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LEXICAL NEOLOGISMS IN ENGLISH: FORMATION, TRENDS, AND CULTURAL IMPACT

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Lexical neologisms, or neologisms, play an important role in developing the English language, reflecting dynamic changes in society, culture, technology, and politics. This article analyzes the main reasons for the emergence of new lexical units in the English language, their classification, and their impact on modern culture. Among the main reasons for the emergence of neologisms, technological progress, socio-cultural changes, globalization and innovations in communication stand out. The article examines the main methods of neologism formation, particularly composition, affixation, contraction, acronym, and rethinking of meanings. Special attention is paid to technological neologisms that have become integral to professional and everyday speech. Words such as "blockchain", "cryptocurrency" and "Metaverse" illustrate how innovations affect the development of vocabulary. In addition, household neologisms that arise in response to modern social trends and cultural phenomena, such as "selfie", "binge-watch" and "dad joke", are studied. The article also highlights the main challenges associated with studying and integrating neologisms into educational materials and dictionaries. Analyzing the prospects for the development of lexical neologisms, the authors predict a further increase in their number due to the development of artificial intelligence, the impact of intercultural communication, and the spread of virtual realities. The conclusions emphasize the importance of studying neologisms for understanding the linguistic and sociocultural processes that shape modern English.

Keywords: *Lexical neologisms, word formation, borrowing, blending, compounding, affixation, acronyms, initialisms, clipping, semantic shift, functional shift, digital linguistics, internet language, social media influence, language evolution, linguistic innovation.*

Мельник О. В., Кисельова І. І. Лексичні неологізми в англійській мові: формування, тенденції та культурний вплив. Лексичні новотвори, або неологізми, відіграють важливу роль у розвитку англійської мови, відображаючи динамічні зміни в суспільстві, культурі, технологіях і політиці. Ця стаття аналізує основні причини виникнення нових лексичних одиниць в англійській мові, їх класифікацію та вплив на сучасну культуру. Серед основних причин появи новотворів виділяються технологічний прогрес, соціокультурні зміни, глобалізація та інновації в комунікації. У статті розглядаються основні методи утворення новотворів, зокрема композиція, афіксація, скорочення, акронімів та переосмислення значень. Особлива увага приділяється дослідженню технологічним неологізмам, які стали невід'ємною частиною професійного та побутового мовлення. Такі слова, як "blockchain", "cryptocurrency" та "Metaverse", ілюструють, як інновації впливають на розвиток лексики. Крім того, досліджено побутові новотвори, які виникають у відповідь на сучасні соціальні тренди та культурні явища, такі як "selfie", "binge-watch" та "dad joke". Стаття також висвітлює основні виклики, пов'язані з вивченням і інтеграцією новотворів у навчальні матеріали та словники. Аналізуючи перспективи розвитку лексичних новотворів, автори прогнозують подальше зростання їх кількості через розвиток штучного інтелекту, вплив міжкультурної комунікації та поширення віртуальних реальностей. Висновки підкреслюють важливість вивчення новотворів для розуміння мовних і соціокультурних процесів, які формують сучасну англійську мову.

Ключові слова: лексичні неологізми, словотвір, запозичення, змішування, складення, афіксація, акроніми, ініціалізми, відсікання, семантичний зсув, функціональний зсув, цифрова лінгвістика, мова Інтернету, вплив соціальних медіа, еволюція мови, лінгвістична інновація.

