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## ***Helicopter Moms* and *Майки-орлици* – The Crossways of Determinative Nominal Compounding and Its Interpretations**

### **Abstract**

The interpretation and analysis of determinative (root) nominal compounding in the Anglo-Saxon and Bulgarian linguistic traditions are contrasted with the aim of illustrating that pattern or structural borrowing should be accompanied by introducing into the target language metalinguistic discourses, the interpretation of the phenomenon in the source language metalinguistic discourses or at least employ comparative concepts in order to recognize the phenomenon for what it is. The crosstalk between linguistic conceptualizations of a uniform phenomenon, which violates none of the linguistic systems yet fails to be recognized for what it is in the target language, leads to overzealous loyalty to language particularism, a Slavic, morpheme-based approach to word formation and unnecessary classificatory chopping into different groups of formally and semantically uniform items. Starting from misconceptions of headedness and intracompound relations, *майка-орлица* [mayka orlica, “mother eagle”, *helicopter mom*] is interpreted in Bulgarian as an instance of izafet, or a compositionally formed phrasal complex name with an implicit comparison semantic operator, while in English its semantic counterpart, *helicopter mom/parent*, is simply recognized as a figuratively coined determinative nominal compound. The non-recognition of the identity of this phenomenon in the two languages is a fallout of the analytical models adopted and their non-translatability. Accepting less classification-obsessed linguistic approaches to analysing linguistic creativity in the field of word formation reduces extant crosstalk and enhances crosslinguistic cross-pollination in (meta)linguistic terms. What is at crossways is the metalinguistic discourses, not the language phenomena.

**Keywords:** determinative nominal compounds, figurativity, comparative categories, English, Bulgarian

### **Introduction**

Compounds are among the most frequently encountered words in the languages of the world. Štekauer, Valera and Körtvélyessy (2012: 309) rank compounding as second only after suffixation in terms of productivity cross-linguistically, with 90% of the languages of the world using it freely (compared to the leading suffixation (96%) and followed by reduplication (80%), prefixation (72%) and conversion (63%)). In the Bulgarian analytical tradition, it is claimed that Bulgarian is predominantly an affixal

language (Avramova and Baltova 2016: 3052), even though phrasal word formation is recognized by Murdarov (1983) as the most active means of producing new lexemes in the language. Restricted to the literary language, compounding (dubbed composition) is recognized as second in importance in the ecology of Bulgarian word formation (Avramova and Baltova 2016: 3052).

The typology of compounds is diverse and frequently contested (e.g. Bisetto and Scalise 2005, Wälchli 2005, Bauer 2011, 2020, Masini et al. 2023), but the outstanding pattern of creating new lexemes via composition seems to be the unmarked combination into a single naming unit of two (or more) nouns without any linking element. Known as root or primary nominal compounds (as opposed to synthetic compound nouns, co-compounds, bahuvrihi compounds, for example) such constructions contain nouns exclusively without any overt indication of the internal relationship between the constituents, which leaves unlimited space for conceptual integration and meaning computation of the usually non-compositional whole (which is not the case in Greek, where there are compound-dedicated noun forms, see Ralli 2013). Such compounds have been recognized as having a strong paradigmatic nature, extremely diversified and unpredictable semantics, and high productivity (Fernández-Domínguez 2020: 82, Masini et al. 2023).

The ubiquity of such constructions can be associated with Radden and Panther's recognition of compounds as "especially interesting complex expressions in that they are *conventional names* that highlight conceptual parts of a more complex conceptualization [...] [and] are motivated by language independent factors, namely salience, metonymy, and economy" (2004: 5, emphasis added). The fact that the basic motivation for the production of compounds is non-language dependent but is associated with patterns in human cognition indicates that similarities may be expected in the constitution of compounds, rather than highly marked language-specific peculiarities, especially in the case of plain nominal compounding. Common characteristics of this type of compounds are to be expected in all languages, as they allow for the establishment of an optimal ration between the economy of effort and employed language material (level of explicitness or transparency) played against the maximization of opportunity for competing interpretations.

