

**Liliia Sandyha,
PhD, Associate Professor,
Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv**

**Yuliia Sviatiuk,
PhD, Associate Professor,
Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages,
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv**

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH NEOLOGISMS IN BUSINESS

Intense competition in business, the constant struggle between employees for promotion, AI replacing human jobs, the increasing empowerment of women in the corporate world, inflation and others are identified as key phenomena reflecting contemporary business trends and challenges. The study aims to investigate business neologisms which represent these phenomena as a multifaceted notion, with a particular focus on their types of formation.

As a linguistic phenomenon, neologisms have always reflected contemporary trends, values and emerging realities, illustrating the transformations taking place in the world overall and within certain societies in particular. It is the spheres of social media, the IT, ecology, business, and Coronavirus (COVID-19) that rank among the most prominent and productive sources of neologisms in contemporary English. Numerous scholars have explored neologisms in different contexts: for instance, Y. Li examined the origins of English neologisms [7], M. Asif et al. investigated Covid-19 neologisms [3], H.-J. Schmid studied how neologisms are processed within human cognitive systems [11], E. Mattiello analyzed the role of analogy in English word formation [8].

According to H.-J. Schmid, neologisms are no longer nonce-formations: they are either becoming the language norm or have already entered the mainstream language, however, they may be still perceived as new by many speakers [11, p. 1]. They generally require phonological, morphological, and semantic comprehensibility [2, p. 181]. Exceptions occur when speakers intentionally invent unusual neologisms, often referred to as ‘author’s neologisms’ for humorous effect or to distinguish oneself [9]. Schmid notes that irregular forms are less likely to gain acceptance as they encounter resistance from listeners during their processing [11, p. 16].

E. Mattiello [8, p. 28–29] states that neologisms are typically characterized by the following seven criteria:

- 1) transparency (phonological, morphological and semantic);
- 2) regularity, i.e. neologisms are coined on the basis of conventional morphological structures;
- 3) productivity, i.e. the application of existing rather than obsolete word-formation patterns;
- 4) decodification, i.e. the inclusion of supplementary context to facilitate the comprehension of a neologism's meaning;
- 5) informativity, i.e. minimizing the number of constituents and omitting the elements that may impede the comprehension of a neologism, particularly in cases involving compounding;
- 6) mnemonic effect, e.g. a metaphor-based compound may be favored over a borrowing for its imagery and motivation, alliteration or rhyme further reinforcing its stylistic appeal;
- 7) analogy, i.e. the productive use of productive morphological patterns and lexical elements in the formation of new words.

According to H.-J. Schmid [11, p. 13], there are five essential factors that influence the speed and ease with which neologisms are comprehended, namely:

- 1) the extent of contextual and contextual support (the linguistic environment in which a lexeme occurs);
- 2) the degree of transparency in the morphological structure;
- 3) the comprehensibility of constituent morphemes, particularly the first one;
- 4) 'family size', i.e. awareness of a restricted group of established lexemes sharing these components, which facilitates comprehension of the component morphemes;
- 5) understanding of the semantic relationship that links the components within a neologism.

Y. Li [7, p. 211] states that neologisms in the English language typically conform to three principal word-formation patterns: traditional methods (union/combination, affixation, abbreviation (clipping and acronym), and hybrid methods (blending), semantic innovation through old words acquiring new meanings, and the combination of native and borrowed elements.

Neologisms are lexemes or word combinations, either existing or recently coined, that refer to new concepts and phenomena, and are adopted to a limited degree by members of specific speech community [10, p.129–130].

Within the framework of the present study, business neologisms referring to new professions, work practices, types of inflation, and the

impact of Covid-19 on the business environment were selected from lexicographic sources, including *About Words – Cambridge Dictionaries Online Blog* [1], *Word Spy* [13], and other reputable Internet sources such as <https://www.thetimes.co.uk>, <https://www.investopedia.com>, <https://www.forbes.com>, etc.

The research methods were applied in accordance with the aim, objectives, and the material of the study, namely: 1) semantic analysis, employed to explore the lexical meanings of business neologisms;

2) descriptive analysis, used to characterize the neologisms and investigate their similarities and differences;

3) structural analysis, applied to study the productive word-formation patterns of business neologisms, particularly abbreviation, blending, and compounding;

4) statistical analysis, conducted to quantify the neologisms and categorize them according to word-formation types.

Let us now examine business-related neologisms from both semantic and structural perspectives. The relationships between employers and employees are reflected in a wide range of newly coined terms. For example, some individuals choose to leave a company when they do not share the values promoted by its management, a phenomenon referred to as **conscious quitting** [1] (compounding). In certain cases, employees may post videos on TikTok explaining their resignations, often highlighting reasons such as poor work-life balance or low morale, which is captured by a neologism **Quit-Tok** [1] (blending).

