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USING CORPORA TO STUDY NEOLOGISMS AND LEXICAL INNOVATION

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Abstract: Language constantly evolves, and new words, or neologisms, appear as society, technology, and culture change. Studying these new words helps us understand how language adapts to modern needs. This paper explores how corpora—large collections of real language use—can be used to identify and analyze neologisms. By examining word frequency, context, and usage patterns, researchers can track lexical innovation over time. The study highlights the advantages of corpus-based approaches, such as access to authentic data, the ability to monitor changes in real time, and insights into word formation and meaning. It also considers the challenges of identifying and interpreting neologisms and suggests ways to address these issues using systematic corpus analysis.

Keywords: Neologisms, lexical innovation, corpus linguistics, language change, digital corpora

Аннотация: Язык постоянно развивается, и новые слова, или неологизмы, появляются по мере изменений в обществе, технологиях и культуре. Изучение этих новых слов помогает понять, как язык адаптируется к современным потребностям. В данной статье рассматривается использование корпусов — больших коллекций реального языкового материала — для выявления и анализа неологизмов. Изучая частотность слов, контекст и способы употребления, исследователи могут отслеживать процессы лексических инноваций с течением времени. Статья подчеркивает преимущества подходов, основанных на корпусах, такие как доступ к подлинным данным, возможность отслеживать изменения в реальном времени и понимание способов образования слов и их значений. Также обсуждаются трудности выявления и интерпретации неологизмов и предлагаются способы их решения с помощью систематического анализа корпусов.

Ключевые слова: Неологизмы, лексические инновации, корпусная лингвистика, изменение языка, цифровые корпусы

Language is an ever-changing mirror of human society, reflecting cultural shifts, technological advances, and social trends. One of the most fascinating aspects of this evolution is the emergence of neologisms—words that appear to name new realities, concepts, or phenomena. Unlike traditional words documented in dictionaries, neologisms often surface in dynamic

environments such as social media, blogs, online forums, and contemporary literature.

By comparing the appearance of neologisms across different languages, including English, Russian, Uzbek, and Korean, we gain a deeper understanding of both universal and language-specific lexical innovation. English often forms new words through compounding (selfie-stick, hashtagged), blending (brunch), or functional shifts (turning nouns into verbs: to Google). Russian neologisms may involve calquing from English, such as компьютерная сеть (computer network), or playful blends like инфоцыгане (info-gypsies). Uzbek neologisms frequently emerge through borrowing from Russian and English, especially in technology (kompyuter, internetlashmoq), while Korean incorporates English loanwords into its own phonological and morphological system (인터넷, 셀카 for selfie). Corpora, as systematic collections of authentic language data, are essential tools for capturing the transient and innovative nature of new vocabulary. They allow linguists to identify new words and observe their evolution in usage, frequency, and meaning. Comparative corpus analysis reveals patterns across languages. English often adopts concise, catchy terms for social media trends, Russian favors compound or descriptive forms, Uzbek relies on borrowed and adapted terms, and Korean integrates loanwords and native morphological strategies. Such comparisons illuminate how different linguistic systems respond to similar societal changes. To study neologisms systematically, researchers employ several corpus-based methods that provide both quantitative and qualitative insights. These methods allow linguists to identify new words, analyze their formation, track their frequency, and examine their social and cultural contexts.

1. Corpus Analysis

Corpora are large collections of authentic language data, including books, newspapers, online forums, blogs, and social media posts. By analyzing these corpora, researchers can detect newly emerging words and observe their usage in natural contexts. For example, English neologisms such as selfie or ghosting can be traced across social media posts, showing when and where they became popular.

2. Frequency Analysis

Frequency analysis involves counting how often a word appears in a corpus. Words that suddenly increase in frequency are likely neologisms or trending terms. This method helps to identify emerging vocabulary and monitor its growth over time.

3. Diachronic Comparison

Diachronic analysis compares corpora across different time periods to examine how words evolve. By analyzing historical and contemporary corpora, researchers can determine when a neologism first appeared, how its usage changed, and whether it has stabilized or declined.

4. Keyword Analysis

Keyword analysis identifies words that occur significantly more often in a target corpus than in a reference corpus. This technique highlights words that are unusual or especially characteristic of the corpus, which often includes neologisms.

