Morpholexicosemantics analysis of neologism on Facebook posts and threads

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ABSTRACT

Neologism is a word or phrase that has three classifications which are the completely newly-coined words and phrases, existing words and phrases that have new meanings and existing words or phrases with expanded meanings. This linguistic phenomenon is seen to be prevalent in Facebook posts and threads. This study was conducted to discover neologisms, their classification, word formation processes, and lexical functions. The results indicated that the word-formation processes, namely acronyms, affixations, back-formation, blending, clipping, compounding, conversion and shortening have been used and among these, affixation and compounding are the most used word-formation processes. Moreover, in its lexical functions, which are noun, verb, adjective and interjection, noun is the most used. Therefore, it is recommended that Cultural implications on the fast transmissions and influence of the creation of neologisms be further explored.

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1. Introduction

The social networking sites have become a trend in the realm of mass media. These are a web-based service that allows individual to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system (Kachhia, & Kachhia, 2014). The internet and telecommunications technology have truly transformed the way we communicate, contributing to the emergence of a new kind of online culture (Wikipedia). In relation to this, the English language, just like other languages, is now facing a "neological boom" (Smith, 2007; Ellison & Boyd, 2006). People keep on posting words that seemed to be unfamiliar which are generally considered as "newly coined words".

This study focused on neologisms that have emerged as a result of online social networking. Creating new words and posting these online guarantees a vast spread of it. Given that the social networking sites have millions of participants worldwide, this means that millions of people as well could use newly encountered words and even create a new one. This has to be given attention for this could be a contribution or threat to the mainstream of language. The users of the internet, specifically, these social networking sites online, have to know how these neologisms are being formed, as well as how to utilize this linguistic phenomenon not just in learning new language but also in teaching it (Falk, Bernhard, & Gérard, 2013).

Basically, Facebook is an online networking site where one can show information about one's self and communicate with groups of friends. It is also where one can find different posts on different matters ranging from the most informative one up to the least, such as issues and trends worldwide, current political status of a certain nation, and even those trending foods that a certain

circle of friends may talk about. Each day, Facebook is seen to produce as many as thousand words and expressions which are newly formed or old words given either new meaning or expanded meaning. These words and expressions that emerge are now called "neologism".

In linguistics, *neologism* refers to a newly coined term, word, or phrase that has not been accepted in the mainstream lexicon (Renner, Maniez, & Arnaud, 2013; Rumsiene, 2009). These are new words or phrases that were coined recently by a person, magazine, era, or event, and it's now widely used but are typically not listed in computational lexicons-dictionary-like resources that many natural language processing applications depend on (Cook, 2010; Phillips, n.d.). Though neologism has been a help in the mainstream of language, it may also become a problem in the lexicon when words are being added to it which approximate to hundreds of words every year (Wei, 2014; Malkiel, 1993; *UK Essays,* 2013). This might pose problems when the newly invented expression or words are misused by people and might affect communication.

The language used in the Facebook posts and threads served as the corpus of the study but these should only be Sebuano, Tagalog, English, Taglish or any other creative combination of such languages. These neologisms certainly have an explanation about how these are invented and what are their functions in any form of discourse or how these are used in constructing sentences.

It is truly important to know how a newly invented word, for instance, is made for it may be derived from an existing word, a newly coined word, or an existing word that expands its meaning (Nordquist, 2016) . Thus, the function of that newly invented word in a sentence is also an important factor in order to identify the classification of the word (Saussure, 2015). Hence, these factors should be given attention for these neologisms play a vital role not only as means of communication but also in the language lexicon (Ten Hacken, & Thomas, 2013). It is in this perspective that this study was conducted.

In this generation social media poses an impact to the lives of many. Some might say that it gives negative thoughts and a waste of time, while others say it has become the voice of the people. Inevitably, one cannot change the fact that social networking sites have become the famous world's trends nowadays where people get updated with the most recent happenings in the surroundings. This study aimed to find out the neologisms and their meanings, the word formation processes inherent in them, and their functions and frequency of occurrences in the Facebook context, specifically, on its posts and threads. This study will explore Neologism on Facebook Posts and Threads using Morpholexicosemantics Analysis.

2. Methodology

This study was done through synchronic and diachronic analysis of the qualitative data. The researchers followed an approach found in the study of Pavol Stekauer (2005) which is a descriptive analysis of qualitative textual data concerning the semantic and syntactic structure of the created or invented words. Given the size of the corpus, the researchers conducted an elaborate analysis of the qualitative data collected from the varying posts and threads found on Facebook.

The study was conducted all throughout the year 2019. The researchers gathered the data from the first week of April until the last week of December. The data analysis started on the first week of January to the last week of April, 2020.

