses 2005; Gibbs ed. 2008). The basis of metaphor is a mapping between two semantic matrices, in other words two conceptually grounded semantic structures.

The most common type of metaphorical mapping is the understanding of abstract concepts through the expression of more concrete ones. Grasping, or holding an object in one's hand, is a directly physical experience whose linguistic, semantic representations include the verb *fog* and the noun *fogás* 'grasping, holding in one's hand'. By contrast, the meaning of *concept* is by definition abstract. Hungarian has a variety of expressions which relate the concept symbolised by *fog* to those associated with *megért* 'understand' and *tud* 'know', for example *átfog* 'grasp, span, comprehend', *egybefog* 'hold together, understand as related', *felfog* 'comprehend', *megfog* 'grasp, understand', *összefoglal* 'summarise', *megragad (vmit, vminek a lényegét)* 'grasp (something, the essence of something)' and *tapint, rátapint (az elevenére, a lényegre)* 'touch on, put one's finger on (the essence)'. Somebody can be *gyors* or *lassú felfogású* 'quick or slow to grasp things', *fogékony* 'susceptible, responsive', we can learn about his *felfogás* 'conception, view'. A text or an event can be *felfogható* 'comprehensible' or *felfoghatatlan* 'incomprehensible'. In Hungarian, as in many other languages, the concept of GRASPING helps access the concept of COMPREHENSION, CONCEPT FORMATION, via metaphorical mappings. One key component of these mappings is the concept of CONTROL. In the source domain of the metaphor, this pertains to physical control over an object (as a matter of direct sensorimotor experience), whereas in the target domain it concerns mental control over the phenomena that one has understood, i.e. knowledge as a more indirect, abstract kind of experience (see Sweetser 1990; Tolcsvai Nagy 2001).

Next I will outline conceptual, semantic network of the noun *fogalom* based on Hungarian data. This can be carried out in two domains: firstly, by examining metaphorical exten-

sions in the family of words associated with *fog*, and secondly by presenting the semantic structures of words of Uralic origin which are synonymous with it.

As is clear from the above, the noun *fogalom* 'concept' is derived from the verb *fog* 'grasp, hold'. Similar derivations motivated by the same kinds of semantic operations include *fogad*, *fogadalom*, *fogadás*, *fogadkozik*, *fogadó*, *fogalmaz*, *fogalmazvány*, *fogalmazás*, *fogan*, *fogamat*, *fogantatás*, *fogantyú*, *fogás*, *fogat*, *fogékony*, *foglal*, *foglalkozás*, *foglalkozik*, *foglaló*, *fogó*, *fogós*, and *fogság*. Even without detailed analysis, it is well-known that derivations from *fog* have been created in Hungarian in significant numbers, and further, that these derived words are interrelated to varying degrees semantically, with each expression having its own rich polysemy network including several meanings. While some of the semantic (conceptual) relations between particular pairs of words may not be transparent for the average native speaker, elements of the network reinforce each other conceptually: primary and derivative meanings of the verb *fog*, as well as the direct and common experiential basis of the primary meaning facilitate mental access to the abstract meanings of derived words such as the noun *fogalom*. Therefore, even though the noun *fogalom* was first produced as a calque, it had its natural place in conventionalised semantic networks of Hungarian. The vast network of words in the family of *fog* made it relatively easy to process the new calque which had been formed on a partially artificial basis. Most words produced by the language reform movement were motivated to a similar extent both semantically and morpho-phonologically.

Concepts are complex bodies of knowledge formed by abstraction and schematisation of experience processed by the human mind. The knowledge thus attained is not finite and closed, rather it is susceptible to change in the wake of newly processed experience. As the semantic analysis of *fogalom* made it clear, knowledge as it is understood here is related to the concept of acquiring knowledge in the linguistic data. In Hungarian, as in many other Uralic languages, lexical expressions of CONCEPT are related to the concepts of PHYSICAL PERCEPTION and CONTROL. With regard to *ért* 'understand', the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of Hungarian says that "its primary meaning may have been 'touch'. [...] A similar change is widely documented in both Hungarian and other languages, cf. *ésszel fölér* ['grasp mentally'], *felfog* ['understand'], *fogalom* ['concept'], *megfoghatatlan* 'érthetetlen' ['incomprehensible']; compare also Latin *concipere*, *percipere*; Italian *capire*; French *comprendre*; German *begreifen*, *auffassen*; Finnish *käsittää*: 'megért, felfog' ['understand'] (basically each of these meaning 'megragad, kézbe vesz' ['grasp, take in one's hand'])" (Benkő ed. 1967: 792).<sup>3</sup>