In other words, if we adopt as a comparative concept (see Haspelmath 2010: 663–665 for definitions of comparative concepts and how they contrast with descriptive categories) *binominal lexeme* (Pepper 2020: 1) or *binominal* [ $N_1N_2$ ] *construction*, we can agree with the following definition "lexical items that consist primarily of two nominal constituents and whose function is to name a (complex) concept that involves an unstated (or underspecified) relation between two entities" (Pepper 2020: 1). This definition, formulated as a framework-free one (Haspelmath 2015: 290–291), allows for recognizing the commonalities in language phenomena in diverse languages (determinative nominal compounding in our case) and avoiding metalinguistic cross-talk. It also makes possible the concession that at least

word-formationally *helicopter parent*, *soccer mom* and *майка-орлица* [майка-орлица, *helicopter mom*] are bare determinative nominal compounds, albeit with positionally opposed heads. Despite the sociocultural differences that can be read off the semantic nuances within the compound families in the two languages, the two word formation families display the same type of  $[N_1N_2]N$  (bi)nominal construction, where  $N$  is a single name of a complex concept, namely a determinative compound.

### Bare determinative nominal compounds in Bulgarian

Among the various types of compounds, binominal  $[N_1N_2]N$  constructions of a subordinative, determinative type with predominantly syntagmatically modifying relations but conceptually including argumentative relations without being restricted to modification, have been identified as the most open to multifarious interpretations due to the lack of specification of  $R$  (the nature of both the morphosyntactic and the morphosemantic and conceptual relation) in the formula for their composition  $[N_i R N_j]N_k$ . Dubbing such compounds “[ $N_1N_2$ ] constructions” is motivated by one linguistic and one metalinguistic consideration. From the point of view of language properties, there has long been recognized a phylogenetic indeterminacy of the morphosyntactic nature and general classification of  $N_1N_2$  combinations (Heine and Kuteva 2006). Metalinguistically, as a result of the crosstalk between analytical traditions stemming from morpheme-based, rule-governed and classificatory approaches (the Bulgarian tradition of mainstream word-formation analysis) and output-oriented, constraint-regulated interpretative approaches, based on a paradigmatic and lexeme-based understanding of word-formation phenomena (the Anglo-Saxon mainstream analytical tradition), there is confusing variability in the labelling of such constructions in the word-formation literature on and in Bulgarian (Moskovska 1995, Alexieva 2002, Avramova 2003, Kirova 2006, Kovatcheva 2006, Radeva 2007, etc.). The labels encompass “nominal phrases”, “lexical combinations”, “phraseological unities”, “lexicalized collocations”, “synaptic combinations”, “binomials (compositional appositive names)”, “appositive compounds”, “izafet”, “loanblends”, “hybrid constructions”, etc. The variability stems not only from the analytical tradition but also from the unease of recognizing the pattern as a productive word-formation model in Bulgarian, even though in the past two decades such compounds established their viable ecological niche in the language. Such determinative root compounds, without a linking vowel and no morphophonological compound-dedicated changes in any of the constituents, are still cautiously considered a novelty in the language and identified as distinct from the extant native nominal compounds: of synthetic nature, e.g.,  $[N\text{-interfix-}N]N$ , e.g., *езиковед* [ezikoved, “ezik-O-ved”, “language-O-lead”, *linguist*] or  $[N_1N_2]N$  of an appositive or coordinative/copulative nature, e.g., *плод-зеленчук* [plod-zelenčuk, “fruit-vegetable”, *greengrocer's*]. Their gradual establishment in the Bulgarian language may be interpreted as an instance of structural borrowing (or pattern borrowing) from English via the process of constructionalization as a mechanism of incremental change.

Bulgarian word formationists consider the  $[N_1N_2]N$  construction with determinative, modifying semantic relations, atypical in Bulgarian as it is far removed from the prototype of nominal compounding in the language. The atypicality of the compound type is predicated on: the phylogenetic indeterminacy of the morpho-syntactic nature and general classification of NN combinations (Heine and Kuteva 2007: 284), the nature of the predominant extant nominal compounds in the language, the firm belief that affixal derivation is far more typical for the language than compounding and, last but not least, understanding the nature of nominal modification in the language.

