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## Creativity and routine in word formation: four case studies

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The hypothesis tested is that creativity in word formation is a matter of contextualization and perception; i.e. mixture of: (perception of) heightened effort on the part of the producer; novelty (or unexpectedness); conceptual clash and/or contrast and (invited) interpretative effort on the part of the comprehender. The mechanisms employed are recombination (Talmy 2003) of routine patterns, processes and recognizable elements and exertion of greater cognitive effort on both sit(d)es – production and comprehension. The producer’s effort is to achieve unexpectedness that would resonate into successful efforts for effective reverse-engineering by the comprehender, for “reenacting awareness” of motivational triggers and employed techniques or of a source for a local analogy.

- (1) “I am such a **do**lent man, / I **ep**tly work each day; / My acts are all **beci**lic, / I’ve just **ane** things to say.” (*A Very Descript Man*)

Although the leading factors here are context and textual form/genre (a poem), the recognition of purposeful play inviting interpretative effort and de-affixation are a move away from routine patterns, the whole process of reverse-engineering is based on awakened awareness of a mundane and almost automatized routine pattern - affixation.

- (2) *Захая* [zahaya, ‘start caring’]

The translation coinage (*King Lear*) is based on the synchronically simplex *нехая* [nehaya, ‘do not care’]; is devoid of playfulness and is further supported by the contextual appearance of the de-affixed neologism *хая* [haya, ‘care’].

- (3) *Махмурлек*, [mahmurlek < mahmurLuK+LeK [“hangover”+“cure”]]

This novel blend in Bulgarian excludes most of the external factors (context, conscious effort, etc.) and exploits exclusively the choreographed “conceptual rewiring” (Veale 2012) between creator and comprehender.

On the basis of the analysis of three data sets and the semantics of the *-gasm* family in English, it is concluded that creativity relies heavily on routine patterns and is best thought of as “the process whereby we become aware of the present and possible conditions for the organization of cognition, and whereby we enable others to reenact that awareness” (de Beaugrande 1978: i).

**References:** • De Beaugrande, R. (1978). *Linguistics and Creativity*. Paper, Louisville, Kentucky, April 1978. • Talmy, L. (2003). *Recombination in the Evolution of Language*. *CLS* 2: 33-66. • Veale, T. (2012). *Exploding the Creativity Myth. The Computational Foundations of Linguistic Creativity*. London: Bloomsbury.