Similar conceptual and semantic structures are presented by the Historical-Etymological Dictionary with regard to the verbs *ért* 'understand' and *tud* 'know'. The historical root of the Hungarian verbs *ért*, *megért* 'understand', viz. *ér-*, comes from the mapping of a tactile experience, as still evidenced by the verbs *érint*, *hozzáér* 'touch'. *Tud* 'know' can also be traced back historically to a meaning related to touching and holding. Moreover, equivalents of *ért* and *tud* in other Uralic languages also have the same conceptual background. To summarise, a large number of Hungarian expressions denoting 'understanding' reflect metaphoric construals with the source domains of touching and holding. This fact contributed to the accommodation, spread and easy comprehension of the newly derived word *fogalom* 'concept'.

<sup>3</sup> "[Az *ért*] eredeti jelentése 'megérint' lehetett. [...] Ilyen változásra mind a magyarból, mind más nyelvekből számos példa idézhető; vö. *ésszel fölér*, *felfog*, *fogalom*, *megfoghatatlan* 'érthetetlen'; továbbá lat. *concipere*, *percipere*; ol. *capire*; fr. *comprendre*; ném. *begreifen*, *auffassen*; finn *käsittää*: 'megért, felfog' (valamennyi tkp. 'megragad, kézbe vesz')."

Géza Bárczi voices similar disapproval with respect to the noun *anyag* 'material'. "With many newly derived words, the starting point, the base, i.e. the root is already objectionable, since its meaning does not match the meaning of the derived word; thus, the derivation is alien from Hungarian perceptions of the world, the whole structure is based on the literal translation of a foreign word which hardly makes any sense in Hungarian"<sup>4</sup> (Bárczi 1966: 305). Here, the examples are *rajong* 'adore' and *üzem* 'factory', among others. In these cases, the criticism is more justified, since the meaning of the roots *raj* 'swarm' and *üz* 'chase; do [in e.g. *sportot üz* 'do sport', *mesterséget üz* 'do some profession']' are difficult to activate in the meaning of the derived word.

The Hungarian noun *anyag* 'material' indeed follows the pattern of the Latin word *materia*. The latter includes the component *mater* 'mother', this is why language reformers saw it justified to derive the Hungarian noun from *anya* 'mother'. However, the concept of MATERIAL presents a complex issue, thus the derivation cannot be simply put down to the imitation of a foreign pattern. The definition of the concept and its corresponding semantically motivated name go beyond direct experience and folk categorisation. Since language reformers aimed to anchor new derivations to existing and previously conventionalised concepts and the words symbolising them, knowledge and beliefs about particular concepts had a strong influence on word formation. In the case of material, a key motivational basis may have been the view whereby material is what the natural body consists of, i.e. it is the raw material from which human creations are derived. This BEING DERIVED FROM SOMETHING is the metaphorical basis of the correspondences *mater* ~ *materia* and *anya* ~ *anyag*. In a philosophical system the correspondences are justified, going back as far as Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*. Involving the concept of MOTHER into the linguistic mapping of MATERIAL was thus a motivated choice in the language reformers' eyes.

3. Historians of Hungarian language and culture regard the renovation of obsolete words as one of the most successful methods of word formation during the language reform movement. Still, disapproving remarks are not uncommon. In his *Biography of the Hungarian language*, Bárczi expresses the following view: "Sometimes when an old word was given a new lease of life, the old meaning was modified as a result of misunderstanding, forced interpretation or arbitrary decisions. For instance, the old meaning of *alak* 'form' had been 'baby doll', *agy* 'brain' used to mean 'skull'; *börtön* 'prison' and *alkalom* 'occasion' had previously meant 'hangman' and 'contract, bargain', respectively"<sup>5</sup> (BÁRCZI 1966: 297). The first example deserves closer scrutiny. According to the *Historical-Etymological Dictionary*, the first record of *alak* comes from 1405, its first meaning is 'baby doll, puppet', its further meanings 'mask', '(my) dear', 'form' (Benkő ed. 1967: 125).

