

THE FORMATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF NEOLOGISMS IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH: EXTRALINGUISTIC, INTRALINGUISTIC AND DISCURSIVE DETERMINANTS

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the formation and stabilization of neologisms in Arabic and English from a comparative linguistic perspective. The study argues that neologisms cannot be adequately explained only as new lexical items produced by social change; rather, they should be understood as the outcome of a complex interaction between extralinguistic stimuli, intralinguistic mechanisms, and institutional-discursive validation. The research focuses on three interrelated groups of factors: technological, scientific, socio-political, global and media-driven changes; lexical gaps, semantic extension, analogy, productivity and linguistic economy; and the role of terminology planning, lexicography, media discourse and social networks in the diffusion and standardization of new lexical units. The article applies qualitative comparative, descriptive-semantic and discourse-analytical methods. The findings show that English neology is predominantly characterized by bottom-up lexical productivity and rapid discourse circulation, while Arabic neology is more strongly shaped by the interaction between borrowing, Arabization, semantic adaptation and institutional standardization. The study concludes that neologisms should be interpreted not merely as lexical innovations, but as indicators of the relationship between language structure, social transformation and communicative authority.

Keywords: *neologism, lexical innovation, Arabic, English, extralinguistic factors, intralinguistic mechanisms, terminology, media discourse, lexical gaps, standardization*

ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ И ИНСТИТУЦИОНАЛИЗАЦИЯ НЕОЛОГИЗМОВ В АРАБСКОМ И АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ: ЭКСТРАЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ, ИНТРАЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ И ДИСКУРСИВНЫЕ ФАКТОРЫ

АННОТАЦИЯ

В данной статье рассматриваются процессы образования и закрепления неологизмов в арабском и английском языках в сравнительно-лингвистическом аспекте. В исследовании обосновывается мысль о том, что неологизмы не могут быть объяснены только как новые лексические единицы, возникающие под влиянием социальных изменений. Они представляют собой результат сложного взаимодействия экстралингвистических стимулов, интралингвистических механизмов и институционально-дискурсивного закрепления. В статье анализируются три группы факторов: технологические, научные, социально-политические, глобализационные и медиакоммуникативные изменения; лексические лакуны, семантическое расширение, аналогия, словообразовательная продуктивность и языковая экономия; а также роль терминологического планирования, лексикографии, медиадискурса и социальных сетей в распространении и стандартизации новых единиц. Используются качественный сравнительный, описательно-семантический и дискурсивный методы анализа. Результаты показывают, что английская неология в большей степени характеризуется спонтанной словообразовательной продуктивностью и быстрым дискурсивным распространением, тогда как арабская неология теснее связана с заимствованием, арабизацией, семантической адаптацией и институциональной стандартизацией. Делается вывод о том, что неологизмы следует рассматривать не только как лексические инновации, но и как показатели взаимодействия языковой структуры, социальных преобразований и коммуникативной нормы.

Ключевые слова: неологизм, лексическая инновация, арабский язык, английский язык, экстралингвистические факторы, интралингвистические механизмы, терминология, медиадискурс, лексические лакуны, стандартизация

INTRODUCTION

The study of neologisms occupies a central position in contemporary lexicology, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis because lexical innovation reflects the capacity of a language to respond to new social, scientific, technological and communicative realities. A neologism is not simply a newly coined word; it is a

linguistic sign that emerges at the intersection of a new conceptual need, an available structural model and a communicative environment capable of circulating the innovation. For this reason, the analysis of neologisms requires more than the description of word-formation techniques. It also requires attention to the social conditions that produce the need for new naming, the internal mechanisms that give linguistic form to that need, and the institutions or discourses that determine whether a new item remains occasional or becomes conventionalized.

In modern linguistic research, neology is often associated with specialized communication, terminology, media discourse and language change. Cabre Castellvi, Estopa Bagot and Vargas-Sierra define neology in specialized communication as a field where new concepts and new terms are closely connected with professional, scientific and technological discourse. Roldan Vendrell and Fernandez-Dominguez also relate emergent neologisms to lexical gaps in specialized languages, showing that new realities and denominative needs are especially important in terminological studies.

