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# BORROWINGS AND NEOLOGISMS IN MODERN ENGLISH

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**Abstract.** This article examines the role of borrowings and neologisms in the development of modern English vocabulary. English has historically expanded through intensive contact with other languages, resulting in the incorporation of lexical items from French, Latin, Scandinavian languages, Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Chinese, Japanese, and many other linguistic sources. In contemporary English, globalization, technological development, social media, international business, popular culture, and scientific innovation have accelerated lexical change and stimulated the emergence of new words and meanings. The study analyzes major types and sources of lexical borrowing, contemporary neologism formation processes, including compounding, derivation, blending, clipping, abbreviation, conversion, semantic extension, and borrowing. Particular attention is given to digital neologisms such as *livestream, cryptocurrency, catfishing, ghosting, prompt engineering,* and *retweet*. The research demonstrates that borrowing and neologism formation are not isolated processes but interconnected mechanisms of lexical expansion. Modern English therefore represents a highly dynamic lexical system capable of rapidly incorporating linguistic and cultural innovations.

**Keywords:** English lexicon, borrowing, loanwords, neologism, lexical innovation, word formation, globalization, digital communication, social media, language change.

**Introduction.** Language is a dynamic social phenomenon that continuously changes in response to developments in society, culture, science, technology, and international communication. Vocabulary is one of the most rapidly changing components of a language because new objects, concepts, technologies, social practices, and cultural phenomena constantly require linguistic expression. Two particularly important mechanisms of lexical development are borrowing and neologism formation. English is especially notable for its openness to lexical influence from other languages. The historical development of English involved prolonged contact with Scandinavian, French, Latin, Celtic, and other languages. Later periods introduced words from languages geographically and culturally distant from Britain. Durkin's comprehensive historical study demonstrates that borrowing has affected not only specialized terminology but also high-frequency and basic vocabulary in English. In the contemporary period, lexical change has become even more rapid. Globalization and digital communication facilitate the international circulation of words, while social networks provide an environment in which new lexical items can be created, disseminated, modified, and adopted within very short periods. Recent research on English neologisms emphasizes the relationship between lexical innovation, technological development, globalization, Internet culture, and social change. The Oxford English Dictionary also increasingly documents vocabulary emerging from digital communication. Research published in 2026 shows that Twitter/X had provided evidence for thousands of dictionary senses and first evidence for 213 new word meanings, demonstrating the importance of social media as a source of contemporary lexical evidence. The aim of this article is to

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examine the main characteristics of borrowings and neologisms in modern English and to identify the principal mechanisms through which they contribute to lexical expansion.

**Literature review.** The lexical development of English has attracted considerable attention in historical linguistics, lexicology, sociolinguistics, and lexicography. Among the most significant mechanisms responsible for the expansion and transformation of the English vocabulary are lexical borrowing and neologism formation. Existing scholarship demonstrates that these two processes are closely connected with language contact, social change, technological development, globalization, and cultural interaction. One of the most comprehensive studies of lexical borrowing in English is Philip Durkin's *Borrowed Words: A History of Loanwords in English* (2014). The study provides a systematic historical account of loanwords from the earliest stages of English to the modern period. Durkin examines borrowings from Scandinavian, Latin, French, Celtic, Arabic, Hebrew, South Asian languages, Chinese, Japanese, and other languages. Importantly, the author does not consider borrowing merely as the transfer of individual words from one language to another. Instead, borrowing is analyzed as a historical process that can substantially transform the lexical structure of the receiving language. Durkin's research is particularly important because it demonstrates that borrowed vocabulary is not restricted to specialized or culturally specific lexical fields. His analysis of the most frequent vocabulary of contemporary English shows substantial contributions from Scandinavian, French, and Latin sources. Thus, historically borrowed words may become deeply integrated into the core vocabulary of English and may eventually be perceived by speakers as ordinary native vocabulary. Another important aspect of Durkin's work is the distinction between different forms of lexical influence. In addition to direct lexical borrowing, he considers semantic borrowing and loan translation. This distinction is theoretically significant because languages can influence one another not only by transferring phonological and morphological forms but also by transferring meanings and patterns of conceptualization. The historical dimension of borrowing is also closely associated with sociocultural factors. Durkin emphasizes that the analysis of loanwords requires consideration of historical events, migration, political relations, religious change, settlement, trade, and cultural contact. In the history of English, contacts with Scandinavian-speaking communities and the Norman French-speaking elite, for example, contributed to major changes in English vocabulary. This demonstrates that lexical borrowing should be understood not simply as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a reflection of social and historical interaction.

Recent research by Melnyk and Kyselova (2025) examines lexical neologisms in contemporary English and emphasizes their relationship with technological progress, sociocultural transformation, globalization, and innovations in communication. The authors identify compounding, affixation, contraction, acronym formation, blending, semantic shift, and functional shift among the important mechanisms of contemporary lexical innovation. Their analysis also highlights technological terms such as *blockchain, cryptocurrency,* and *Metaverse*, as well as socially and culturally motivated words such as *selfie* and *binge-watch*. This research is particularly relevant to the present study because it demonstrates that contemporary neologisms cannot be analyzed independently of the social environment in which they emerge. New vocabulary frequently appears as a linguistic response to new technologies, social practices, cultural phenomena, and communication patterns. Therefore, the study of neologisms provides insight not only into lexical structure but also into broader processes of social and cultural transformation.