A BABY DOLL or PUPPET represents a person in the form of a physical object. One of its main features is its shape, its contours (Gestalt), which mirrors the general shape of the human body in form and structure (head, trunk, limbs, with appropriate positions and proportions), at varied levels of elaboration and aesthetic appeal. The shape of a human being is

<sup>4</sup> "Számos újonnan képzett szónak már a kiindulópontja, az alapja, azaz a töve kifogásolható, mert ennek jelentése nem illik a származék jelentéséhez; így a származékszó a magyar szemlélettől idegen, az egész képződmény egy idegen szó szolgái fordítása, amelynek a magyarban szinte semmi értelme sincs."

<sup>5</sup> "Olykor e föléleveníítés során az eredeti jelentés félreértés, belemagyarázás vagy tudatos önkény által módosult. Így az *alak* régi jelentése 'bábu' volt, az *agy* régen annyi mint 'koponya'; *börtön* régen 'hóhér', *alkalom* régen 'szerződés, kötés, alku'."

stored as a dominant mental schema in our conceptualisation of humans, and consists in a schematic human body in standing position, with a head, trunk and limbs in appropriate positions. A doll or puppet, whatever its size and function, maps this schematic human form as a physical object. Thus, language reformers did not modify the older meaning of the noun *alak* by “misunderstanding, forced interpretation or arbitrary decisions”, but rather by relying on straightforward if perhaps not fully overt conceptual motivations. The key motivating factor is the similarity in shape between the doll or puppet and the human body. Metaphorical extension and metonymic attention shift may both have played a role in the semantic change. On the one hand, there are conceptual correspondences between the doll and the human body (its form and structure). On the other, the conceptualiser’s attention is shifting from the whole body to its shape and contour, in a part/whole relation (for metonymy, see Kövecses 2005; Kövecses–Radden 1998; Panther–Thornburg eds. 2003; for motivation, cf. Radden–Panther 2004).

4. The greatest sensation and the most heated debates are provoked by results of contraction or blending. The noun *rovar* ‘insect’, which was derived from *rovátkolt* ‘notched’ and *barom* ‘animal’, makes for popular learning material even at secondary school lessons. Géza Bárczi discusses this phenomenon as follows: “The strangest method of word formation is the contraction of two truncated words (or a truncated and a full word), such as *csőr* ‘beak’ < *cső* ‘pipe’ + *orr* ‘nose’ (at first also as *csörr*), *könnyelmű* ‘light-minded’ < *könnyű elméjű* ‘light minded’, *lég* ‘air’ < *levegő-ég* ‘floating-sky’, *rovar* ‘insect’, formerly *robar* < *rovátkolt* ‘notched’ + *barom* ‘animal’, *higany* ‘mercury’ < *hig* ‘thin’ + *anyag* ‘material’ etc. These of course no longer make a comic impression, as we are not thinking about their origins; nor are they incomprehensible as they have entered common usage; however, they must have struck contemporary observers in the same way as we struck by *ding* ‘the green outer cover of walnuts, which was created by contraction from *dió* ‘walnut’ and *ing* ‘shirt’”<sup>6</sup> (Bárczi 1966: 307).

This method of word formation may seem less comic when its general semantic and morphological schemas are explored in detail. *Rovar* and its companions, including *könnyelmű* (to be highlighted here) were created by the important operation of conceptualisation and semantic construal known as conceptual integration. Linguistic expressions (e.g. words) are simply put next to one another in a larger construction (phrase or clause), but rather they are linked by many kinds of semantically important elaborative relations. The conceptual mapping of some part of the world is made possible by the establishing of connections between conceptually and therefore also semantically related linguistic elements.

One method for this is the emergence of cognitive connections pertaining to context. In linguistic interactions, information is always processed within a context, which consists partly of the speech situation and partly from the preceding and following discourse. Cognition arranges experiences in mentally separated domains (e.g. semantic structures and substructures thereof). These domains are connected on the basis of various semantic pat-

<sup>6</sup> ”A legfurcsább szóalkotásmód azonban két megcsonkított (vagy egy csonka és egy teljes) szó összevonása, ilyenek, mint *csőr* < *cső* + *orr* (eleinte *csörr* is), *könnyelmű* < *könnyű elméjű*, *lég* < *levegő-ég*, *rovar*, előbb *robar* < *rovátkolt* + *barom*, *higany* < *hig* + *anyag* stb. Ezek persze ma már nem látszanak komikusnak, mert nem gondolunk keletkezésük módjára, s nem is érthetetlenek, mert régen átmentek a közhasználatba, ámde a kortársakra úgy hathatott egy-egy ilyen szó, mint miránk például a *ding* ‘a zöld dió burka’, melyet a *dió* meg az *ing* szavak összerántásával alkotott teremtője.”