Some employees may also be required to carry out time-consuming repetitive administrative duties, referred to as **vampire tasks** [1] (compounding). A novel approach to preserving work-life balance is exemplified by the term **snail girls** [1] (compounding), which denotes female employees who prioritize personal well-being by taking time to relax, avoiding excessive workloads, and resisting the pressure of tight deadlines.

Several neologisms in the sample reflect work behaviors associated with dishonest practices by certain employees. For example, **hushed hybrid** [1] (compounding) refers to a modern working arrangement in which an employee combines office duties with telecommuting without notifying or obtaining approval from their employer. Similarly, employees may embark on a **hush trip** [1] (compounding), i.e. a secret journey during which they pursue remote work alongside travel, again without informing their employer.

Some demotivated or underperforming office workers may simulate productivity by employing a device or installing software that moves their computer mouse at regular intervals. This practice is intended to give

management the impression that they are working, while in reality they are not. The neologism **mouse jiggling** [1] (compounding) denotes this behavior.

In contrast, some employees may hold multiple jobs and may choose to inform their management, thereby avoiding criticism for doing so, the practice being referred to as **sunlighting** [5] (analogy). Sunlighting is generally viewed as ethical because it does not compromise an employee's performance in their primary role and may even enhance their skills and support professional development, ultimately benefiting the company. The neologism emerged as a positive counterpart of *moonlighting*, which is considered unethical due to its secrecy. According to E. Mattiello, who studied the role of analogy in English word-formation, the model and target words are closely related phonologically, morphosyntactically and semantically [8, p. 106].

A recent work practice, termed **coffee badging** [1] (compounding), refers to commuting to the office primarily to have a cup of coffee with colleagues before leaving to continue working remotely.

Let us now examine different types of new employees. A generation of young workers can be categorized according to factors such as income, family plans, and overall lifestyle. A recent social media trend highlights **DINKWADs**, child-free young couples in which both partners earn high salaries and have a dog: 'dual income, no kids, with a dog' [1] (abbreviation). Related categories include **DINKs** (child-free couples with dual incomes) and **SINKs** (child-free individuals with a single income) [6]. According to A. Gale, the DINKWAD phenomenon reflects significant shifts in American values, with a parenting-free lifestyle that emphasizes financial independence and extensive travel representing a hallmark of the new American Dream [4].

A new group of individuals prefers to avoid commuting due to frustration with daily traffic congestion. These so called 'anti-commuters' have adopted an innovative work arrangement known as **WFB** (working from boat) (abbreviation). Equipped with a modern Starlink satellite dish, digital nomads can perform their work remotely while preserving work-life balance, far from the pressures of urban life [12].

A wider trend involves individuals becoming increasingly mobile, opting for telework and relocating to foreign countries, a phenomenon termed **nomadification** [1] (suffixation). Some employees take advantage of **paycations** [1] (blending), periods of telecommuting that allow them to travel while working. Another emerging category is **tethered nomads** [1] (compounding), who balance traveling and working remotely from different locations with periods of remaining in one place to work locally.

The frequently exorbitant tuition fees for higher education worldwide have discouraged many talented and ambitious school leavers from pursuing

college or university studies. Consequently, numerous capable young individuals without university degrees have found employment in companies where they undertake challenging tasks and earn competitive salaries. This emerging category of employees is referred to as **new collar workers** [1] (compounding). However, new collar workers without a bachelor's degree may sometimes face limited opportunities for promotion.

The Covid-19 pandemic has permanently transformed work practices, as many employees were compelled to transition to teleworking. Even after the pandemic, some staff members have continued to adopt this mode of work due to its obvious advantages. Conversely, a growing number of employees, referred to as **ghost colleagues** [1] (compounding), work from home in isolation and have limited interaction with their peers.

Entrepreneurs who operate without employees and assume a wide range of responsibilities to reduce costs are referred to as **solopreneurs** (blending) [1]. The related adjective is **solopreneurial**, and the phenomenon itself is termed **solopreneurship** [1]. Some entrepreneurs believe that they alone can successfully manage their business, a mindset known as **entrepreneur's syndrome** [13] (compounding).

Concerning golden agers, not all retirees opt to cease working upon reaching retirement age. Some employees approaching retirement age may choose to gradually reduce their working hours prior to fully retiring, a practice referred to as **flexirement** [1] (blending). Moreover, certain energetic individuals may wish to continue their professional activities, adopting what is known as **unretirement** [1] (prefixation).

Conversely, adults who lack steady employment or work only part-time without earning a sufficient income, live with their parents, and spend most of the day on leisure activities such as video gaming are referred to as **failsons** and **faildaughters** (both compounding) [13].

In conclusion, the business sector has demonstrated itself as a key source of neologisms reflecting new developments in employment, employees' lifestyles, and business trends in English-speaking communities. These terms capture the rise of new professions, types of workers, business practices, inflation patterns, and post-Covid work arrangements. The study revealed that the primary word-formation processes for business neologisms are compounding (accounting for 40% of the neologisms of the sample), blending (26%), and abbreviation (21%). Less frequently used mechanisms include affixation (11%) and analogy (2%).

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