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The increasing importance of digital communication is particularly significant in recent scholarship. Social media platforms create an environment in which lexical innovations can spread rapidly across geographical and linguistic boundaries. Expressions originating in online communities can move from informal digital communication into journalism, advertising, professional discourse, and eventually dictionaries. Compounding is particularly important in modern English because it allows speakers to create concise names for newly emerging concepts. Examples such as *smartphone, cybersecurity, cloud computing, machine learning,* and *prompt engineering* demonstrate how existing lexical elements can be combined to designate new technological realities. Recent dictionary-based research confirms the continuing productivity of compounding among newly emerging English lexical items. Concepts such as *generative AI, deepfake, prompt engineering, AI-generated content,* and *large language model* demonstrate how technological developments generate new terminology or new combinations of existing lexical units.

**Research results and discussion.** The analysis demonstrates that borrowings and neologisms constitute two closely interconnected mechanisms of lexical development in modern English. Although borrowing primarily represents an external source of vocabulary enrichment, neologism formation frequently relies on the internal resources of English, including compounding, derivation, blending, clipping, conversion, abbreviation, and semantic extension. At the same time, borrowed lexical items may subsequently participate in English word formation and acquire new meanings. Historical evidence confirms that borrowing has profoundly influenced the English lexicon. Durkin's analysis demonstrates that Scandinavian, French, and Latin borrowings have contributed significantly not only to specialized vocabulary but also to high-frequency and basic English vocabulary. This indicates that borrowed words can become deeply integrated into the receiving language and eventually function as ordinary components of its lexical system. The present analysis therefore suggests that the distinction between “native” and “borrowed” vocabulary is not always sufficient for describing the contemporary English lexicon. Once a loanword becomes fully integrated, it may participate in derivation, compounding, semantic extension, and other productive processes.

Major Sources of Borrowed Vocabulary. The analysis of modern English vocabulary identifies several historically important donor languages. French and Latin have had a particularly substantial influence on English, while Scandinavian languages have contributed a number of high-frequency lexical items. English has also incorporated vocabulary from Arabic, Persian, Hindi and other South Asian languages, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, Italian, and numerous other languages as a result of cultural contact and globalization. The significance of these borrowings differs according to historical period and semantic domain. French and Latin have been particularly important in the development of legal, political, administrative, academic, and scientific vocabulary. Scandinavian influence, by contrast, has penetrated everyday vocabulary to a considerable extent. Durkin's research shows that early Scandinavian borrowing made a significant contribution to the inner core of frequently used English vocabulary. This finding demonstrates that borrowing is not simply a peripheral phenomenon associated with exotic or culturally specific words. Historical borrowing has contributed substantially to the structural and functional development of English vocabulary.

Linguistic Integration of Loanwords. The analysis shows that successful borrowing involves more than the simple introduction of a foreign lexical item. A loanword can undergo phonological, morphological, semantic, and functional adaptation. For example, borrowed nouns can enter English

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grammatical patterns and become bases for new compounds or derivatives. Words originally associated with particular cultural contexts can also develop broader meanings in English.

This process may be represented as follows:

Foreign lexical item → borrowing → phonological/morphological adaptation → semantic integration → productive use in English

The final stage is particularly important. Once a borrowed element becomes productive, speakers may use it in new combinations that did not necessarily exist in the source language. Consequently, borrowing may stimulate subsequent internal lexical innovation. Durkin emphasizes that lexical borrowing must be examined together with semantic borrowing, loan translation, and the broader effects of contact on the English vocabulary.

Productive Mechanisms of Neologism Formation. The analysis of contemporary English neologisms identifies several highly productive mechanisms.

| **Word-formation process** | **Examples** | **Linguistic function** |
|---|---|---|
| Compounding | smartphone, cybersecurity, deepfake | Combines existing lexical units |
| Blending | webinar, infotainment, brunch | Combines parts of different words |
| Derivation | digitalize, influencer, viralize | Creates new words through affixation |
| Clipping | app, demo, ad | Shortens existing lexical forms |
| Acronym/initialism | AI, NFT, LLM | Creates concise technical labels |
| Conversion | to message, to livestream | Changes grammatical function without overt affixation |
| Semantic extension | cloud, viral, follow | Adds new meanings to existing words |
| Borrowing | sushi, karaoke, tsunami | Introduces lexical material from another language |

Recent research confirms that compounding, derivation, blending, clipping, borrowing, and semantic shift are among the major processes involved in contemporary English lexical innovation. The findings indicate that no single word-formation mechanism dominates all areas of contemporary vocabulary. Different semantic fields demonstrate different patterns of productivity.

Technology as a Major Source of Neologisms. One of the clearest findings is the strong relationship between technological development and lexical innovation. The rapid development of artificial intelligence, digital platforms, cybersecurity, online commerce, and mobile technologies has created a constant need for new terminology.