terns (such as composite structures and reference-point constructions), giving rise to a new linguistic unit. In other cases the connection between concepts emerges when the understanding of one of them facilitates the understanding of the other (cf. metaphor and metonymy). These modes of connection may also co-occur. Conceptual integration is a dynamic conceptual structure evolving in the current discourse space: as part of a larger linguistic structure (clause or text), two or more concepts give rise to the emergence of complex and new meaning within a particular context (cf. Fauconnier 1985; Fauconnier–Sweetser eds. 1996; Kövecses–Benczes 2010: 173–191). The new meaning may or may not undergo conventionalisation.

In conceptual integration, multiple domains are connected, with each cognitive domain being a mental space. Mental spaces are conceptual “packages” that the speaker and the hearer create on-the-fly during discourse from parts of their previous knowledge, for purposes of understanding the information conveyed. These mental spaces are connected, transformed and replaced as discourse unfolds (cf. Fauconnier–Turner 1998: 139; Fauconnier–Turner 2002).

It deserves special emphasis that mental spaces are often created in the spur of the moment and that discourse and thought are characterised by the building up of networks of mental spaces. While mental spaces are not identical with linguistic structures, they are built up as prompted by linguistic expressions. Linguistic expressions may build new mental spaces, populated by elements and their relations. Expressions creating new spaces or referring to mental spaces previously introduced in the discourse are called space builders, and they include adpositional phrases, adverbials, conjunctions and subject-verb constructions. In the process of building up mental spaces in a text, one mental space may be used to generate another.

The emergence of a blend is linked to five optimality conditions. These are the following (Fauconnier–Turner 1998: 162–163):

“Integration: The blend must constitute a tightly integrated scene that can be manipulated as a unit. More generally, every space in the blend structure should have integration.

Topology: For any input space and any element in that space projected into the blend, it is optimal for the relations of the element in the blend to match the relations of its counterpart.

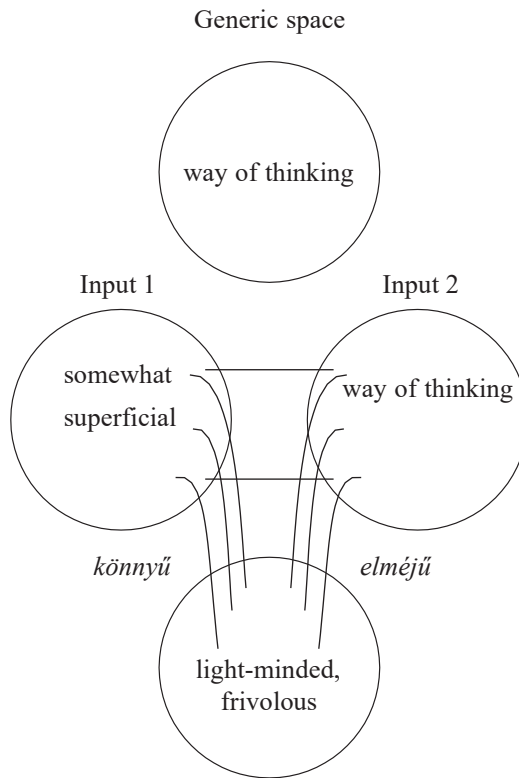
Web: Manipulating the blend as a unit must maintain the web of appropriate connections to the input spaces easily and without additional surveillance or computation.

Unpacking: The blend alone must enable the understander to unpack the blend to reconstruct the inputs, the cross-space mapping, the generic space, and the network of connections between all these spaces

Good reason: All things being equal, if an element appears in the blend, there will be pressure to find significance for this element. Significance will include relevant links to other spaces and relevant functions in running the blend.”

