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ENGLISH NEOLOGY: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE *OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY ONLINE* NEWEST ENTRIES (2018-2022)

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This paper aims at examining English neologisms that were introduced into the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* between 2018 and 2022. The research seeks to provide information about the most productive word formation mechanism during that period. The compilation of the data required the creation of a corpus with all the new terms to fulfil that objective. Due to the great volume of new word entries, proportional samples were selected to ensure the representativeness of the data for each of the years. The findings were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively to obtain a comprehensive discussion of the results. The conclusions drawn from this study highlight a shift in the most productive word formation process from affixation to compounding.

Keywords: neology; word formation; *Oxford English Dictionary Online*; productivity.

1. Introduction

Languages are living entities shaped by different forces such as their speakers, human innovations, or culture. This derives into a

dynamic linguistic scenario which is both attractive and challenging for linguists and lexicographers due to the difficulty of following all the recent trends and changes within the language. This study aims at providing insights within the field of neology by presenting a descriptive analysis of the neologisms that were included in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* from the year 2018 to 2022.

The study of neologisms does not only allow us to describe linguistic novelties, but also to understand the imprint of society through its speakers. For that reason, this study considers word formation processes to uncover current trends behind their use and the one that is the most productive for the language. Particularly, regarding the most recent additions to the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.

The interest in neology is seen in many studies published on this matter in recent years. Among the studies carried out on this topic, we highlight an article written by Al-Salman and Haider (2021) which aimed at categorizing COVID-19 neologisms and the word formation processes behind them; a study on the impact of social media, neologisms and the mechanisms employed by internet users carried out by Sandyha et al. (2022); and the paper on the neologisms that became part of the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* from 2012 to 2016 by Ratih and Gusdian (2018). Certainly, the impact of the latter is such that this study is underpinned in their findings and claims, and it seeks to continue their analysis by considering a closer time span.

To fulfil this aim, this paper is structured by firstly providing a theoretical framework on neologisms, word formation processes and the lexicographical approach of neology. Then, there is a section devoted to the methodological approach, which includes the description of the creation of the corpus and the calculation of the sample size for each update of the *OED*. This is followed by the analysis of the results and the concluding remarks of the study.

2. Neologisms in English: A Theoretical Framework

2.1. Neologisms

2.1.1. Definition

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the term "neologism" as "a word or phrase which is new to the language; one which is newly coined" (OED April 1, 2023). Evidently, the coinage, appearance and emergence of new words in any language results from the need of speakers "to provide new names for new things and processes" (Lehrer 2003, 369).

Although the term "neologism" may appear to be self-explanatory, its study has encountered certain challenges: the intricate nature of the term, the absence of a general theory of neology, the positioning of the study of neologisms within the field of Applied Linguistics, the linguistic and social biases surrounding the term, the predominance of grammar-focused theories in linguistic research, as well as terminological and conceptual complexities associated with the term (Cabré 2015, 80). Luckily, a shift has been observed in recent years because of the increase of scholarly investigation into the discipline and the recognition that neology has garnered within the field of linguistics (Cabré 2015, 85). For the purposes of this study, we will consider the definition provided by Rey (2005), who defined the term as

> a unit of the lexicon, a word, a word element or a phrase, whose meaning, or whose signifier-signified relationship, [...], was not previously materialised as a linguistic form in the immediately preceding stage of the lexicon of the language. This novelty, which is observed in relation to a precise and empirical definition of the lexicon, corresponds normally to a specific feeling in speakers. According to the model of the lexicon chosen, the neologism will be perceived as belonging to the language in general or only to one of its special usages; or as belonging to a subject-specific usage which may be specialised or general. (2005, 324)

Based on this definition, several factors can be highlighted in the examination of what is understood as a neologism: novelty, integration within the lexicon (whether general or specific), and the acceptance and recognition from the side of the speakers. In fact, the established use of the new word by speakers is what distinguishes a neologism from "nonce words" or "occasionalisms" (Bueno-Ruiz 2021, 334).