Contemporary expressions such as *generative AI, deepfake, prompt engineering, AI-generated content, cloud computing,* and *machine learning* illustrate this tendency.

Some of these expressions are completely new combinations, while others combine already established lexical elements in new ways. Therefore, technological neologization frequently involves recombination rather than the creation of entirely unprecedented linguistic material. This observation is consistent with recent research showing that contemporary neologisms reflect technological and sociocultural transformations and are particularly visible in digital communication.

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Semantic Innovation in Existing Vocabulary. The research also demonstrates that lexical innovation does not necessarily require the creation of a completely new word. Existing words can acquire additional meanings as a result of technological and cultural developments.

For example:

cloud — traditionally a meteorological phenomenon; in computing, a system of remote digital storage and services;

viral — originally associated with viruses; in digital communication, describing content that spreads rapidly online;

follow — traditionally meaning to move behind or monitor someone; in social media, to subscribe to another user's content;

friend — traditionally a person with whom one has a personal relationship; in social networking, a person connected through a digital platform;

stream — traditionally a flow of water; in digital communication, continuous transmission of audio or video.

These examples illustrate semantic extension, whereby an existing lexical form develops a new specialized meaning. The importance of semantic borrowing and semantic innovation has also been emphasized in historical research on English lexical development.

Borrowing and Neologism as Interconnected Processes. One of the principal findings of the study is that borrowing and neologism formation cannot always be treated as independent lexical processes. A borrowed word can become the basis for subsequent English word formation. Similarly, a foreign concept can enter English through a borrowed term and subsequently generate derivatives, compounds, or semantic extensions.

The process may therefore be represented as:

Language contact → borrowing → integration → word formation → semantic extension → lexical conventionalization

For example, once a foreign lexical item becomes established in English, speakers may use it in compounds or derivatives according to English morphological patterns. This demonstrates that lexical borrowing contributes not only to vocabulary size but also to the productive potential of the receiving language.

**Discussion.** The findings demonstrate that modern English vocabulary is characterized by a high degree of lexical openness and structural productivity. Borrowing provides English with lexical resources from external linguistic environments, whereas internal word-formation mechanisms allow speakers to adapt these resources and generate new lexical units. The first important observation concerns the integration of borrowed vocabulary. A loanword may initially be perceived as foreign, but repeated use can gradually reduce its foreign character. It may become phonologically and morphologically adapted and eventually participate in productive English constructions. Historical evidence from Scandinavian, French, and Latin borrowing demonstrates that such integration can extend into the core vocabulary of English. The second important observation concerns the productivity of contemporary word formation. Compounding, derivation, blending, clipping, conversion, and semantic extension enable speakers to create lexical forms without necessarily importing completely new words from another language. Recent studies confirm that these mechanisms remain central to contemporary lexical innovation. The third finding concerns the accelerating role of digital communication. Social media has changed the speed and scale of lexical

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diffusion. A new expression can emerge within a particular online community and rapidly spread to wider audiences. The documented role of Twitter/X as a source of OED evidence illustrates the increasing importance of digital discourse for observing lexical change. Thus, the contemporary English lexicon can be understood as the result of interaction between external borrowing, internal word formation, semantic change, and sociocultural innovation.

Not every innovation necessarily becomes a permanent part of the language. Some expressions remain limited to particular communities, while others become widespread and eventually receive dictionary recognition. The distinction between temporary lexical innovation and established vocabulary therefore remains an important issue for future research. Overall, the findings support the view that modern English is not a static lexical system but an continuously developing one. Its capacity to integrate foreign vocabulary and generate new lexical forms allows it to respond rapidly to changes in science, technology, culture, and communication.

**Conclusion.** The study demonstrates that borrowings and neologisms constitute essential mechanisms of lexical development in modern English. English has historically expanded through intensive linguistic contact, and borrowed vocabulary from French, Latin, Scandinavian, Arabic, South Asian, East Asian, and other languages has become an integral part of the language. Contemporary lexical development is increasingly influenced by globalization, scientific progress, technological innovation, mass media, and social networks. These factors stimulate the creation and dissemination of new lexical units through compounding, derivation, blending, clipping, abbreviation, conversion, semantic extension, and borrowing. The analysis also shows that borrowings do not remain passive elements of the vocabulary. Once integrated into English, they may participate in further word formation and develop new meanings. Similarly, many contemporary neologisms arise through the reinterpretation or combination of existing linguistic material. Digital communication has become particularly important in the contemporary process of lexical innovation. Social-media platforms provide a rapid environment for the emergence and dissemination of new vocabulary, while lexicographical resources such as the Oxford English Dictionary increasingly document these developments. Thus, modern English can be characterized as a highly flexible and dynamic lexical system. Its ability to absorb foreign elements while simultaneously creating new words enables it to respond effectively to social, cultural, scientific, and technological change. Further research may focus on corpus-based investigation of recently emerging AI-related vocabulary, the process of lexical conventionalization, and the adaptation of English neologisms in other languages, including Uzbek.

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