Vakareliyska and Kapatsinski (2014: 278) identify the type seen in *екшън герой* [ekšân-geroy, *action hero*] as a hybrid formation or in their terminology as a “loanblend  $[N[N]]$  construction”, in which “an English noun is used as the modifier, but without the addition of the normally required Slavic adjectival suffix and gender/number–case agreement desinence.” The hybridity is two-fold – first one of the compound constituents is a recently borrowed word and second the whole construction violates morphosyntactic rules of the language, i.e. the pattern itself is foreign, and introduces a new pattern within the system of compounding. True though this may have been for the massive appearance of the phenomenon in the 1990s (Vakareliyska and Kapatsinski 2014: 277), such constructions have always existed in the language (not in astonishing quantities) but have not been recognized as such, e.g., *вагон-ресторант* [vagon-restorant, *dining car*], *къща-музей* [kâša muzey, “house museum”]. Second, the grammaticalization of the pattern now allows for both native constituents (though native may mean domesticated, having been borrowed a long time ago), e.g., *голмайстор* [golmaystor, *goal master, goal scorer*], *бинго маниак* [bingo maniak, *bingo addict*]. The initial acceleration of the pattern resulted from constructionalization as evidenced by families of loanblends containing specific loan constituents such as *бизнес* [biznes, *business*] and *екшън* [ekšân, *action*], e.g. *бизнес среща* [biznes sreša, *business meeting*], *бизнес дама* [biznes dama, *business lady*], *бизнес вечеря* [biznes večerya, *business dinner*], *бизнес разговор* [biznes razgovor, *business talks*], etc. and *екшън филм* [ekšân film, *action movie*], *екшън звезда* [ekšân zvezda, *action star*], *екшън режисьор* [ekšân režisyor, *action director*], *екшън прожекция* [ekšân prožekciya, *action showing*], etc. But with the development of native- only constituents, e.g., *куче-касичка* [kuče-kasička, *dog piggy bank*], *слънце-пясък-море туризъм* [slânce-pyasâk-more turizâm, *sun-sand-sea tourism*], etc., it is obvious that grammaticalization has created a novel node with specified formal properties and clearly delineated semantic potential in the modificational construction of Bulgarian.

The constructional change in question has led to the establishment of a compound type that does not differ from the notorious determinative (modifying) nominal compounds in English, which pose differentiation problems with nominal phrases (Bauer and Huddleston 2019: 1664). In Bulgarian, such a problem does not arise,

but all other properties of the compound type can be recognized: i) the naming of a hyponym or subtype of the category named by the semantic head *бизнес вечеря* [biznes večerya, *business dinner*] names a type of dinner; ii) right-headedness both in terms of form and in terms of semantics (though it should be noted that exocentric and semantically left-headed root compounds also exist, *очи-череши* [oči-čereši, *beautiful, dark eyes*] *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, *mother-eagle, helicopter mom*]); iii) no interfix to mark compoundhood status; iv) internal marking (agreement-like plural marking on both constituents suggestive of a modifying, subordinate status – *очи-череши* [oči-čereši, *beautiful, dark eyes*], *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, *mother-eagle, helicopter mom*], even though they do not necessarily indicate the nature of the relationship); v) the naming of a single concept, albeit a complex one; vi) an overall morphosemantic modifying relation between the constituents, even though a variety of immediate semantic (conceptual) relations may be at play, including verb-argument relations (see Downing 1977, Gagné and Shoben 1997, Gagné 2000, 2001, Gagné and Spalding 2004, 2006, 2009, etc.).

The easy accommodation of the compound type into a unique niche within the ecosystems of word formation in Bulgarian and the ecology of the functional domain of modification in the language is granted by its formal simplicity allowing for context-pragmatic adaptability of semantic interpretation. In Vakareliyska and Kapatsinski's analysis (2014: 281), the hybrid construction (as they call the new determinative right-headed nominal compound type advancing in all Slavic languages under the influence of English) is unique with its ability to enhance the naming potential of linguistic elements by providing underspecification of meaning. In the authors' opinion, the underspecification allows for a semantic variety unavailable to any of the native patterns and constitutes an economy-driven simplification. They see the  $[N_i R N_j] N_k$  construction, with an implicit *R*, as the resolution of competition between the *-ov*, *-ski* and *-en* suffixes for deriving adjectives. In other words, as a competition resolution mechanism the new construction opts for underdeterminacy.

