

The Importance Of Neologism In English

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Abstract: This article draws attention of English teachers to the increasing number of new words or neologisms that appear in the English language. It is argued that one can understand the culture by examining its new words, thereby neologisms should be integrated into the vocabulary material offered to English learners. After giving an overview on the current perspectives and theories on the notion of neologisms as well as eliciting the results of the survey aimed at estimating how well the English learners are familiar with this lexical group and analyzing their feedback concerning integrating it into the classroom practice, and cultural competences of the English learners.

Keywords : Neologism; language teaching strategy; vocabulary teaching; motivating students.

The term *neologism* is first attested in English in 1772, borrowed from French *néologisme* (1734). A proponent of a new word or doctrine may be called a neologist, as we saw when the press dubbed Donald Trump the "neologist-in-chief" (itself a neologism, combining neologist and commander-in-chief) behind "covfefe".

In an academic sense, there is no professional Neologist, because the study of such things (cultural or ethnic vernacular, for example) is interdisciplinary. Anyone such as a lexicographer or an etymologist might study neologisms, how their uses span the scope of human expression, and how, due science and technology, they spread more rapidly than ever before in the present times. The term *neologism* has a broader meaning that includes not only "an entirely new lexical item" but also an existing word whose meaning has been altered(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neologism>).

Sometimes, the latter process is called *semantic shifting*, or *semantic extension*. Neologisms are distinct from a person's *idiolect*, one's unique patterns of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Neologisms are usually introduced when an individual or individuals find that a specific notion is lacking a term in a language, or when the existing vocabulary is insufficiently detailed, or when the neologist is unaware of the existing vocabulary. The law, governmental bodies, and technology have a relatively high frequency of acquiring neologisms. Another trigger that motivates neologists and protologists to coin a neologism is in order to disambiguate a previously existing term that may have been obscure or vague due to having multiple senses. A neologism is a new word or sense of a word. It can come from any of the categories of word formation. “With frequent use and the passage of time they become marked and enter everyday use (and shift from the periphery to the center of the language system). A neologism is a newly coined word or phrase or a new meaning for an existing word, or a word borrowed from another language.

The intense development of science and industry has called forth the invention and introduction of an immense number of new words and changed the meanings of old ones, e. g. *aerobic*, *black hole*, *computer*, *isotope*, *feedback*, *penicillin*, *pulsar*, *quasar*, *tape-recorder*, *supermarket* and so on.

Stekauer describes a neologism as “a naming unit which was coined to satisfy a linguistic demand, be it the demand of a single member of a speech community, or a single unrepeated demand”. Only in extremely few cases, it is known who coined the

new word; most neologisms have an anonymous origin. They are spread especially by newspapers and magazines.

Lehrer wrote that “many neologisms, including blends, occur in print – ads, newspaper and magazine articles etc.” [2; 3]. They help to catch readers' attention and, especially in advertisements, they intend to be memorable. “The speaker wants the hearer to remember the name of the product, process, or business establishment”.

Neologisms are often “witty; they involve word play, such as puns and allusions, as well as the puzzle of novelty” [2; 3].

On the other hand, there is a requirement of existence – “a word will not be formed to denote an item/action/quality which does not exist.” A new word “must denote something which the speaker feels to be real... which is nameable”.

In this article, We would like to give a few examples of neologisms appearing during this century. We have chosen the words from a list of neologisms from Peprník' English Lexicology, originally from the Oxford Companion to the English Language:

1. chocotherapy (noun, U)

- blending from *chocolate* and *therapy*
- a spa treatment using chocolate

“A *ChocoTherapy* massage begins with a fine coffee bean exfoliation to smooth your skin and to stimulate blood flow to the skin's surface.” www.yogaunlimited.co.nz

2. citizen journalist (noun, C)

- also: **citizen journalists**, **citizen journalism**
- compounding
- a person using “digital technology and web-based media to share what they witness with the worldwide audience” (Maxwell 42) citizen journalist

“If you're a citizen journalist by the way in the middle of it all, you could send us your pictures or your videos right here to THE SITUATION ROOM at cnn.com, we'll be anxious to get your eyewitness accounts.” (CNN_Situation, 2006) citizen journalists

“Citizen journalists and bloggers pursue their own stories and disseminate them for free on the Internet, bypassing the mainstream media altogether.” (San Francisco Chronicle, 2006) citizen journalism

