European Journal of Innovation in Nonformal Education (EJINE)
Volume 4 | Issue 5 | May - 2024 ISSN: 2795-8612

Semantic Characteristics of Internet Discourse Neologisms

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A B S T R A C T
The article examines the role and usage of neologisms in modern internet discourse. The study highlights the significance of analyzing and defining neologisms in English-language internet discourse, mainly in online journals, as this domain rapidly adapts to new linguistic trends and contributes to a diverse language landscape. The concept of neologism is examined by considering different approaches, such as stylistic, psycholinguistic, lexicographic, denotative, and concrete historical theories. The findings of the study have practical applications for linguists, translators, and foreign language learners. Furthermore, the analysis of neologisms in English-language online journals contributes to the field of neology and offers insights on current society goals and trends, as new vocabulary reflects cultural values and developments.

A R T I C L E I N F O
Article history:
Received 20 Mar 2024
Received in revised form
20 Apr 2024
Accepted 21 May 2024

Keywords: neologisms; internet discourse; online magazines; borrowings; word formation.

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Introduction

In the field of linguistics and lexicology, a neologism represents to a newly coined word or phrase that appears in a language. Neologisms may arise due to advancements in technology, changes in society, or the need to describe novel concepts or phenomena which characterizes a linguistic innovation. The new linguistic phenomena are reported by internet discourse to create rich linguistic language landscape that attracts philologists and requires careful study. A section of lexicology – neology which deals with the description of new words – neologisms appeared, at the end of the 19th and 20th centuries. There is still no exact definition of the word “neologism” in lexicology. Different theories offer varying viewpoints on the definition and characteristics of neologisms.

Neologisms are words that are stylistically marked and possess a sense of novelty or creativity according to the stylistic theory [1]. These words are noticeable because they use language in a different or creative way.

The psycholinguistic theory defines them as words that someone has never heard before as a native speaker. In simple terms, they are words or phrases that someone doesn't know because of their language background [2].

The lexicographic theory identifies them as words that are not yet included in dictionaries. Neologisms are constantly developing, and it takes time for them to be added in formal lexical dictionaries.

The denotative theory considers neologisms as words that denote new things or ideas. They are words or phrases used to talk about new things or ideas that didn't have names before [3].

A neologism must satisfy three parameters according to the historical theory of: linguistic space, time, and the type of novelty of the linguistic unit. Linguistic space means the language or languages where new words are created. Time means when a word or phrase is first used in a language. The type of novelty in language can be something totally new or a different way of using words that already exist [4].

Literature review and methods

The study of neologisms remains significant due to their ability to provide insights into the worldview of native speakers, establish connections with specific eras, and identify the societal trends and priorities. Linguists such as V.I. Zabotkina[5], E.N. Zakharenko[6], T.V. Popova[7], L.V. Ratsibulskaya[8], D.E.Rosental[9], and G.Ya.Solganik [10] have contributed to the active exploration of neologisms, yet neology continues to require attention as a dynamic field within linguistics.

The research presented aims to investigate the role of neologisms in contemporary Internet discourse, which has a broad target audience and encompasses numerous neologisms in need of description.

The study's objective is to determine the functional characteristics of neologisms in English Internet discourse, and this is pursued through the following tasks:

Examining the concept of "neologism," including its types, classification, and methods of formation.

Analyzing neologisms extracted from online journals within Internet discourse, taking into account their methods of formation and productivity.

The research material consists of a continuous sample of neologisms sourced from Internet discourse journals. The primary method employed is linguistic analysis, which involves examining the neologisms based on their formation methods and productivity. Online magazines in English serve as the primary source of research material.

Results and discussions

Another form of neologism classification is based on the form of the linguistic unit. Researchers such as T. V. Popova, L.V. Ratsibulskaya, and D.V. Gunuava [11] use certain ideas to put neologisms into groups.

Neolexemes are new words made by putting parts together or taking from other languages. Some examples of new words are “toaster”, “security”, “roaming”, “shaker”, “dumping”, and “loser”. These new words keep the same shape and structure as existing words but have different meanings or changes.

Neophrases are new phrases that have a different meaning from the original phrase. Some examples are “coach potato”, which means a lazy person, and “silly money” or “funny money” which means a lot of money.

Neosems means giving new meanings to words we already know. Linguist L. A. Khakham [12] has a way to group new words based on their structure and meaning. It has different categories.

New words are those that have a different shape and a different definition. For instance, “mouse” in computer terms means a tool for moving the arrow on the computer screen.