In practice, this new compound type enriches the pool of available means for modification encoding modification relations in the language and thus makes it more complex in terms of cognitive load for the speakers of the language to choose the most suitable option. In this compound construction there is nothing to determine or guide the interpretation of *R* and so speakers do not need to compute alternative interpretations that require encoding via an adjectival suffix, which would be more demanding in terms of marking. Native modifying constructions of a different nature, with formally marked adjective constituents (agreement with the head noun within a phrase) or nominal constructions with a preposition display the same polysemy and underdeterminacy. Their interpretation in context will be equally demanding since an automatic standardized interpretation may be triggered that may have to be countered in the immediate context (*криминална биоложка* [kriminalna bioložka, *criminal biologist, forensic biologist vs. biologist who develops criminal activities*]).

or works without permission]). In Kovatcheva's opinion (2006) the type of semantic underdeterminacy displayed by the new compound type is displayed by [Adj.<sub>relational</sub> N] structures and [N prep N] structures in Bulgarian. The range of semantic interpretations of such compounds in Kovatcheva's view (2006: 84–85) is exactly the same as the one discernible in [Adj.<sub>relational</sub> N] modifying construction. We can compare *боб чорба* [bob čorba, *bean soup*] and *бобена чорба* [bobena čorba, *bean soup*] or *чорба от боб* [čorba ot bob, *bean soup*]. Going back to Kovatcheva (2006: 90), all three alternatives are synonymous and in competition, which enhances the complexity of the linguistic system and is not associated with simplification. This seriously challenges Vakareliyska and Kapatsinski's (2014: 281; emphasis added) claim that “the opportunity for underspecification of the relationship between the two nouns in the phrase, thus affording a greater variety of relations than **any of the native Slavic alternatives can**” determines the development of this new type of compound (Vakareliyska and Kapatsinski 2014: 281). Despite the rising number of modifying subordinative compounds in the language and i) their seeming unmotivatedness (i.e. they are not needed to fill a void in the language and furthermore add complexity within the ecosystem of modifying relations in the language) and ii) their morphosemantic deviance and semantic richness, they are still considered the least typical compound type for Bulgarian (Murdarov 1983, Kirova 2006, 2012, Radeva 2007, Brezinski 2012, etc.).

### **How different is a *soccer mom* from *майка-орлица* and can they both be *helicopter parents*?**

The basic crosstalk between the Anglo-Saxon and the Bulgarian analytical traditions of analyzing compounds is concentrated in the conceptualizations of headedness, the notion of endocentricity vs. exocentricity and the recognition of the creative application of metonymy (and other cognitive mechanisms of figurativity) in the analyses of lexeme-creating processes.

For a long time, conceptual metaphor and metonymy have been considered in the Bulgarian analytical tradition as mechanisms for transposing meaning in established lexemes, producing a figurative expression, i.e., as a novel use of a lexical item, extending an established meaning, not as a formal cognitive operation, which underlies numerous linguistic phenomena among which the creation of compounds, i.e. a cognitive mechanism that operates on knowledge domains and their externalization via linguistic encoding. This is one of the reasons why *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*] is not recognized as an equivalent to *helicopter mom* or *soccer mom* word-formationally (of course no reference is made here to the differences in terms of lexical semantics or socio-culturally motivated connotations), even though apart from headedness they have exactly the same properties as compounds. Semantically (in purely lexical terms and in terms of word formation) *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*] is

identical to *helicopter mom* and *soccer mom*. All three are exocentric determinative nominal (a synonym for modifying subordinative) compounds and their status as such is not disputed in the Anglo-Saxon analytical tradition. In the Bulgarian tradition, *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*] is doubly atypical – it is not recognized as a compound but as a binominal phrase, *izafet*, with an implicit comparison semantic operator (Radeva 2007: 58) and second it is glaringly non-compositional and can only be interpreted as a lexical extension (resulting from semantic change, secondary nomination, metaphoric extension, etc.). Truth be told, it is semantically exocentric, its morphosyntactic head is on the left, but it remains a determinative nominal (modifying subordinative) compound. The underlying assumptions that render the compound atypical can be summarized as follows:

a) unlike typical nominal compounds in Bulgarian, which contain a linking vowel, this type does not;

b) typical nominal compounds in Bulgarian are verbocentric and are based on argument/thematic relations compound internally; and

c) typical nominal compounds without a linking vowel are identified as appositive, e.g., *вагон-ресторант* [vagon-restorant, *dining car*], *заместник-директор* [zamestnik-direktor, *deputy director*], *кандидат-студент* [kandidat-student, *student applicant*] (Radeva 2007: 56–58). At best the compounds under investigation are relegated to a specific, isolated class in their own right with an implicit comparison semantic operator (Radeva 2007: 58) as in *очи-черешу* [oči-čereshi, “eyes-cherries”, *large, beautiful eyes*], *гайтан-вежди* [gaytan-veždi, “woollen braid”, *well-shaped eyebrows*], *снага-топола* [snaga-topola, “body-poplar”, *slender body*], etc.