The previous terms are often used interchangeably, but there exists a distinction between them (Hohenhaus 2005, 376). The difference lies in the novelty attributed to the lexical units labelled as nonce words versus those labelled as neologisms. For Crystal, the novelty of the words is seen in their purpose to fulfil a communicative need, and so, he defines nonce words as "a lexeme created for temporary use, to solve an immediate problem of communication" (2003, 132). Crystal further asserts that nonce words "are made on the spur of the moment, and are not the product of careful planning, and there is no intention on the user's part that they should enter the lexicon as a whole" (2000, 219). Scholars generally agree that once a nonce word is assimilated by the speakers naturally, even to the extent that it is included in dictionaries, becoming institutionalized, it loses its nonce properties and evolves into a neologism (Crystal 2003; Hohenhaus 2005; Bueno Ruiz 2021).

2.1.1. Acceptance and longevity

Determining the longevity of neologisms within the lexicon of a community of speakers is a difficult task as "there is never any way of telling which neologisms will stay and which will go" (Crystal 2003, 132). Nevertheless, some scholars have proposed a set of factors that can increase the likelihood of a neologism enduring over time.

McMahon (1994) states that, despite facing a conservative predisposition when it comes to incorporating neologisms, these linguistic innovations "often stand more chance of acceptance if they are introduced first by some prominent person or in a more prestigious publication […] [and] are most likely to survive, and indeed to be created in the first place, if they are felt to be necessary

in the society concerned." (1994, 192). Similarly, Sandyha et al (2022) agree that neologisms originate when there is a necessity to designate a new reality. They further add that the viability of these neologisms is generally granted when the general society can access them, and if the new term resembles other existing words, enhancing its chances for long term-usage (2022, 129).

In contrast, Metcalf (2002) dissents from the notion that the survival of a word is predicated on the necessity of naming a new reality. He affirms that "a word that fills a gap in vocabulary seems to have no advantage over one that doesn't. A language isn't a brick wall; it seems comfortable with gaps" (2002, 149). He proffers a framework describing five key elements for predicting the success of new words in persisting within the lexicon: frequency of use, unobtrusiveness, diversity of users and situations, generation of other forms and meanings, and endurance of the concept. These are referred as the FUDGE factors due to the acronym derived from their initial letters (2002, 152-162). Nonetheless, the author considers a series of qualities that might be expected to matter for a word to succeed, but which do not appear to significantly influence its survival. These include whether a word is entirely new or has existed in the language for an extended period, whether a word serves for another purpose, the linguistic elements used in its construction, the novelty or obviousness of the meaning, or whether the word has been included in a dictionary (2002, 164-166).

2.2. Word formation processes

Neologisms prove that languages are dynamic, living entities subject to continuous change and evolution. Accordingly, the growth and development of languages is facilitated through the introduction of neologisms, which serve to address the evolving linguistic requirements of speakers. To achieve this, word formation processes play a key role.

Word formation processes can be defined as "the way to construct new words from the existing words based on some rules" (Ratih and Gusdian 2018, 24). The most common and widely recognised mechanisms include abbreviations and acronyms, affixation, back formation, blending, coinage, clipping,

compounding, and conversion (Bauer 1983; Bauer and Huddleston 2002; Crystal 2003; Meyer 2009; Murphy 2010; Yule 2010). Other recognised word formation processes include borrowing (Crystal 2003; Meyer 2009; Murphy 2010; Yule 2010), folk etymology (Crystal 2003; Meyer 2009), phonological modification (Bauer and Huddleston 2002), reduplication (Crystal 2003), and meaning extension (Meyer 2009).

It is worth mentioning that some neologisms are created after the combination of many of the word formation processes described above. A great example is provided by Yule (2010): "If someone says that *problems with the project have snowballed*, the final word can be analysed as an example of compounding in which *snow* and *ball* were combined to form the noun *snowball*, which was then turned into a verb through conversion" (Yule 2010, 60).

2.3. Lexicography and Neology

2.3.1. The lexicographical approach towards neologisms

Neologisms present a dynamic facet of language since "they are a true expression of how language reflects the way we interact with the world" (Al-Salman and Haider 2021, 26). The relationship between neology and lexicography is so intertwined that it can be said that "[t]he history of English lexicography begins with the study of neology" (Algeo 1993, 281). According to Bueno Ruiz (2021),

> [t]he lexicographical criterion proposed by Rey (1976) and systematically applied in the work of detecting neologisms has allowed research to advance considerably in the description of neology in the different languages of the world, given that the lexicographical criterion makes it possible to detect neologisms in an objective and largely automated process (2021, 333).