The comparative study of Arabic and English neologisms is particularly important because the two languages respond to lexical innovation through partly different mechanisms. English, as a global donor language in science, technology, media and digital communication, often produces new lexical units through compounding, blending, affixation, abbreviation and semantic extension. Arabic, on the other hand, frequently receives new concepts through borrowing, translation, Arabization, calquing and institutional terminology planning. This does not mean that Arabic lacks internal productivity; rather, its neological processes often operate through the interaction of internal derivational resources, classical lexical heritage, modern terminological needs and language-planning institutions.

The present article therefore addresses the following research problem: how do extralinguistic, intralinguistic and institutional-discursive factors interact in the formation and stabilization of neologisms in Arabic and English? The aim of the study is to develop a comparative explanatory model of neological formation in which external social change, internal linguistic structure and communicative validation are considered as interdependent dimensions of lexical innovation.

METHODS

The study uses a qualitative comparative design. It does not attempt to measure the frequency of neologisms statistically; instead, it aims to explain the mechanisms that condition their emergence, spread and stabilization. The methodological framework combines three approaches.

First, the comparative method is used to identify similarities and differences between Arabic and English neological processes. This is necessary because both languages are affected by common global factors, such as digitalization, globalization and scientific progress, but they do not transform these factors into lexical units in the same way.

Second, the descriptive-semantic method is applied to classify the mechanisms of neologism formation. Particular attention is given to lexical gaps, semantic expansion, analogy, word-formation productivity and linguistic economy. These mechanisms explain how an external communicative need becomes a concrete lexical form inside a language system.

Third, discourse analysis is used to examine the role of media, social networks, specialized communication, lexicography and terminology institutions. This method is essential because the life cycle of a neologism does not end with its creation. A new word must circulate, be repeated, acquire social recognition and, in some cases, be recorded in dictionaries or standardized by institutions.

The theoretical basis of the study includes works on specialized neology, lexical gaps, scientific and technical neology, social media neologisms, semantic change, analogy in word formation, Arabic terminology, neological lexicography and attitudinal factors in neologism use. Doboş's article on scientific and technical neology, for example, explicitly connects the "Knowledge Society" with scientific and technical lexical creativity. Šetka Čilić and Ilić Plauc analyze neologisms in social networking sites and show the high use of neologisms in internet-based communication. Link, Schmid and Ray propose a model of speaker attitudes toward neologism use based on efficiency, extravagance and extralinguistic relevance.

RESULTS

1. Extralinguistic factors: Social change as a source of lexical demand. The first major finding is that extralinguistic factors create the initial demand for neologisms. These factors include technological development, scientific progress, socio-political transformation, globalization, mass media and digital communication. They do not directly produce words by themselves, but they generate new realities, practices and concepts that require linguistic representation.

Technological development is one of the most productive sources of contemporary neology. New devices, software systems, platforms, digital practices and artificial-intelligence-based tools constantly create naming needs. In English, such needs are often satisfied through rapid word formation: *smartphone*, *hashtag*, *livestream*, *cloud computing*, *deepfake* and similar units are formed and circulated quickly. In Arabic, the same technological field often produces a more complex

situation: a term may appear as a direct borrowing, a transliterated form, a calque or an Arabic equivalent. For example, global digital terms may circulate in Arabic media through forms such as transliterated borrowings, Arabic equivalents or hybrid expressions. Thus, the extralinguistic stimulus is shared, but the linguistic result is not identical.

Scientific progress produces another important layer of neologisms. New scientific concepts require precise terminology. This is particularly evident in specialized domains such as medicine, information technology, environmental studies, economics and communication technologies. In such contexts, neologisms are not only expressive innovations but also nominative necessities. Their function is to reduce conceptual ambiguity and provide specialists with stable units of communication.

Socio-political change also stimulates neology. Political discourse often creates new evaluative, ideological and slogan-like lexical items. Such units do not merely name new phenomena; they frame them. The English word *woke*, for instance, developed from an older verbal form into a socio-political label associated with awareness of social justice issues. Similarly, politically charged neologisms may function as tools of persuasion, criticism or identity construction. Tabatadze's work on political discourse emphasizes that political neologisms are related not only to linguistic form but also to extra-linguistic political contexts and media mediation.