The metalinguistic motivation for ascribing atypicality to determinative nominal compounds can be sought in the heterogeneity of classificatory labels with which such compounds have been associated in the relevant literature (Murdarov 1983, Radeva 2007, Kirova 2012, etc.). To illustrate the heterogeneity a summative list of classificatory labels and groups of non-synthetic nominal compounds in Bulgarian is presented below:

i) *заместник-министър* [zamestnik-ministâr, *deputy minister*], *кандидат-студент* [kandidat-student, “applicant-student”, *student applicant*], *помощник-треньор* [pomoshnik-trenyor, “helper-coach”, *junior coach*] – compositionally formed binominals with a determining relationship;

ii) *касиер-платец* [kasier-platec, “cashier-payer”, *cashier*], *архитект-проектант* [arhitekt-proektant, *architect-designer*], *плод-зеленчук* [plod-zelenčuk], “fruit-vegetable”, *greengrocery*], *кафе-клуб* [kafe-klub, *coffee house*], *храм-паметник* [hram-pametnik], “temple monument”, *a building of cultural and historical value* – compositionally formed appositive complex names with a coordinative relationship;

iii) *град-герой* [grad-geroy, “town-hero”, *hero city*], *песен-изповед* [pesen-izpoved, “song-confession”, *a very moving song*], *среща-диалог* [sreša-dialog,

“meeting-dialogue”, *discussion meeting*] – compositionally formed syntactic formations;

iv) кино център [*kino centâr, film studio*], джаз фестивал [*džaz festival, jazz festival*], etc. – compositionally formed complex naming structures comprising two bare nouns;

v) очи-черешу [*oči-chčereshi, “eyes-cherries”, large, beautiful eyes*], гайтан-вежди [*gaytan-veždi, “woolen braid”, well-shaped eyebrows*], снага-топола [*snaga-topola, “body-poplar”, slender body*], etc. – izafet, compositionally formed complex names with an implicit comparison semantic operator.

This heterogeneity may easily be overcome, if we adopt a set of uniform criteria and discard the degree of similarity to syntactic phrases as a classificatory parameter (Murdarov 1983 and Kirova 2012). It can be argued that the heterogeneity comes from the failure to recognize the possibility for alternative and parameterized headedness (Scalise and Guevara 2006, Guevara and Scalise 2009, Scalise, Fábregas, and Forza 2009, Scalise and Fábregas 2010) and the recognition that both attributive and argumental (thematic) relations can hold between the constituents of a nominal compound.

The five identified groups of NNs constitute just two basic types:

1) coordinative with two subgroups – co-compounds (or hypernymic coordinative compounds) e.g., *плод-зеленчук* [*plod-zelenčuk, “fruit-vegetable”, green-grocery*], *кафе-клуб* [*kafe-klub, coffee house*], and appositional coordinative compounds – e.g., *архитект-проектант* [*arhitekt-proektant, architect-designer*]; and 2) determinative compounds.

Determinative is preferable over modificational/attributive for the following reasons: 1) the construction displays a vast array of intracompound relations, not all of which are of attributive nature; and 2) the schematic meaning of the construction – i.e., the non-head N determines and delimits the interpretation of the other N in the compound; and 3) the term iconically mirrors Marchand’s (1967: 380) recognition of genuine compounds based on determinant-determinatum relations.

The unease of accepting the determinative type of noun + noun compound in Bulgarian may be associated with the unease associated with recognizing: i) the fact that both featural modifying and thematic/argumentative conceptual relations may be encoded by **R** between the constituents of a compound and ii) the fact that headedness is not a monodimensional concept but is measured in terms of categoriality and semantics and can be positionally variable within a single language, without changing the nature of the whole. In *зарче касичка* [*zarče kasichka, dice bank*] the relationship is one of featural modification while in *банка издател/платеж* [*banka izdatel/platec, issuing bank/paying bank*] the nature of the relationship is argument-thematic, a type of relationship traditionally associated with synthetic and parasynthetic compounds (on the distinction between the two types see Melloni and Bisetto 2010). Truth be told, the nature of **R** can only be analyzed posteriori,

since it has to be determined for each individual compound on the basis of the lexical meaning of the resultant compound (backed up by encyclopedic and contextual knowledge), which validates a specific, plausible *R* interoperation (on the contextual dependence of the meaning of modifying root compounds see Downing 1977).