5. Morphological and Semantic Analysis

Morphological analysis studies the structure of new words, such as affixes, compounding, or blending. Semantic analysis examines changes in meaning. For example, the Uzbek word internetlashmoq is formed by adding a native verb suffix to the borrowed English word "internet," demonstrating both morphological adaptation and semantic extension.

6. Comparative Analysis

Comparing neologisms across languages reveals differences and similarities in lexical innovation. For instance, the word "selfie" appears as English selfie, Russian селфи, Uzbek selfi, and Korean 셀카. Such comparisons illustrate how languages adopt and adapt foreign words to fit their phonological, morphological, and cultural systems.

By combining these methods, linguists can systematically capture, analyze, and interpret the dynamic process of lexical innovation. Corpus-based approaches offer the advantage of large-scale, authentic data, enabling researchers to observe not only the emergence of new words but also their adoption patterns across different social groups, platforms, and languages.

Morphological and semantic analysis: Observing how new words are formed and what new meanings they acquire. For instance, the word selfie can be tracked in English corpora, while Russian селфи, Uzbek selfi, and Korean 셀카 show borrowing and adaptation processes.

Studying the contexts of neologisms reveals social and cultural influences. Social media corpora capture informal innovations, while news corpora reflect formal adoption. Contextual analysis across languages demonstrates how cultural norms shape lexical creativity. For example, English ghosting, Russian гостинг, Uzbek gosting qilmoq, and Korean 고스팅 illustrate global trends adapted into different linguistic systems. Similarly, blends like English staycation inspire Russian (стейкейшн), Uzbek (steykeshn qilish), and Korean (스테이케이션) adaptations. Adoption is influenced by exposure, ease of pronunciation, and relevance. English propagates innovations rapidly due to global reach, Russian adopts compound and descriptive forms, Uzbek

favors borrowing, and Korean integrates English words into native structures. Comparative study highlights how linguistic, social, and cultural factors drive word adoption.

Challenges in Corpus-Based Neologism Research include short-lived words, spelling variations, informal text noise, and ethical concerns from online data collection. Longitudinal studies are required to differentiate fleeting slang from stable neologisms.

Comparing English, Russian, Uzbek, and Korean shows both universality and diversity in lexical innovation. Global technological and cultural changes prompt all languages to create or borrow new words, but strategies differ. English prefers brevity and creativity; Russian uses descriptive forms; Uzbek relies on adaptation; Korean integrates loanwords while maintaining native morphological patterns.

In conclusion, the study of neologisms through corpus-based research provides invaluable insights into the dynamic and evolving nature of language. By systematically analyzing large collections of authentic language data, researchers can identify newly emerging words, track their frequency and usage patterns, and understand the social, cultural, and technological factors that drive lexical innovation. Comparative analysis across multiple languages—such as English, Russian, Uzbek, and Korean—reveals both universal trends and language-specific strategies in neologism formation. English tends to favor brevity, blending, and functional shifts; Russian employs compounding and descriptive forms; Uzbek often adapts borrowed terms with native morphological modifications; and Korean integrates foreign loanwords while maintaining native morphological and phonological patterns. These differences highlight the influence of cultural norms, linguistic structures, and historical contexts on the adoption and adaptation of new words. From my perspective, studying neologisms in a multilingual context is particularly fascinating because it demonstrates not only the creativity inherent in language but also the ways in which cultural and technological factors intersect to shape communication. Observing how English words quickly spread and are adapted in Russian, Uzbek, and Korean illustrates the interconnectedness of our modern world and the dynamic process of linguistic evolution. Ultimately, I believe that multilingual corpus studies are not only academically valuable but also personally inspiring. They allow us to appreciate the richness and adaptability of language, encourage cross-cultural understanding, and highlight the creativity and ingenuity of speakers worldwide. Continuing to explore neologisms with both quantitative and qualitative methods will deepen our understanding of language change and its role in reflecting contemporary society. Corpus-based research illuminates the dynamic process of lexical innovation. Comparative analyses across multiple languages provide insight into universal trends and language-specific

strategies. Corpora offer a structured, evidence-based approach to studying word formation, adoption, and adaptation. Future studies should incorporate multilingual corpora and real-time online data to explore global neologism propagation and transformation, enhancing our understanding of language evolution and intercultural exchange.

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