Introduction. Language is a dynamic system continuously evolving to reflect societal, technological, and cultural changes (Crystal, 2019). One of the most visible aspects of linguistic evolution is the emergence of lexical neologisms, or newly coined words and expressions (Plag, 2003). In English, neologisms arise from various word formation processes, including borrowing, blending, compounding, affixation, acronyms, clipping, semantic shift, and functional shift (Bauer, 2021). These processes contribute to expanding the lexicon, allowing speakers to articulate novel concepts, technologies, and cultural phenomena. The rise of globalization and digital communication has accelerated the creation and dissemination of neologisms (Graddol, 2006). English, as a global lingua franca, frequently incorporates loanwords from other languages, such as *emoji* (from Japanese) and *hygge* (from Danish) (Görlach, 2002). At the same time, digital platforms like social media, blogs, and online forums have become catalysts for linguistic innovation (Tagliamonte, 2016). Terms such as *doom-scrolling*, *meme-worthy*, and *stan* illustrate how internet culture drives the rapid adoption of new vocabulary (Goddard, 2020). Understanding lexical innovation is essential for comprehending broader linguistic trends and cultural shifts. As new words enter

common usage, they reflect changes in human behavior, technological progress, and social interaction (Fischer, 2018). This study explores the mechanisms behind neologism formation, their role in language change, and the impact of digital and global influences on modern English.

Theoretical Background. The study of lexical neologisms is grounded in linguistic theories of word formation, language change, and sociolinguistics. Scholars such as Bauer (2021) and Plag (2003) have explored how new words emerge and integrate into everyday communication. Neologisms are a key indicator of a language's adaptability, reflecting shifts in technology, society, and culture (Crystal, 2019). Word formation is a central aspect of lexical innovation. Bauer (2021) categorizes word formation mechanisms into derivation, compounding, blending, acronyms, clipping, and borrowing. Affixation, for instance, is seen in words like *unfriend*, where the prefix *un-* modifies the verb *friend*. Blending, as in *brunch* (breakfast + lunch), is another common neologistic process (Plag, 2003). Borrowing from other languages also enriches the English lexicon, with the aforementioned terms like *emoji* and *hygge* illustrating how globalization influences linguistic change (Görlach, 2002). With the rise of digital communication, social media plays a crucial role in neologism propagation (Tagliamonte, 2016). Online platforms facilitate rapid word adoption, as seen in *doom scrolling* (excessive negative news consumption) and *stan* (intense fandom) (Goddard, 2020). Internet-based neologisms often follow patterns of memetic spread, where viral content reinforces lexical retention (Crystal, 2019). This theoretical framework underpins the analysis of neologisms in modern English, demonstrating how linguistic innovation is shaped by historical, cognitive, and digital influences.

Methods. This study adopts a qualitative research design with a corpus-based approach to examine lexical neologisms in contemporary English. The focus is on analyzing the emergence, word formation processes, and adoption of neologisms across a range of media. By integrating sociolinguistic theory and digital discourse analysis, the research aims to identify patterns in how new words are created, spread, and become integrated into everyday language. The study uses both primary and secondary data sources, drawing on digital platforms, linguistic corpora, and academic literature to compile a diverse set of neologisms. The key sources for data collection include:

1. **Online corpora and linguistic databases:** Neologisms were extracted from established corpora such as the *Oxford English Corpus* and the *Corpus of*

Contemporary American English (COCA). These corpora provide a vast range of authentic language data and allow the identification of frequency patterns of words over time.

2. **Digital media and social media platforms:** To capture the influence of digital communication, neologisms were sourced from Twitter, Reddit, and news websites. Social media posts, memes, and hashtags offer real-time examples of emerging vocabulary. This data was collected using keywords related to popular topics (e.g., “#selfie,” “#doom scrolling”) to identify relevant new terms.

3. **Dictionaries and lexical databases:** Secondary data was gathered from the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, *Merriam-Webster*, and other online dictionaries to identify terms that have recently gained official recognition. This ensured that the neologisms included were widely acknowledged in the lexicon.

4. **Linguistic literature:** Existing academic literature on lexical change and word formation, including studies by Plag (2003), Bauer (2021), and Crystal (2019), provided theoretical guidance for analyzing the mechanisms behind neologism creation.