In the psycholinguistic literature the argument has been going on over the property assignment vs. the thematic relational fusion of the two Ns in  $[N_1N_2]$  constructions (see Gagné 2000, Estes 2003, Jones and Golonka 2012 and the literature cited therein). The two views should be reconciled for a number of reasons: 1) first  $[N_1N_2]$  compounds in Bulgarian display all frequently postulated semantic relations; 2) psycholinguistically interpreted thematic relations in compounds are not syntax-driven but are conceptually motivated. Thematic relations refer to the link between concepts that occur together in time and space. Thematically related concepts play complementary roles in a given action or event frame and are amenable to a “script” interpretation (Jones and Golonka 2012). The third reason has been succinctly formulated by Gagné (2000). She defends the position that it is not necessary to posit that relation interpretations and property interpretations arise from two distinct sets of processes. Both relation interpretations and property interpretations can be accounted for within a relation-based framework if one assumes that the selection of a relation is followed by an elaboration process in which the properties/features of the newly formed combinations are derived (Gagné 2000: 384).

No matter how the debate progresses, determinative  $[N_1N_2]N$  compounds in Bulgarian are abundant and productive and provide coverage of a wide range of various meanings, which are in rivalry with a) synthetic compounds, e.g. *бизнес дарение* [biznes darenie, *business donation*] vs. *кръводаряване* [kruvodarjavane, *blood donation*]; b)  $[\text{Adj}_{\text{relational}}N]$  constructions, e.g. *бизнес стил* [biznes stil, *business style*] vs. *работен стил* [raboten stil, *style of working*], and c)  $[N_2 \text{ prep } N_1]$  constructions, e.g. *бинго зала* [bingo zala, *bingo hall*] vs. *зала за бинго* [zala za bingo, *hall for playing bingo*]. The width of the semantic scope of  $[N_1N_2]N$  compounds against the more specialized alternatives, paired with formal simplicity, which invites pragmo-contextual determination of interpretation accounts for their wide spreading in usage across registers and domains.

Their productivity is attested by the growth of various families of compounds based on a single exemplar. One such family is the one based on the exemplar *майка-орлица* [mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*]. Admittedly, it could be argued whether we are witnessing vertical strengthening of a mother schema or horizontal expansion of sister nodes, without the establishment of an intermediate schema but the issue remains moot. The lexicon of a language is divided into complex (derived via word formation processes) lexical items that constitute multilayered networks which are connected both horizontally (via novel extensions) and vertically (via mother or secondary schemas) and thus encode generalizations over fully or partially specified instantons. Being inductive generalizations from instantiations, sche-

mas are constructed on the basis of perceived similarities. Through the processes of schematization (vertical growth) and through extension (horizontal, analogical construction of similar individual instances) the network is constantly dynamically reshaped. Audring (2019: 274) claims that the vertical relations can be captured as mother-daughter relations, while the horizontal relations can be conceptualized as sister relations and that these two are in complementary distribution so to speak in providing the seamless use and construction of various lexical items sanctioned either vertically or horizontally. The author believes that sister relations are the more parsimonious explanation for novel lexical items since they involve analogy exclusively, without the need for generalizations that remove specific details from the primary schemas. The labour division between mother-daughter relations and sister relations seems to be sensitive to constituent-based family size. In other words, whether we recognize a fully grammaticalized higher node, which can exist without any substantive realization or whether we are dealing with a horizontally growing series of sister nodes does not undermine the compound status of the respective family.

