

NEW LEXICAL UNITS AND THEIR ANALYSIS IN CURRENT LINGUISTIC THEORY

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Annotation

This article is devoted to the theory of neologisms in Modern Linguistics. While analyzing spheres of usage, we came to such a conclusion, that the most, as we can say, renewable branch is that of sociology (45 references out of 113), as it is the most developing sphere of the human life at this point.

Key words and phrases

lexicology, stylistics, neologism, linguistics, language, theory, word, vocabulary, terminology, closed system.

In [linguistics](#), a neologism ([/ni'vələdʒɪzəm/](#), [/ni:ou'lou-/](#);[1] also known as a coinage) is any newly formed word, term, or phrase that has gained popular or institutional recognition and is becoming accepted into mainstream language.[2]

Neologisms are one facet of [lexical innovation](#), i.e., the linguistic process of new terms and meanings entering a language's [lexicon](#). The most precise studies into [language change](#) and [word formation](#), in fact, identify the process of a "neological continuum": a [nonce word](#) is any single-use term that may or may not grow in popularity; a [protologism](#) is such a term used exclusively within a small group; a prelogism is such a term that is gaining usage but is still not mainstream; and a neologism has become accepted or recognized by social institutions.[3][4]

Neologisms are often driven by changes in culture and technology.[5][6] Popular examples of neologisms can arise and be found in nearly all aspects of human life and culture, from [science](#) to [technology](#), to [the arts](#), to [fiction](#) (notably [science fiction](#)), to films, to television, to commercial branding, to [literature](#), to [jargon](#), to [cant](#), to [linguistics](#) and to [popular culture](#).

In linguistic theory, newly coined lexical units are defined as neologisms, that is, words or expressions that enter the language as a result of cultural expansion, technological advancement, shifts in social structures, and transformations in patterns of everyday life. Such units are perceived by language users as novel due

to their recent emergence and functional relevance to new communicative realities [3].

In the context of globalization and rapid informatization, the production of neologisms has intensified considerably. At the initial stage of their appearance, these lexical innovations are typically recorded in specialized sections of authoritative online lexicographic sources, such as the Cambridge Dictionary, Oxford English Dictionary, Macmillan Dictionary, and Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Subsequently, through the processes of socialization (broad acceptance and use within the speech community) and lexicalization (structural and semantic stabilization within the language system), these units gradually become integrated into the active vocabulary. Over time, they lose their perception as novel items and enter the general lexical stock as commonly used words.

Linguists call the total word-stock of a language its lexicon or vocabulary. There is a notion that a so-called unabridged dictionary records the unabridged lexicon, that is all the words of the language. But the lexicon of English is open-ended. It is not even theoretically possible to record it all as a closed system.

A neologism is the term used to describe a word that has been made-up or invented by a speaker, which appears in a transcript of spontaneous speech dialogue. It can also be described as a word which does not appear in the dictionary of the primary spoken language, but which is also not a foreign word.

Neologisms are newly coined words, phrases, or adapted existing terms that have gained widespread popularity in English, often reflecting technological, social, or cultural changes. Common examples include *selfie*, *unfriend*, *brunch*, *fomosapien*, *cheugy*, and *staycation*, which are often formed through blending, compounding, or shifting the meaning of old words. The exact number of vocabulary units in Modern English cannot be stated with any degree of certainty for a number of reasons, the most obvious of them being the constant growth of Modern English word-stock especially technical terms of the sciences which have come to influence our modern society. As one of the American lexicographers aptly puts it we could fill a dictionary the size of the largest unabridged with names of compounds of carbon alone.

There are many points of interest closely connected with the problem of the number of vocabulary units in English, but we shall confine ourselves to setting down in outline a few of the major issues:

- 1) divergent views concerning the nature of vocabulary units and
- 2) intrinsic heterogeneity of modern English vocabulary.

Modern English vocabulary is not homogeneous, and contains a number of lexical units which may be considered "non-English" and "not modern". It follows

that in estimating the size of vocabulary very much depends on our understanding of the terms modern and English. Let us begin with the analysis of the term English vocabulary units. If we compare words of the type *Luftwaffe*, *regime*, *garage*, *sputnik*, we shall see that the borderline between 'non-assimilated' borrowings which make up part of English vocabulary and foreign or alien words is not always sharp and distinct. For example, it was already pointed out that the Second World War and fascist aggression gave currency to a number of new lexical items such as *Luftwaffe*, *Blitzkrieg* and others.

Words of that type are distinguished from other neologisms by their peculiar graphic and sound-form. They are felt as "alien" elements in the English word-stock and are used more or less in the same way as words of a foreign language may be used by English speakers. This also applies to barbarisms. As a rule barbarisms, for example, *mutatis mutandis* (L.), *faux pas* (Fr.) and others, are included even in the comparatively concise dictionaries alongside with English words although it is rather doubtful whether they are really part of the English vocabulary.

According to the data available, the "passive" vocabulary of a "normally educated person" comprises about 30,000 words. At best about 20,000 are actually used in speech. Of these not all the words are equally important.

As is well known terminology in various fields of scientific inquiry comprises many peculiar vocabulary units the bulk of which is made up of Latin or Greek morphemes. Terms possess a number of common features in all European languages. Terms are as a rule used by comparatively small groups of professionals and certainly not by the language community as a whole. Most of them are to a certain extent "international", understandable to specialists irrespective of their nationality.

Special words and terms make up the bulk of neologisms and the question naturally arises whether terms belong to common English vocabulary items. Nevertheless they are of great importance for those who are working in this or that branch of science or technology.

There is no doubt that English language today is the most widely used language for international communication. Words and expressions are born, live for a short time and then die or find their place in our vocabulary according to the temporary or permanent nature of the phenomena they describe.

Some neologisms, especially those dealing with sensitive subjects, are often objected to on the grounds that they obscure the issue being discussed, and that such a word's novelty often leads a discussion away from the root issue and onto a sidetrack about the meaning of the neologism itself.

Neologisms emerge on a continuous basis, reflecting the dynamic nature of language development. The expansion of the lexical system occurs both through borrowing from other languages and through internal word-formation processes. Consequently, in order to remain professionally competent and responsive to contemporary linguistic trends, a translator must systematically observe not only emerging grammatical patterns but also ongoing lexical innovation. Particular attention should be paid to newly formed lexical units characterized by novelty in form and/or semantic content, that is, neologisms, which constitute one of the principal sources of vocabulary enrichment in modern languages.

In conclusion, neologisms should be considered not merely as incidental lexical innovations, but as significant indicators of linguistic dynamism and socio-cultural transformation. Scholars who support the process of neologization emphasize its constructive role in facilitating lexical expansion and responding to emerging communicative needs. Neologisms contribute to the adaptive capacity of language, enabling it to reflect technological advancements, social change, and evolving conceptual frameworks. Moreover, these newly formed lexical units are often characterized by semantic clarity and relatively transparent syntactic patterns, which enhances their accessibility. Such features are particularly important in the context of second-language acquisition, where semantic precision and structural simplicity may support more effective comprehension and integration into active vocabulary. Thus, neologisms function not only as creative linguistic phenomena but also as mechanisms of systematic language development.

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