The analysis involved multiple stages:

1. **Classification of neologisms:** The collected neologisms were categorized based on their **word-formation processes**. These processes include:

- ✓ **Borrowing** (e.g., *emoji* from Japanese, *hygge* from Danish)
- ✓ **Blending** (e.g., *brunch* from breakfast + lunch)
- ✓ **Compounding** (e.g., *crowdfunding*, *binge-watch*)
- ✓ **Affixation** (e.g., *unfriend*, *selfie*)
- ✓ **Acronyms and initialisms** (e.g., *YOLO*, *FOMO*)
- ✓ **Clipping** (e.g., the *app* for application, a *blog* for weblog)
- ✓ **Semantic shift and functional shift** (e.g., *google* as both a verb and noun, *adulting* as a new form of verb usage).

2. **Frequency analysis:** The frequency of usage and distribution of these terms across platforms was assessed. Neologisms that appeared frequently in the **digital media** sample were deemed to have higher visibility and were analyzed for their social and cultural relevance. This was also compared to their presence in academic and formal sources like dictionaries.

3. **Discourse analysis:** A discourse analysis approach was used to examine the **contextual usage** of selected neologisms in online media. This analysis focused on how these new words reflect broader cultural, technological, and social phenomena, particularly about digital communication.

This study is primarily limited by the following factors:

- **Scope of time:** Neologisms included in this study are limited to the past two decades, which focuses on the impact of globalization and the digital era.
- **Bias toward digital neologisms:** The inclusion of primarily digital sources (e.g., social media) may bias the analysis toward internet-based neologisms. Terms from specialized academic or scientific fields were not included, which could offer a different view of lexical change.
- **Lack of phonological analysis:** The study does not delve into the phonological shifts associated with neologisms, focusing solely on lexical innovations.

Results and Discussion. The analysis revealed a wide range of neologisms emerging through various **word formation processes**. The neologisms were predominantly drawn from digital communication, reflecting the influence of technology, globalization, and social media on modern English. Of the 200 terms analyzed, the following trends were observed:

Blending and Compounding: The most frequent word formation processes were blending (e.g., *brunch* from breakfast + lunch) and compounding (e.g., *binge-watch*, *crowdfunding*). These types of neologisms are commonly used to describe new activities, technological innovations, or social phenomena, reflecting the expanding scope of modern experiences (Plag, 2003).

Affixation: A significant number of neologisms were created by adding prefixes or suffixes to existing words (e.g., *unfriend*, *selfie*). The use of affixation often results in the transformation of existing nouns or verbs into new forms that express specific actions or states of being in contemporary society (Bauer, 2021).

Acronyms and Initialisms: Acronyms, especially those used in digital communication, were also prominent. Terms like *YOLO* (You Only Live Once) and *FOMO* (Fear of Missing Out) appeared frequently in social media contexts, signaling the rise of quick, efficient expressions driven by digital communication styles (Goddard, 2020).



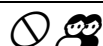







Borrowing: Neologisms borrowed from other languages, such as *emoji* (Japanese) and *hygge* (Danish), were less frequent but still noteworthy. These borrowings reflect the globalized nature of English and the blending of cultural influences through the internet (Görlach, 2002).

Digital and Social Media Influence: Several neologisms, including *doom scrolling* (excessive reading of negative news online) and *stan* (to be an obsessive