Words that look different but mean the same thing as other words. For example, the word “fishing” can also be used to talk about a kind of internet scam that tries to get a person's private information.

Distinguished Russian linguist E.V.Rozen[19], also studied neologisms and their cultural aspects and proposed a structural classification based on the composition of the words:

Neologisms as standalone words or as part of new words: These are words that can be used independently or as components of new words.

New morphemes in the language: These are newly created morphemes that become part of the language's vocabulary.

Words composed of existing morphemes in new combinations: These are words formed by combining already existing morphemes in novel ways.

Indeed, there are differences between the approaches of E.V.Rozen and L.A.Khakham regarding the classification of neologisms, particularly in terms of semantics. E.W. Rosen focuses solely on the structural aspects of new words, whereas L.A.Khakham considers both structure and meaning.

When examining the method of formation of neologisms, several groups can be identified, including

phonological, semantic, assimilation, and syntactic neologisms. Syntactic neologisms can further be divided into morphological and phraseological neologisms.

Phonological neologisms are formed through the combination of individual sounds. They often involve onomatopoeia or exclamation words. In literature, these words are referred to as "artificial" or "open" words. Examples of phonological neologisms include "auf" (meaning "great" or "grand"), "rah-rah" (referring to a wide short skirt), "zizz" (mimicking the sounds made by a sleeping person), "buzz" (representing the sound of a ringing phone), "oh!" and "oops!" (expressing surprise or mild pain), "bling-bling" (referring to shiny metal keychains, necklaces, or jewelry), and "sis-boombah" (an American slang term for spectator sports, especially football).

This group can also include mocking exclamations, such as "yech" or "yuck," which express strong disgust or hatred. These neologisms have a high degree of novelty and can be classified as "strong neologisms." The high level of their novelty is explained by the unusualness and novelty of its form.

Semantic neologisms are understood words that already existed, but received new meanings, and they can be in the following forms:

old words completely change their meaning and lose their previously existing meaning; in this case, the original meaning of the word is no longer retained.

another lexical semantic option appears in the semantic structure of the word, preserving all traditions [14].

The main source of borrowed words remains the French language. Over the past 25 years, the number of Scandinavian loanwords has decreased dramatically. A new trend is the growth of borrowed words from African and Asian languages.

In recent decades, the second type of semantic neologism has been more prevalent. Common examples of new meanings in modern English include "charisma" (referring to strong personal charm or magnetism), "bummer" (meaning disappointment, annoyance, or problem), "go-go" (describing something as dynamic or modern), "funky" (signifying something as nice or cool), "banana" (especially in the phrase "to go bananas," meaning to go crazy), and words like "flaky" (used to mean amazing).

Overall, semantic neologisms tend to involve the formation of more abstract lexical semantic variants of words, with an expansion of their meanings. These neologisms are often more commonly used in slang.

Additionally, borrowed words, also known as adopted neologisms, continue to contribute to the English language. Although the rate of borrowing has decreased compared to the Middle Ages and Renaissance, loanwords still play a significant role. Borrowed words constitute approximately 7.5% of the total number of neologisms. While the main source of borrowed words historically has been the French language, there has been a decrease in Scandinavian loanwords over the past 25 years. A new trend is the increase in borrowed words from African and Asian languages [15].

Below a list of borrowed words from various languages and cultures have been provided for revising. These borrowed words, often referred to as loanwords or adopted neologisms, have become part of the English language. Here are some examples you mentioned:

Latin: circus, apostle

French: infantry, grenade

Greek: phobia, lexicon, atlas

German: blitz, strudel, kindergarten, schnitzel, noodles

Italian: broccoli, fresco, spaghetti, parmesan, pesto, pizza, cappuccino, fashionista

Spanish: canyon, tornado, tortilla, barricade, guitar, alligator, burrito

Dutch: cruise, dock, avast, freight, duke, yacht, landscape, sketch, cookie

Scandinavian: ski, saga, sauna, slalom

Japanese: karaoke, samurai, kimono, sushi, tsunami, kamikaze, geisha, judo, jujitsu, soy, emoji, inemuri

Arabic: harem, hijab, algebra, zero, zenith, giraffe, caravan, mosque

Portuguese: albino, dodo, emu, fetish, tempura

Sanskrit: avatar, karma, mahatma, yoga

Russian: borscht, czar/tsar, icon, vodka, glasnost

Indian: bandana, bungalow, juggernaut, jungle, loot, pajamas, shampoo

Hebrew: sapphire, abacus, behemoth, cherub, jubilee, sabbatical

Persian: chess, checkmate, check

Malay: ketchup, amok

Irish: boycott, clock, dig (slang), hooligan

Chinese: kung fu, in' yan'

Turkish: baklava, coffee, kiosk, ottoman

Norwegian: gun, ransack, slaughter, hell, husband, skill, bug, reindeer, dirt

African: banana, bongo, banjo, cola, jazz, chimpanzee, goober, gumbo, impala, jumbo, mamba, zebra, zombie.