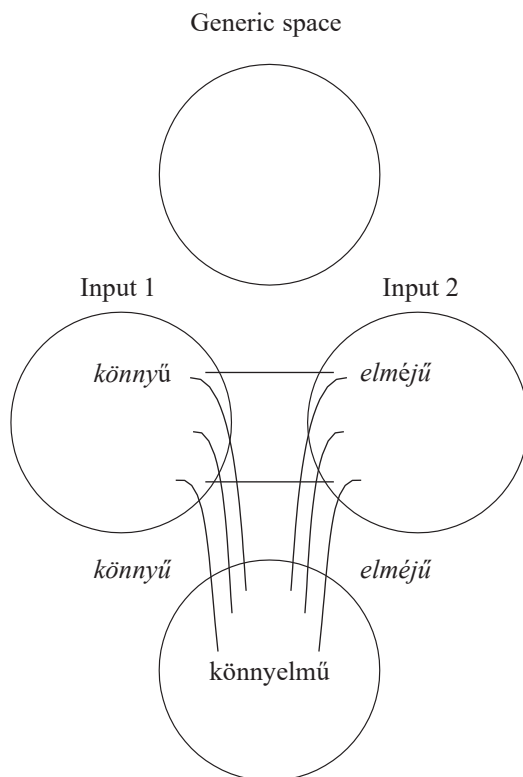
The adjective *könnyelmű* ‘frivolous, light-minded’ is the product of conceptual integration from the multiword expression *könnyű elméjű*, where *könnyű* means ‘light’ and *elméjű* means ‘minded’. More precisely, it displays both conceptual and phonological integration (or phonological fusion) at the same time. Conceptually, the two mental spaces of *könnyű* ‘not fully responsible, somewhat superficial’ and *elméjű* ‘[person] characterised by some kind of mind-

set, thought pattern' give rise to a single blend, a mixed conceptual structure. Phonologically, three parts of the two words' phonological structure make it into the blend (marked by italics: *könnyű elméjű*). This operation is not unknown to Hungarian, and it cannot be considered rare either. Well-known examples of conceptual as well as phonological integration include *csalagút* 'channel tunnel' (from *csatorna* 'channel' and *alagút* 'tunnel'), *csokréta* 'bouquet' (from *csokor* 'bunch of flowers' and *bokréta* 'bouquet') and *ordibál* 'shout' (from *ordít* 'shout' and *kiabál* 'shout'). In the latter two examples, the synonymy of integrated elements also plays a part. Figure 1 below presents conceptual integration in the case of *könnyelmű*.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual integration in the semantic structure of *könnyelmű*





**Figure 2:** Phonological integration in the case of *könnymű* (with elements transferred to the blend marked by italics)

*Könnymű* only partially conforms to the optimality conditions of integration. In this blend, i. a well-integrated conceptualisation emerges, ii. relations between elements in the input spaces correspond to relations between elements in the blend, iii. the connections between the blend and the input spaces are conceptually adequate but phonologically less so, the blend is not easy to manage phonologically, iv. Hungarian speakers find it difficult to unpack the blend, the two input spaces are hard to recognise, v. the significance of elements in the blend is appropriate, independently of the difficulty of phonological unpacking, since *könnymű* represents a successful innovation.

Conceptual integration is an important process type of word formation and neologism. In the Hungarian lexicon, it has supported several neologisms. These include for example *csokoholista* 'person addicted to chocolate', *kutyaszitter* 'dog-sitter' (*kutya* 'dog'), *gerillakeresztész* 'guerilla gardener', *kormányablak* 'an interface for managing administrative duties', literally 'government window' (for a detailed survey, see Sólyom 2014).

5. Processes of semantic and morphophonological construal adopted by speakers in the long history of Hungarian word formation deserve detailed investigations. In this paper, the focus has been on non-spontaneous word formations invented by the language reform movement, presented as instantiations of universal modes of construal also adopted in Hungarian. The noun *fogalom* 'concept' is partly a calque, partly a result of metaphorisation, *anyag* 'materi-

al' is a calque, *könnyelmű* 'light-minded' represents conceptual integration (blend), while *alak* 'form' marks the renovation of an obsolete Hungarian word. Each example has been shown to be conceptually strongly motivated, providing sufficient reason for the language reformers to invent these lexemes. A much larger part of words created by the language reform movement conforms to conventionalised conceptual and linguistic construal patterns of Hungarian (to the "nature of the Hungarian language") than has been recognised in the specialised literature on the basis of evaluative criteria. Impressions of a word's strange, unusual, comic or foreign character are prompted by the novelty of the word in question rather than being grounded in a system of well-founded causes in cognition, at least in the examples discussed in this paper.

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