In that sense the expansion of the family, comprising *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*], *майка-хеликоптер* [mayka-helikopter, *helicopter mom*], *майка-организатор* [mayka-organizator, mother-organizer, *organizer mom*], *майка-ветеран* [mayka-veteran, *veteran mom*], *майка-модна икона* [mayka modna ikona, *fashion icon mom*], *майка „джънк фууд“* [mayka džânk fuud, *junk food mom*], *майка „педант“* [mayka-pedant, *prig mom*], *майка „кълбо от нерви“* [mayka kâlbo ot nervi, *a nerve-knot mother*], *майка „единак“* [mayka-edinak, *loner mother*], *майка „царица на спокойствието“* [mayka-carica na spokoystvietto, *tranquil mother*], *майка „детство мое“* [mayka detstvo мое, mother-my childhood, *playful mother*], *майка „веселяк“* [mayka-veselyak, *a care-free and amusing mother*], *майка „аз знам всичко“* [mayka az znam vsičko, *a know-it-all mother*]<sup>1</sup> testifies to the free enrichment by sister expansion of this considered archaic type of locally developed determinative compound with an atypical semantic and categorial head (left-located). It also testifies to independent parallel developments in the two languages, English and Bulgarian, in the creation and rising use of metonymy- and metaphor-based compounds. The English parallel family comprises *soccer mom*, *security mom*, *hockey mom*, *crunchy mom*, *silky mom*, *scrunchy mom*, *intentional mom*, *fitness mom*, *influencer mom*, *competitive mom*, *wine mom*, *cosseting parent*, *helicopter parents*, *lawnmower parents*, *tiger parent*, *elephant parent*, *attachment parent*, *free range parent*, *bulldozer parent*, *snowplow parent*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All the Bulgarian examples have been extracted from the journal [Roditel, Parent], available at <https://roditel.bg/10-te-tipa-majki-na-detskata-ploshtadka/>.

<sup>2</sup> The English examples have been retrieved from Benczes (2014: 210–212); *The Cut*, available at <https://www.thecut.com/2023/04/silky-crunchy-scrunchie-mom-tiktok-meaning.html>; Urban dictionary, available at <https://www.urbandictionary.com/>.

*Benczes (2014: 210–212) analyzes the parent family* (in her account it is comprised of *helicopter parents, lawnmower parents, bulldozer parent, snowplow parent*) as an instance of creative compounding, where creative means based on conceptual metonymy or metaphor. For her (2014: 210–211) the parent family represents creative compounds where the first (modifying) element is the source domain in a cross-domain metaphoric mapping and the second element (*parent* or *mother*) is the target domain. In her opinion (ibid: 211) the helicopter parent family in English is based on the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY and its implications, where parents are vehicles clearing the road for their children (which applies for the local niche constituted by *helicopter parents, lawnmower parents, free range parent, bulldozer parent, snowplow parent*). Benczes does not delve any further in her analysis. It is obvious that among the local niches in the family, three more can be identified: i) *soccer mom, security mom, hockey mom, influencer mom, wine mom, fitness mom*, based on metonymic associations; ii) *tiger parent* and *elephant parent*, based on metaphoric relations and iii) descriptive ones – *crunchy mom, silky mom, scrunchy mom, intentional mom, competitive mom, attachment parent*.

In Bulgarian the family members also constitute delineated niches: *майка-орлица* [mayka-orlica, mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*], *майка-хеликоптер* [mayka-helikopter, *helicopter mom*], *майка-организатор* [mayka-organizator, mother-organizer, *organizer mom*], *майка-ветеран* [mayka-veteran, *veteran mom*], *майка-модна икона* [mayka modna ikona, *fashion icon mom*], *майка „джънк фууд“* [mayka džânk fuud, *junk food mom*], *майка „педант“* [mayka-pedant, *prig mom*], *майка „кълбо от нерви“* [mayka kâlbo ot nervi, *a nerve-knot mother*], *майка „единак“* [mayka-edinak, *loner mother*], *майка „царица на спокойствието“* [mayka-carica na spokoystvietto, *tranquil mother*], *майка „детство мое“* [mayka detstvo мое, mother-my childhood, *playful mother*], *майка „веселяк“* [mayka-veselyak, *a carefree and amusing mother*], *майка „аз знам всичко“* [mayka az znam vsiçko, *a know-it-all mother*]. They can be grouped into the following niches: *майка* [mayka, *mother*] + a type of person (ветеран [veteran, *veteran*], *организатор* [organizator, *organizer*] *веселяк* [veselyak, *happy rascal*], etc.); metaphoric ones – *орлица* [orlica, *eagle*] and metonymic ones, where *майка* [mayka, *mother*] is combined with an outstanding/leading property, constituent of the meaning of the resulting holistic name. The first two types behave differently morphosyntactically from the third type. They get plural markers on both constituents *майки-орлицы* [mayki-orlici, motherS-eagleS, *helicopter moms*], *майки-организаторы* [mayki-organizatorI, mothers-organizers, *organizer motherS*], which probably creates the false sensation that they resemble appositive, coordinative compounds. The members of the third niche pluralize the head only and the right-standing constituent remains as an index or pointer to the defining properties. This definitely brings those compounds closer to the depictive mode of linguistic encoding. Dingemanse (2015: 950) draws a “distinction in linguistic representation between description and depictive”