The corpus was taken from the Facebook threads and posts that are public in nature or can be seen by anyone who likes to browse it. Grammatical consideration was not considered in the posts and threads since the focus of this study was neologisms. The corpus is composed of the posts and threads found on Facebook from April 2018 up to December 2018.

The researchers collected the data from the varying Facebook threads and posts consisting of neologisms. In order to get the desired information, the researchers conducted the following: (1) Selection of the posts and threads on Facebook which contained neologisms; (2) Utilization of the processes in defining and analyzing the gathered data; and (3) Classification of the analysed data through tabulation of the used word processes or formations.

The researchers have selected the data on Facebook posts and threads synchronically as well as the utilization of the theories in analyzing the corpus. Then, the classification of the analysed data through tabulation of the used word processes or formations was done diachronically.

In the analysis, the instances of neologisms were isolated and analysed according to according to their types, meanings, morphosemantic and lexical functions using Onomasiological Theory and Semasiological Theory.

3. Findings and Discussion

The neologisms that surfaced from the corpus were classified into three, namely: A. Completely newly-coined words and phrases; B. Existing words or phrases that have new meanings; and, C. Existing words or phrases with expanded meanings. These are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Neologisms on Facebook Posts and Threads According to their classifications

A. Completely newly-coined neologisms		
Abas	Fruitie	Netspeak
Bae	GGSS	Pabebe
Cinemagram	Gayweather	Row
Comfy	Gor	Seenzoned
Convo	Groupie	Snapchating
Dormmandments	Hellmode	Throwbacking
Dubsmash	Imba	Unending
Effin'	Instaselfie	Unfollow
Fangirling	Mirrorfie	Unfriend
Foodie	Na blags	Unlike
Friendzoned	Netizen	

B. An existing word/phrase with a new meaning
ATM (At The Moment)
FL (Flood Likes)
GG
Juicecolored
Na Colombia
Chika Galore
Flashback Friday
Photobombers
Throwback Thursday
Wayback Wednesday

C. An existing word/phrase with an extended or expanded meaning
Hokage
Hopia
Hugot
Kalamay
Thuglife
TBH
Ohwrayt
Ediwow

Word formation is the process of making and composing new terms as discussed above and in relation to this study the neologisms undergo a morpho-semantic analysis (Payne, 2006; Khurshid, 2000; Kosur, 2014). Based on the data gathered, there were various morpho-semantic processes used in neologisms on Facebook posts and threads. The graphs below show the frequency of occurrence of the morphosemantic processes.
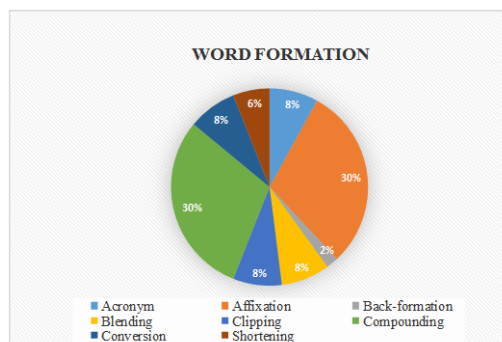

Fig. 1. Word formation

The word-formation types identified in the data are: acronyms, affixation back-formation, blending, clipping, compounding, conversion, and shortening; while the word-classes they belong to are nouns, verbs, adjectives and interjections. The most common word-formation type among the neologisms used in this study are the affixation and compounding with a total number of fifteen (15) each or 30%. According to Gontsarova, affixation is the process of adding one or more affixes to the root morpheme in order to get a new word like unfriend (prefix) and mirrorfie (suffix). Meanwhile, compounding, like dubsmash, is the act of joining two separate words to produce a new form (Gontsarova, 2013).

The next word-formations type in order of frequency are acronym (ATM -At The Moment), blending (netizen), clipping(convo), and conversion (hokage) with a total of four (4) or 8% neologisms each; next is the shortening (hugot) which accounts for three (3) or 6% of the neologisms, and the last process is the back-formation (abas instead of saba) which consists of one (1) or 2% among the 50 list of neologism in Facebook posts and threads.

The results abovementioned have revealed that since Affixation and Compounding are the most word-formation used, this means that these two processes are easiest to use in coining or creating new words. The people would just have to think of a word or words to attach or combine to be able to create a new one.