Globalization intensifies the transnational movement of neologisms. English often serves as a donor language in global scientific, technological and media discourse. Arabic, like many other languages, responds through borrowing, Arabization, loan translation or semantic adaptation. The result is not simple lexical transfer but a process of negotiation between global communicative pressure and local linguistic norms.

Digital communication and social media accelerate this process. Social networks provide a testing ground for new lexical items. Some innovations remain limited to specific communities, while others spread across platforms and enter wider public usage. Šetka Čilić and Ilić Plauc's analysis of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp shows that social media communication strongly favors shortened forms, blends, compounds and abbreviations because online interaction values speed, brevity and expressive impact.

2. Intralinguistic factors: The internal mechanisms of neologism formation.

The second major finding is that extralinguistic pressure cannot become a neologism unless the language system provides internal mechanisms for lexical formation. Intralinguistic factors therefore function as the structural "grammar" of neology.

The first mechanism is the lexical gap. A lexical gap appears when a language lacks a stable unit for a new concept, referent or communicative need. Roldan Vendrell and Fernandez-Domínguez distinguish between emergent neologisms and lexical gaps in specialized languages and show that neologisms often arise where denominative need is especially intense. In English, such gaps are frequently filled through compounding, blending, affixation and conversion. In Arabic, they may be filled through derivation, Arabization, calquing or the activation of existing lexical roots.

The second mechanism is semantic expansion. A language does not always create a completely new form for a new meaning. Often, an existing word is resemanticized and transferred into a new conceptual domain. The word *meme* illustrates this process: it originated as a term in cultural theory and later acquired a dominant digital-cultural meaning in internet communication. Similarly, *cloud* in *cloud computing* does not refer to the meteorological object but to a metaphorically extended technological concept. In Arabic, semantic expansion may occur when an existing Arabic lexical item is adapted to name a modern technological or institutional concept.

The third mechanism is analogy. Speakers rarely create new words from nothing; they usually rely on existing models. Mattiello's monograph *Analogy in Word-Formation: A Study of English Neologisms and Occasionalisms* examines analogy as a central mechanism in English neological formation. In English, analogy is visible in blends such as *mansplain*, formed by analogy with existing compounding and blending patterns. In Arabic, analogy operates differently, often through root-and-pattern morphology, derivational templates and established models of nominal and verbal formation.

The fourth mechanism is productivity. A word-formation pattern becomes neologically significant when speakers can use it repeatedly and creatively. English compounding and blending are highly productive in media and digital discourse. Arabic derivational morphology is also productive, but its productivity is mediated by the language's root-pattern system, classical lexical resources and modern terminological needs.

The fifth mechanism is linguistic economy. Modern communication favors brevity, speed and high informational density. This is especially evident in online discourse and news language. Kapralikova's study of linguistic economy discusses shortening processes such as clipping, amalgamation, back-derivation and elliptical constructions, while also relating abbreviation to Zipf's Principle of Least Effort and Martinet's principle of linguistic economy. Zhou Li-na's article on neologisms in

News English also indicates that news discourse is a productive environment for lexical innovations because it demands compact and efficient forms of expression.

3. Institutional and discursive factors: From innovation to stabilization. The third major finding is that the formation of a neologism is not identical with its stabilization. A word may be created and even circulated, but it becomes linguistically significant only when it gains wider discursive, social or institutional recognition.

In English, stabilization is often bottom-up. A new unit appears in media, social networks, advertising, youth discourse or specialized professional communication. If it is repeated frequently enough and used across contexts, dictionaries and lexical databases may eventually record it. The movement is therefore often from usage to recognition.

In Arabic, the process is frequently more complex. Because Arabic operates within a strong tradition of language planning, terminology work and normative concern, new lexical units may be evaluated by language academies, terminology committees, translators, media institutions and educational authorities. Elmgrab's article on the creation of terminology in Arabic identifies derivation, Arabization and blending among the main methods for creating Arabic terminology. This indicates that Arabic neology is not merely a matter of borrowing from English but involves active adaptation and terminological selection.

Lexicography is also central to neologism stabilization. Rodriguez Guerra's article on dictionaries of neologisms examines modern neologism dictionaries and discusses lexicographic and chronological criteria for recording new words. This distinction is important because not every new word deserves equal lexicographic status. Some units are occasional, expressive or short-lived; others gradually move toward conventionalization.