tion. This refers to two ways of communicating something: by describing it (propositionally, with words and sentences), or by depicting it.” Simply put, the non-head constituents in these compounds function as pictures or illustrations, evoking whole scenarios, as to the type of mother named.

The heads *mom* and *parent* in English seem mutually substitutable. In Bulgarian (probably due to restrictions imposed by number agreement), the more frequent is *майка* [*mayka*, *mother*] and much more rarely *родители* [*roditeli*, *parents*], even though the different compounds from the family appear in articles discussing types of parents and parenting styles. This seems to be the only difference between the parallel families of compounds in the two languages.

Socio-culturally speaking, the meanings of the resultant lexical wholes do not coincide, and anthropologically informed ethnographic analysis may reveal significant cross-cultural specifics and differentiations, but from the point of view of word formation, the families are unquestionably parallel. Both are families of positionally specified identical head constituent, in both semantic niches employing different intracompound relations have been established; a fact which testifies to maturity of development of the patterns, since as Hüning (2009: 183) claims productive word-formation processes “often show semantic fragmentation: in the course of time they develop “semantic niches”, i.e. groups of words (subsets of a morphological category) kept together by formal and semantic criteria and extendable via analogy.” Even though in the Bulgarian analytical tradition the family with the *майка* [*mayka*, *mother*] head constituent is recognized as a lexical field of a phrasal/izafet nature, the properties of the two families are too similar to be dismissed as accidental and as displaying entirely different mechanisms of origin – (creative) compounding in English and syntactic generation of fixed phrases in Bulgarian. No matter how atypical they seem as compounds, all the members of the family in Bulgarian are analogically constructed after the exemplar *майка-орлица* [*mayka-orlica*, *mother-eagle*, *helicopter mom*], which as elaborated above is a typical determinative nominal compound with an atypically positioned head.

It transpires that *майка-орлица* [*mayka-orlica*, *mother-eagle*, *helicopter mom*] and *helicopter mom* are almost identical in terms of a) morphotactics; b) morphosmenatics; c) semantics of the whole and d) employment of creativity by utilizing the conceptual mechanisms of metaphor and/or metonymy.

### Concluding remarks

[N<sub>1</sub>N<sub>2</sub>]N constructions of a subordinative, determinative type with modifying relations may be a novelty in Bulgarian and are distinct from the majority of extant native NNs of various types, but if we follow Haspelmath’s (2010: 663–664) advice and abandon language particularism in favour of genuinely comparative concepts, which should be based on conceptual-semantic concepts, general formal concepts or other comparative concepts, we can immediately recognize that *майка-орлица*

[mayka-orlica, mother-eagle, *helicopter mom*] and *helicopter mom* are instances of the same type – determinative nominal compounds with a modifying intracompound relation. All members of the two families share the prototypical relationship, recognized as defining for such compounds – the compounds are all hyponyms of their respective heads and are supported by relations of entailment (Bauer and Huddleston 2019: 1645) with the head.

At the intermediate level of delicacy of analysis of a construction schema, defined as “a cognitive representation comprising a generalization over perceived similarities among instances of usage” resulting from “repeated activation of a set of co-occurring properties” (Barlow and Kemmer 2000: xxiii), both families are identical. The principles of intracompound relations employ the same construction principles and lead to similar output word formation meaning (excluding socio-culturally nuanced differences of the lexical meaning of the resultant complex lexemes).

Employing a comparative and framework-free analysis leads to the recognition of comparable, if not fully identical, phenomena in contrastive and comparative studies, which captures commonalities of language architectures and use, countering cross-cultural cross-talks between scholars with different schooling and persuasions.

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