Barbarisms are loanwords that have synonyms in the receiving language, while xenisms refer to phenomena and objects that exist only in the source country and are absent in the receiving country. Xenisms are characterized by a higher degree of novelty. Barbarisms and xenisms together make up the adopted neologisms, contributing to the enrichment of the English vocabulary.

It's important to note that while borrowed words add diversity and expand the lexical system, they represent a relatively small portion of the overall vocabulary. Consequently, xenisms have a higher degree of novelty, although they account for only 14% of all adopted neologisms.

Morphological neologisms are created "according to the patterns existing in the language system and from the morphemes available in this system" and are divided into the following types: affix, word addition, conversion, abbreviations.

Affixal units, as a rule, are formed in full accordance with the traditions of word formation in the English language, their morphological structure and the nature of meaning correspond to the idea of a simple, standard word developed among English speakers. Therefore, the emergence of artificial neologisms is consciously noted by native speakers only when they are aware of the indicated innovation. This method excels in the correct creation of neologisms. A synthetic word, as well as a complex word, is characterized by the presence of semantic division and internal prediction, unlike a simple word.

When classifying according to the level of novelty, we must take into account the presence of "absolute" neologisms - neologisms that have not been used in the language before, and "relative" neologisms - words that are not new to the language.

S. A. Alatorseva [16] defines them strong and weak. Strong neologisms are characterized by a high degree of novelty, unusual forms, and they are included in the lexical structure of the language for the first time, on the contrary - weak neologisms are considered to be pre-existing words that have received a new use.

Individual authorship neologisms of expressive and emotional color are a vivid example of a group of strong neologisms. For example, the word "boughetto" was coined by the African-American rapper Nurphy Lee by combining the words "bourgeois" and "ghetto". This neologism has a negative meaning and is used in the sense of "a wealthy person who does not follow the norms of decency in society" [17].

The same group includes new nominations of modern realities and concepts that create a sense of novelty to a greater or lesser extent. The group of weak neologisms includes newly used words that were previously known: the word "egg" received a new meaning "bomb".

Classification according to the principle of belonging to the language-speech allows to distinguish two main categories: usual and unusual neologisms. Typical neologisms are a property of the literary language.

In the category of unusual neologisms, we can include occasional and potential words formed on the basis of individual authorship.

Individual stylistic neologisms are words created by word artists, writers, publicists in order to increase the expressiveness of the text, to give imagery to the artistic text, they are aimed at maintaining novelty and unusualness. Such individual stylistic neologisms are also called authorial neologisms. Unlike linguistic neologisms, individual stylistic neologisms often have an expressive function, not a nominative one. Neologisms created by poets and writers belong to individual style. Authors of neologisms can be not only writers. Unknowingly, we invent new occasionalisms every day. However, such neologisms rarely make it into the literary language and are used throughout the country.

Neologisms of individual authorship have become so ingrained in the language that they are often indistinguishable from linguistic neologisms, except by specialists in the field. However, most neologisms created in daily life do not make it into the literary language and remain limited in usage.

Regarding the classification of neologism based on the duration of its existence, the author identifies three main categories [18]:

- short-term, that is, neologisms used by a native speaker once in a speech;
- medium-term - new words that are consolidated in the vocabulary of the language for some time, and then "leave" it;
- Long-term - neologisms that have become independent, full-fledged units of the language and have taken root for a long time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have explored various approaches to classifying neologisms. It's important to note that the understanding of neologism can vary depending on the specific approach used.

Many of the neologisms discussed in our typology are international words, often borrowed from the English language. This is attributed to the widespread globalization, computerization, and advancements in scientific technologies that are occurring in English-speaking countries. However, our classification of linguistic neologisms also recognizes neologisms with national and cultural characteristics. These neologisms typically encompass lexical and semantic innovations that either denote new realities specific to a particular culture or convey cultural and historical associations in a connotative sense. Such neologisms not only reflect the development stages of a specific language community, but also contain national-semantic elements that cannot be directly compared to similar lexical meanings in other languages.

In summary, neologisms play a significant role in language development and reflect the evolving nature of human communication. They contribute to the enrichment and expansion of vocabulary, reflecting the influence of cultural, social, and technological changes.

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