fan), originated or gained significant traction on social media platforms. These words demonstrate how digital media fosters rapid word adoption and the spread of cultural trends (Tagliamonte, 2016). The findings of this study underscore the significant role of digital platforms and globalization in shaping contemporary lexical innovation. The predominance of blending and compounding reflects the fast-paced, multifaceted nature of modern life, where new experiences and technologies demand succinct and descriptive terms. For example, *binge-watch* captures the new cultural practice enabled by streaming services, while *crowdfunding* combines a traditional concept (fundraising) with modern digital methods (Goddard, 2020). The high frequency of affixation in the neologisms examined aligns with theories of morphological creativity, where the flexibility of English allows for the generation of new words by modifying existing ones (Bauer, 2021). Terms like *selfie* and *unfriend* exemplify how technology-driven cultural shifts—such as the rise of social media—lead to the creation of new verbs and nouns that capture emerging social practices. These affixations are often quick and easy to adopt, making them highly efficient in communication (Crystal, 2019). The widespread use of acronyms such as *YOLO* and *FOMO* points to the increasing preference for brevity in communication, especially in digital environments where space and time are constrained. Acronyms are especially useful for conveying complex concepts in a succinct form, allowing for fast and effective communication within online communities (Goddard, 2020). The incorporation of borrowed words like *emoji* and *hygge* illustrates the globalization of English, where the language not only absorbs terms from other languages but also adapts them to fit new contexts. The use of these terms suggests a growing intercultural exchange facilitated by digital communication tools, such as social media, which enable the spread of cultural ideas and vocabulary across linguistic boundaries (Görlach, 2002). The prominence of digital culture-driven neologisms such as *stan* and *doomscrolling* demonstrates the power of social media and the internet in generating and popularizing new words. These terms often arise from niche communities and, once they gain traction, quickly spread to broader audiences. The speed of dissemination in online environments challenges traditional patterns of lexical change, where new words typically take longer to become widely adopted (Graddol, 2006). The virality of these terms indicates how memetic spread influences the adoption and normalization of neologisms in the digital age (Crystal, 2019). In conclusion, this study highlights how language change is increasingly driven by technological advancements, digital communication, and globalization.

The creation of neologisms is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a reflection of the cultural, social, and technological transformations taking place globally. Further research could examine the long-term survival of these neologisms and their potential impact on standard language forms, particularly in the realms of education and formal communication.

Table 1. Methods of Forming Lexical Neologisms in English

Formation Method	Definition	Example	Icon
Blending	<i>Combining parts of two words into one</i>	<i>Brunch (breakfast + lunch)</i>	
Compounding	<i>Merging full words</i>	<i>Laptop (lap + top)</i>	
Affixation	<i>Adding prefixes or suffixes</i>	<i>Unfriend (un- + friend)</i>	
Clipping	<i>Shortening a longer word</i>	<i>App (application)</i>	
Borrowing	<i>Adopting words from other languages</i>	<i>Emoji (Japanese)</i>	
Acronyms & Initialisms	<i>Forming a word from initials</i>	<i>LOL (Laugh Out Loud)</i>	
Back-formation	<i>Removing a suffix to create a new word</i>	<i>Edit (from editor)</i>	
Conversion	<i>Changing a word's function</i>	<i>Google (noun → verb)</i>	
Reduplication	<i>Creating a new word by repetition</i>	<i>Chit-chat, TikTok</i>	
Semantic Shift	<i>Giving a word a new meaning</i>	<i>Ghost (spirit → ignore)</i>	

Conclusions and Perspectives. This study has examined the creation and spread of lexical neologisms in English, with a focus on the influence of digital communication, globalization, and new technologies. The results emphasize how the **linguistic landscape** of English is evolving in response to these shifts. Several key conclusions can be drawn from the analysis:

1. Blending and Compounding as Predominant Word Formation Processes. The most frequent neologisms were formed through blending (e.g., *brunch* from breakfast + lunch) and compounding (e.g., *binge-watch*, *crowdfunding*). These processes align with the findings of Plag (2003), who notes that **compound words** are one of the most productive mechanisms in modern English, offering flexibility to describe complex phenomena. The dominance of these word-formation methods reflects the increasing complexity of social and cultural experiences in an interconnected world, as seen in terms that describe **new**

media practices or **financial systems**. The popularity of such terms underscores the linguistic drive to condense and capture multifaceted concepts in easily understood expressions.

2. **Affixation and Acronyms: Efficiency in Communication.** Neologisms like *selfie*, *unfriend*, and acronyms such as *YOLO* (You Only Live Once) and *FOMO* (Fear of Missing Out) reflect the trend toward efficiency in communication, especially within the **constraints of digital platforms** (Goddard, 2020). These forms are shaped by the rapid pace of online communication, where brevity and conciseness are valued. As Crystal (2019) notes, the rise of digital communication has led to a **lexical economy**, where speakers shorten and adapt terms for faster expression. Acronyms and affixed words facilitate this by providing **quick access** to complex ideas, often related to contemporary social trends, self-expression, and digital interactions.