“... helping to attract a new generation to radio and paralleling such trends as citizen journalism, reality shows and memoirs.” (San Francisco Chronicle, 2007)

3. cyberchondriac (noun, C)

- blending from *cyber* and *hypochondriac*
- *“a hypochondriac who imagines that he or she has a particular disease based on medical information gleaned from the Internet”* <<http://newworldword.com>>

“I am not a cyberchondriac but I diagnose my friends ailments all the time using the internet.” www.geeksugar.com

4. Google/google (verb, I/T; noun)

- also: **googled**
- coinage
- searching the Web via Google

“The idea is that people won't even bother going to Google.” (Forbes, 2006, Nov 27, Vol. 178 Issue 11, googled (55)

“But not long ago, the 16-year-old discovered it on her own when she Googled her name.” (Newsweek, 2008, Jun 30, Vol. 151, Iss. 26)

5. Hinglish (noun, U; adjective)

- blending from *Hindi* and *English*
- a mix of English and Hindi

“It's a newfangled Hinglish movie that interweaves English and Hindi, with moderate use of subtitles.” (Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2002)

6. movieoke (noun, U; adjective)

- blending from *movie* and *karaoke*
- "a form of entertainment in which a person acts out scenes from a film by reading lines from a monitor whilst the film scenes are playing silently in the background" <<http://www.macmillandictionaries.com>>

“To master Movieoke you read subtitles off a monitor in front of you.” (CNN_Next, 2004)

7. voluntourism (noun, U)

- blending from *volunteer* and *tourism*
- travelling that includes volunteer work

“It's a wonderful trend called Voluntourism.” (ABC_GMA, 2007)

8. WiFi/Wi-Fi/Wifi/Wi-fi/wifi (noun, U) - blending from *wireless fidelity*

- *“a networking system which provides wireless connection to the Web”* (Maxwell 211) Wi-Fi

“In fact, on some machines, both the Wi-Fi card and the RAM are located under the same panel.” (PC World, Sep 2008, Vol. 26, Iss. 9; WiFi

“WiMax is similar to the WiFi service in coffee shops and many homes but can cover larger areas and supposedly download faster.” (Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2008)

One of such teaching strategies can be to group neologisms according to their underlying themes and teach them alongside with other lexical units.

For example, if the lesson is about learning and discussing professions in English besides giving standard vocabulary items the teacher can also provide neologisms on this topic: e.g. *open collar* ‘person who works from home’, *market research data*

miner ‘person whose job is to analyse data and predict future market trends’, *millennial generational expert* ‘person whose job is to analyse behavioural patterns of younger employees in the company (or millennials)’, *chief listening officer* ‘person whose job is to collect complaints and ideas from social networks about his/her company’ etc.

One more example can be when discussing technology and its role on people’s lives in the English language classroom the teacher can incorporate such neologisms in the lesson as *password fatigue* ‘weariness from the necessity to memorise too many passwords online’, *second screening* ‘watching television and using another device (tablet or smartphone) at the same time’ or *face time* ‘meeting in real life as opposed to meeting in the virtual environment / online’.

Other groups may include such themes as x Press and media: *rumorazzi* (from *rumour* and *paparazzi* ‘tabloid press’), *coffee-spitter* ‘shocking news / literally ‘news that makes you spill your coffee’; *snailpaper* ‘printed version of a newspaper the publication of which takes more time than its online version’; *headline risk* ‘danger of a major story spreading in the media and negatively impacting a company's reputation’; Psychology and emotional state: *busy brain* ‘a state in which a person is unable to concentrate’; *emotional correctness* ‘expressing emotions suitable for a certain social setting’; *mindblindness* ‘inability to understand the emotional state of another person’ etc.

This strategy has a potential to make language lessons more engaging for students. Since it is the latest vocabulary it is easier for language learners to relate themselves to these lexical units. In some cases they can recognize certain aspects of their own way of life (e.g. with neologisms *hangry*, *password fatigue* or *jeggings* ‘tightfitting stretch leggings for women’)

In conclusion, neologisms are really often created by innovative journalists or ordinary people and then they find their way to fiction or even academic texts. Moreover, newspapers and magazines are very influential nowadays. In case there appears some new phenomenon, somebody names it and the new word spreads quickly. Spoken language is able to adopt to these changes very quickly.

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