

FUNCTIONAL AND SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF COMPOUND NEOLOGISMS IN MODERN ENGLISH

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Abstract: *Modern English demonstrates remarkable lexical flexibility, especially in the formation of neologisms. Among the most productive types of lexical innovation are compound neologisms, which are new words created through the combination of two or more lexical stems. These formations actively reflect technological progress, economic transformation, cultural change, and digital communication. The present article examines the functional and semantic properties of compound neologisms in Modern English. Special attention is given to their nominative role, communicative economy, stylistic expressiveness, semantic transparency, metaphorization, and contextual variability. The paper also analyzes structural models of compounding and explores examples drawn from media, business, technology, and everyday discourse. The study concludes that compound neologisms represent one of the most dynamic mechanisms of vocabulary expansion in Modern English and serve as linguistic indicators of contemporary social development.*

Keywords: *compound neologisms, Modern English, word formation, semantics, lexical innovation, compounds, vocabulary development.*

Introduction

Language constantly changes in response to the evolving needs of society. Every new invention, social tendency, technological development, or cultural movement creates a demand for new vocabulary. English, as one of the most globally influential languages, responds rapidly to such changes. One of the most productive mechanisms of lexical growth in English is compounding, the process of combining two or more words into a single lexical unit. When newly formed compounds enter the language to name new realities, they become compound neologisms.

Examples such as *smartphone*, *crowdfunding*, *foodtech*, *eco-tourism*, *doomscrolling*, *livestream*, and *cryptowallet* illustrate the vitality of this process. These compounds not only name new phenomena but also reveal how speakers conceptualize modern life. They combine familiar lexical elements in innovative ways, making them easy to understand and widely acceptable.

The study of compound neologisms is important for both linguistics and applied communication. Linguistically, they demonstrate productive word-formation patterns, semantic development, and lexical creativity. Practically, they dominate the vocabulary of media, business, education, technology, and social networks.

This article aims to investigate the functional and semantic properties of compound neologisms in Modern English, identify their structural patterns, and explain their role in contemporary communication.

Functional and Semantic Properties of Compound Neologisms

Compound neologisms represent a highly productive mechanism of vocabulary growth in Modern English, primarily serving a nominative function. By synthesizing existing lexical roots, the language efficiently labels emerging socio-technical realities.

Terms such as *smartwatch*, *cryptowallet*, and *foodtech* exemplify this process, gaining rapid acceptance due to their inherent semantic clarity.

Beyond naming, these formations facilitate communicative economy. In a digital-first era where brevity is paramount, compounds condense complex descriptive phrases into compact units. For instance, "raising funds from multiple online contributors" is succinctly replaced by *crowdfunding*, while "live online video transmission" becomes *livestream*. This informational density allows expressions like *supply-chain crisis* or *data-breach scandal* to convey multi-layered meanings within a single lexical frame.

Furthermore, compound neologisms carry significant stylistic and expressive weight. Many are designed to provoke emotional or rhetorical impact; words like *doomscrolling* and *greenwashing* serve as vivid evaluative tools in public discourse. Simultaneously, they function as social markers, categorizing new professional identities and lifestyle groups, such as *gig workers* or *digital natives*.

From a semantic standpoint, the success of these neologisms is rooted in their transparency. The meanings of terms like *online learning* or *carbon footprint* are easily inferred from their constituent parts. This combination of semantic accessibility and structural brevity ensures their rapid dissemination across global English discourse.

Another semantic feature is motivation. In many compounds, the relationship between the components is logical and meaningful. In the phrase *smart home*, the adjective *smart* suggests automated or digitally controlled functions. In *cloud storage*, the word *cloud* metaphorically refers to internet-based virtual space rather than an actual cloud in the sky. Because these formations are semantically motivated, speakers usually accept them easily and understand them rapidly.

Many compound neologisms are also based on metaphorical meaning rather than literal interpretation. Examples such as *brainstorm*, meaning a creative discussion, *firewall*, referring to a digital security barrier, *black market*, meaning illegal trade, and *echo chamber*, describing a closed ideological environment, illustrate the creative semantic potential of compounds. In such cases, the meaning is not fully literal but transferred through metaphorical association.

Some compounds gradually become idiomatic expressions whose meanings cannot be predicted entirely from their components. For instance, *red tape* refers to excessive bureaucracy, *hot money* means rapidly moving speculative capital, and *white collar* describes office-based professional workers. These expressions demonstrate that compounds may evolve beyond their original literal structure and acquire stable cultural meanings.

Polysemy and contextual dependence are also common in compound neologisms. Certain compounds may have more than one meaning depending on the context in which they are used. For example, *platform economy* may refer generally to app-based business models or specifically to companies such as Uber or Airbnb. Similarly, *green energy* may broadly indicate renewable power or more narrowly refer to specific ecological technologies. Therefore, accurate interpretation often depends on discourse context and field of use.

Structurally, compound neologisms in Modern English appear in several productive patterns. The noun + noun model is especially common, producing forms such as *smartphone*, *data mining*, *market bubble*, *carbon tax*, *food waste*, and *video platform*. This model is highly productive because it allows clear and precise naming of

modern realities. The adjective + noun pattern is also frequent in compounds such as *smart city*, *digital currency*, *virtual classroom*, *green economy*, and *remote workforce*. In these examples, the adjective highlights the quality or function of the noun.

Verb-based and gerund-based compounds are increasingly common as well. Forms such as *search engine*, *swipe culture*, *crowdfunding*, *livestreaming service*, *homeworking system*, and *ridesharing platform* often describe actions, processes, or interactive behaviors. These structures are particularly productive in digital and service-oriented contexts.

Technology remains one of the richest sources of compound neologisms. Words such as *touchscreen*, *cloud computing*, *data science*, *machine learning*, *cybersecurity*, and *blockchain network* show how English efficiently names innovations through compounding. Digital communication has also introduced expressions like *screen time*, *video chat*, *hashtag activism*, *fake news*, and *social media*, many of which spread internationally within a short time.

Economic and business language also relies heavily on compound neologisms. Terms such as *startup ecosystem*, *gig economy*, *digital wallet*, *market share*, *price ceiling*, *cash flow*, and *trade war* simplify complex economic concepts into manageable forms. More recent financial vocabulary includes *crypto exchange*, *fintech startup*, *peer lending*, and *microfinance platform*, all reflecting modern economic transformation.

Conclusion. Compound neologisms represent one of the most productive and dynamic sources of lexical growth in Modern English. They arise in response to technological progress, economic transformation, digital communication, and cultural change. Their main functional properties include nomination, economy, informative density, expressiveness, and social identification. Semantically, they may be transparent, metaphorical, idiomatic, or context-dependent.

Structurally, Modern English favors noun+noun and adjective+noun compounds, though other patterns remain active. Compound neologisms dominate the vocabulary of technology, business, media, and everyday life. Because they combine innovation with comprehensibility, they spread rapidly and often become permanent elements of the lexicon.

In conclusion, compound neologisms are not only linguistic forms but also reflections of contemporary civilization. Studying them allows scholars to understand how language adapts to new realities and how speakers conceptualize the changing modern world.

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