The lexical functions were categorized and analyzed according to its context use by using the parts of speech or the word class. Word class is a category to which a word is assigned in accordance with its syntactic functions. In English the main parts of speech (Word class) are noun, pronoun, adjective, determiner, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection (Bolshakov, et.al., 1999; Moore, 2000). Hence, the following are the lexical functions of neologisms found in Facebook threads.
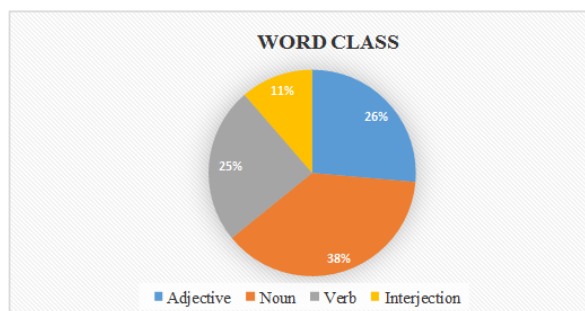

Fig. 2. World Class

The most common word-class in the data is the noun. Noun is a part of a speech which refers to words that are used in naming persons, things, animals, places, ideas, or events (Foodie, Frutie, Groufie and Mirrorfie). Out of the fifty neologisms, twenty (20) or 38% function as noun. Next is the adjective with a total of fourteen (14) or 26% neologisms, verbs pertaining a total number of thirteen (13) or 25% neologisms, and lastly is the interjections which has a total number of six (6) or 11% of the neologisms as shown in the tabulation below.

The results have revealed that people used neologism to function as a noun. This indicates that Facebook users might have created these neologisms to highlight a subject matter in every post or thread on Facebook.

The neologisms' word formation processes are presented against their lexical functions. For example, when acronym was used to form a neologized word, the neologism then was found to function as adjective (GGSS), noun (FL), verb (ATM, TBH) and interjection (GG). Other findings are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Morpholexicosemantic Formations of the Neologisms

WORD FORMATIONS	LEXICAL FUNCTIONS			
	Adjective	Noun	Verb	Interjection
Acronym	GGSS	FL	ATM, TBH	GG
Affixation	Pabebe, Unending, Comfy	Foodie, Fruitie, Groufie, Mirrorfie	Na Colombia, Na blagss, Throwbacking, Snapchating, Unfollow, Unfriend, Unlike, Fangirling	Effin'
Back-formation			Abas	
Blending		Cinemagram, Dormmandments, Netizen, Netspeak		
Clipping	Comfy, Gor	Convo		Row/rowts
Compounding	Hellmode	Dubsmash, Chika Galore, Gayweather, Flashback Friday, Photobombers, WaybackWednesday ThrowbackThursday, Thuglife, Instaselfie	Friendzoned Seenzoned Snapchating	Juicecolored
Conversion	Hopia, Kalamay	Hokage, Thuglife		
Shortening	Imba	Bae, Hugot		
Semantic Expansion				Eh di wow Ohwrayt

The findings conform to Stekauer's notion of Onomasiology. Since words are coined to name existing objects and concepts, it is natural for most neologisms to be nouns (Onyedum, 2012). The analysis above also showed that neologisms can only belong to the open class of English words which include nouns, verbs, adjectives and interjections which are formed by the various morphosemantic processes as discussed in the analysis of this study. There are words that undergo more than one morphological process and words that does not belong to any word formation rather a semantic expansion (Osborn, 1992). Thus, from the basis of the analysis, there is a need to say that Filipinos are somehow known to be creative in terms of inventing new words (Carroll, 1978;

Exenberger, 2008; Janssen, 2005). Some are derived from the Philippine languages and borrowed from the other languages, other words are indigenized. Unlike grammatical words which rarely absorb neologisms, word class is typically able to absorb new words (Stekauer, 2005; Schalley, 2011).

In view of these findings, there are some important implications formulated first; it reveals that the neologisms were formed from existing linguistic elements and that some of the neologisms found on Facebook posts and threads are indigenized. This implicates that these indigenized neologisms were created because of the influence or control of a certain phenomenon. There are also neologisms which are seasonal for it was used in a few months and gone afterwards such as Gayweather and Na Colombia. These seasonal neologisms greatly contribute to the vast spreading of the new terms in social media. Moreover, the rest of the words will also have a chance to be listed on a dictionary if consistently been used like for instance the word selfie that is now listed in the Oxford Dictionary.

Secondly, the person who first used the certain word is a factor of becoming a neologism for a reason that the people would imitate and follow what is on trend particularly on a social networking site, therefore, they are certain to imitate the terms and discourse used by the famous ones. In line with this, it could be stated then that Filipinos are indeed creative in coining and creating words. People find it easy to create new words by using word-formation processes and to make these words function as a noun as which is actually the most lexical category used in this study then share it to the world through the power of internet and technology

4. Conclusion

In the light of the findings of the study, the researchers recommend that the study of neologism can be used to help the students learn new words and enrich their vocabulary. This study be extended to examine the implications of the language spoken in the formation or invention of neologisms. A comparative study on the morphological processes used in the creation of neologisms by the urban and rural citizen study could be done as well. Then, cultural implications on the fast transmissions and influence of the creation of neologisms should be the most relevant extension for this study.

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