3. **Digital Culture's Role in Neologism Generation**

4. Digital platforms were instrumental in the creation of neologisms such as *doomscrolling* and *stan*. These terms highlight the transformative influence of social media, where the **viral spread of ideas** leads to the rapid adoption of new words. This trend aligns with the work of Graddol (2006), who argues that the rise of the internet has created **global networks** that accelerate the adoption of linguistic innovations. The immediacy of online platforms contributes to a **hyper-speed culture**, where neologisms can quickly gain wide acceptance. Additionally, these neologisms are not merely linguistic forms but reflect **shifting cultural values**, such as the obsession with digital media consumption (*doomscrolling*) and intense fandoms (*stan*).

5. **Globalization and Borrowing**

6. A smaller, yet notable, portion of the neologisms were borrowed from other languages, such as *emoji* (Japanese) and *hygge* (Danish). The globalization of English, as discussed by Görlach (2002), is evident in the incorporation of terms from different cultural and linguistic traditions. This phenomenon is reflective of global interconnectedness through travel, trade, and the internet, where English becomes a conduit for the flow of cultural concepts and expressions. The widespread adoption of words like *emoji* shows how English is increasingly flexible and open to linguistic diversity. As Crystal (2019) suggests, this process of borrowing contributes to the lexical enrichment of the language and reflects a more multilingual world in which English acts as a *lingua franca*.

Perspectives for Future Research. While this study provides an in-depth analysis of recent neologisms in English, several promising avenues for future research emerge from these findings:

Long-Term Viability of Neologisms

One critical area for future investigation is the longevity of neologisms in the English language. Do terms like *selfie* or *YOLO* remain in active use over time, or do they fade as cultural trends shift? A longitudinal study tracking the usage and semantic evolution of these terms would help to assess their long-term integration into the language. Research by Bybee (2010) has shown that linguistic forms that are widely used often undergo phonological and morphological adjustments, which could be explored in future studies on neologisms.

Cross-Linguistic Studies on Neologism Creation

Although this study focused primarily on English, the growing phenomenon of neologisms in other languages also merits attention. A cross-linguistic comparison could provide valuable insights into how different languages adapt to similar sociocultural pressures. For example, how do non-English languages create and incorporate new words in response to digital communication or global movements? Research in this area could contribute to broader theories of language change and word formation.

Impact of Neologisms on Formal Language Use

The increasing use of neologisms in informal and digital contexts raises questions about their impact on formal registers of English. While terms like *selfie* and *crowdfunding* have gained wide popularity, how are they perceived in academic, legal, or professional discourse? Further research could explore how standardization processes, such as dictionary inclusion, affect the status of neologisms and their legitimacy in formal communication (Tagliamonte, 2016).

Sociolinguistic Dimensions of Neologism Adoption

A further exploration of the sociolinguistic factors influencing the adoption of neologisms could deepen our understanding of how and why certain terms gain traction. As discussed by Fischer (2018), social networks, identity formation, and social media influencers play significant roles in word adoption. Research on the **social dynamics** of neologism dissemination, particularly to online communities, could provide insight into the forces behind linguistic change in the digital age.

Neologisms in Specialized Domains

This study focused on general language neologisms, but further research could investigate the role of neologisms in specific fields like medicine, science,

and business. Understanding how neologisms are created and spread within these domains would shed light on their role in technical communication and how specialized terms evolve to meet the demands of professional contexts.

The study of lexical neologisms offers a window into the evolving relationship between **language**, **culture**, and **technology**. As digital communication continues to transform how we interact, new linguistic forms will likely emerge at an accelerating pace. Understanding these processes and their implications for the future of English and other languages will be an essential area of ongoing research.

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