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## HISTORY AND CURRENT TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEOLOGISMS

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### Abstract

This article explores the historical evolution and contemporary trends in the field of neology, the study of new words and their incorporation into language. Neology reflects rapid societal changes and the constant renewal of vocabulary driven by social, technological, and communicative needs. We discuss the origins of neology as a discipline, highlight its significance in various linguistic traditions, and examine current developments, especially the prolific generation of new lexical units in the 20th and 21st centuries. The study also addresses the challenges faced by neologists and underlines the multidisciplinary nature of neology that bridges linguistics with social and cognitive sciences.

**Keywords:** neology, neologism, lexical innovation, language change, vocabulary expansion, linguistics, lexicography.

### Introduction

Vocabulary is a dynamic component of language that continuously adapts to reflect changes in human life. The creation of new words, or neologisms, is the most common mechanism for vocabulary enrichment. Neology—the scientific study of new words and their formation—emerged as a field to systematize understanding of lexical innovation. This article traces the historical development of neology, surveys its main theoretical underpinnings, and reviews current trends shaped by technological advancement and globalization. By examining neology’s evolution and present-day scope, this work highlights its importance in both linguistic theory and practical lexicography.



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## **Literature Review**

The concept of neology is relatively modern, with the term itself first introduced in 1801 by the French lexicographer L.S. Mercier. Early attitudes towards neologisms were often skeptical or even hostile, as reflected in the 19th-century Desk Dictionary edited by F. Toll, which regarded many new words as unnecessary additions to language. This perspective influenced language policies in countries like France, where normative pressures in the 17th century resisted linguistic innovation.

French linguistic scholarship, represented by figures such as A. Darmesteter and M. Cohen, laid foundational work for the study of neologisms. Parallel efforts in German and Russian lexicography—such as the Duden dictionary series and Ushakov's Explanatory Dictionary—contributed to documenting and theorizing neological phenomena.

The 20th century is widely recognized as the most productive period for neologism formation, driven by rapid technological, social, and cultural changes. Modern linguists, including Zabrodina, Yakovleva, and Popova, emphasize the intertwined external (social) and internal (linguistic) factors shaping neology. The rise of mass media and digital communication has exponentially accelerated the rate of new word formation, challenging lexicographers to keep pace.

## **Method and Methodology**

This study is a qualitative literature-based review synthesizing historical and contemporary scholarly works on neology from diverse linguistic traditions. Key sources include lexicographic records, theoretical analyses, and empirical data on neologism frequency. Comparative examination of language policy documents, dictionaries, and linguistic treatises provides insights into evolving attitudes towards neologisms. Additionally, statistical data on neologism emergence rates from English and Russian contexts illustrate the scale and nature of lexical innovation in the modern era.

## **Results and Discussion**

Neology is characterized by a complex interaction of extralinguistic and intralinguistic factors. Externally, social changes such as technological progress,



cultural shifts, and media influence create new realities that require lexical representation. Internally, language dynamics such as analogy, linguistic economy, and expressive needs govern the structural formation and adoption of neologisms.

The French linguistic tradition highlights normative resistance to neologisms during earlier centuries, reflecting a tension between language stability and innovation. German and Russian lexicography demonstrate progressive documentation efforts, marking neology as a serious scientific pursuit by the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Modern studies estimate tens of thousands of new English words appear annually, with daily rates reaching into the thousands. This unprecedented lexical growth reveals the need for dynamic lexicographic approaches and broadens the scope of neology beyond traditional linguistic boundaries to include psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic dimensions.

The challenges for neology include developing robust criteria to distinguish fleeting lexical trends from lasting additions, understanding public acceptance mechanisms, and analyzing changing patterns in word formation methods over time.

## **Conclusion**

Neology is a vital and rapidly evolving branch of linguistics reflecting the continuous transformation of language in response to human needs. From its early conceptualization in the 19th century to the explosive lexical innovation of the 21st century, neology provides key insights into how languages grow and adapt. Its multidisciplinary nature underscores the interconnectedness of language with social, cognitive, and communicative processes. Future research must focus on refining theoretical models and enhancing lexicographic practices to better capture and interpret the dynamic landscape of new word formation.

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