The role of discourse is equally important. Media discourse introduces neologisms to broad audiences and gives them repeated exposure. Social networks accelerate their diffusion and provide immediate feedback through likes, shares, comments and imitation. Academic and specialized discourse, in turn, may transform a lexical innovation into a term. Thus, discourse does not merely transmit neologisms; it assigns them function, register and social value.

DISCUSSION

The results suggest that neologism formation should be understood through a three-stage explanatory model: stimulus, formation and validation. The stimulus is usually extralinguistic: technological innovation, scientific discovery, political change, globalization or media transformation. The formation is intralinguistic:

lexical gaps, semantic expansion, analogy, productivity and linguistic economy convert communicative need into linguistic form. The validation is institutional or discursive: media circulation, social media repetition, lexicographic recording and terminological standardization determine whether the unit becomes stable.

This model allows a more precise comparison between English and Arabic. In English, lexical innovation often follows a bottom-up path. New words emerge in usage, circulate quickly and become conventionalized through frequency, social relevance and media visibility. Units such as *ghosting*, *mansplain* and *woke* illustrate this process. They are not simply new forms; they condense new social practices, attitudes and evaluations into compact lexical units.

In Arabic, the path is often more hybrid. Some new words enter through everyday usage and media circulation, especially in digital communication. Others are introduced or regulated through terminology planning, translation, Arabization and institutional recommendation. This produces a tension between spontaneous usage and normative regulation. For instance, one concept may circulate through several competing Arabic forms: a borrowed English form, a transliterated variant, a calque and a proposed Arabic equivalent. This multiplicity shows that Arabic neology is not passive borrowing but a field of competition between communicative efficiency, cultural-linguistic identity and institutional standardization.

The distinction between neologism and occasionalism is also important. A lexical item may be new and creative but remain context-bound. Bueno Ruiz and Freixa discuss the question of whether occasionalisms should be considered neologisms, especially when such units do not reach dictionary status or wider conventionalization. This distinction is relevant for both Arabic and English. Social media produces many creative forms, but only some become part of wider language use. Therefore, novelty alone is not enough; repetition, social relevance, semantic clarity and institutional or discursive support are also necessary.

Another important point is the relationship between form and function. Some neologisms are primarily nominative: they name new objects or concepts. Others are expressive: they create evaluation, humor, irony, identity or ideological stance. The word *mansplain*, for example, does not merely name a communicative act; it evaluates that act socially and pragmatically. Link, Schmid and Ray's model of neologism use is relevant here because it explains speakers' motivation through efficiency, extravagance and extralinguistic relevance. Thus, neologisms should not be reduced to lexical necessity alone; they also reflect speaker attitude and communicative strategy.

In comparative terms, English and Arabic reveal two different but interconnected neological tendencies. English demonstrates high flexibility in producing and circulating new lexical items through informal, media and digital channels. Arabic demonstrates a stronger interaction between innovation and regulation, especially in scientific and technical terminology. Both languages, however, show that neologisms are indicators of broader linguistic adaptation. They reveal how languages respond to new knowledge, new technologies, new social relations and new communicative practices.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that neologisms emerge through the interaction of extralinguistic, intralinguistic and institutional-discursive factors. Extralinguistic factors create the need for lexical innovation; intralinguistic mechanisms provide the structural means for forming new units; and institutional-discursive factors determine the degree of diffusion, acceptance and standardization.

The comparative analysis of Arabic and English demonstrates that both languages respond to similar global stimuli but use different linguistic and institutional strategies. English neology is often characterized by rapid bottom-up formation, high productivity of compounding and blending, semantic extension and immediate media circulation. Arabic neology, while also productive, more frequently involves borrowing, Arabization, semantic adaptation, calquing and institutional terminology planning.

The study also confirms that neologisms should not be regarded only as “new words.” They are linguistic signs of social transformation, technological change, communicative pressure and cultural negotiation. A neologism becomes significant not merely because it is new, but because it fills a communicative gap, fits the internal structure of a language, circulates through discourse and gains a certain degree of social or institutional recognition.

Future research may develop this study through corpus-based comparison of Arabic and English neologisms in specific domains such as artificial intelligence, social media, political discourse and environmental communication. Such research would make it possible to measure frequency, productivity, semantic shift and standardization more precisely.

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