As a consequence, neologisms can be readily identified within the array of words existing in language that have not yet been included in dictionaries (Bueno Ruiz 2021, 334). It is also relevant to note that lexical items new to dictionaries do not necessarily have to be novel for speakers or within the lexicon of a language (Martin 2019, para. 3). Moreover, the inclusion of new words in dictionaries or its

"lexicalization" (Hohenhaus 2007 as cited in Bueno Ruiz 2021, 334) signifies not only the transition of new coinages from nonce words to neologisms, but also their fulfilment of the editorial requirements for dictionary inclusion.

2.3.2. Inclusion of neologisms in the *Oxford English Dictionary*

The *Oxford English Dictionary* is characterised as "a historical dictionary, aiming more than any other at comprehensiveness of inclusion, rather than at a reportage of current use" (Algeo 1993, 283). Consequently, "once a word enters the OED, it is never removed" (Creese 2018, 548). In an ideal scenario, lexicographers would aspire to incorporate every lexical item ever employed by any English speaker or writer, accompanied by all recoverable information pertaining to each item, provided they had time and resources as required by such task (Algeo 1994, 39). Those limitations were usually accompanied by the pressure of having to fit new incorporations within the space available in print editions, a constraint no longer seen in online dictionaries (Creese 2018, 548), but one which has been replaced by "limited editorial capacity" (Martin 2019, para.1).

Despite the constraints at hand, lexicographers' task still consists of selecting among the words that are liable to be part of the dictionary. For this to happen, neologisms must be first included as part of the watch list database of the *OED*, gathering contributions from different sources such as *OED* programmes, the general public or massive databases of language (*OED* October 7, 2023). Thus, the prioritisation of lexical terms is paramount to optimise the utility of dictionary users and maintain balance among diverse categories of potential entries, including general terms, specialised or technical jargon, colloquialisms, and dialectal expressions (Martin 2019, para. 3). The selection of items hinges primarily on distinguishing between idiosyncratic expressions from linguistic items characterised by typicality, which is underpinned by the recognition that these linguistic elements are frequently used and feature a widely disseminated presence, thereby establishing their position as constituents of the language's stable core (Atkins and Rundell 2008, 48). In the case of the *Oxford English Dictionary* there are two main

criteria considered: general currency and sufficient time span (Chen and Cheng 2016, 21).

A neologism achieves general currency when it is employed naturally and without hesitation, assuming that it will be understood by its audience. The new concept should extend beyond individual authors, and it should be employed across a multitude of independent sources, spanning various genres and fields (e.g., arts, humanities, social sciences, sciences, etc.) aside from being spread through diverse media such as newspapers, magazines, books, television, films, and online resources. If there is not sufficient evidence, lexical items are archived for potential future reconsideration (Chen and Cheng 2016, 21).

Sufficient time span refers to the demonstration of usage "for about 10 years" (McPherson 2012). However, the specific time frame and the quantity of examples may show variability due to the constant and quick change of the digital world meaning that a term can grow in importance at a great pace in a shorter period of time (Pleming, 2014). Inclusion in the dictionary only occurs when there is ample evidence, derived from print or online sources, to substantiate a term's usage. Nevertheless, not all new terms need to undergo such waiting periods before earning a place in the *OED* (Chen and Cheng 2016, 22).

3. Methodology

3.1. Data selection

The primary source material of the analysis was taken from the database of new entries published by the *OED*, which "is updated on a quarterly basis" (OED October 12, 2023.). Our focus was directed towards the new entries spanning the years 2018 through 2022. This specific time lapse was selected to scrutinize the most recent developments in English word formation and, therefore, describe the contemporary linguistic scenario.

To compile the inventory of neologisms, we extracted the new words from the specific section of the *OED* online dealing with the updates of the dictionary. The selection criterium was to include only those lexical elements explicitly categorised as new entries. This selection process aimed to delimit the scope of our investigation by excluding newly introduced sub-entries, new word senses or unrevised entries. After having all linguistic items, the first step was to sort them depending on the year they were included within the dictionary. The subcategorization of words depending on their quarterly updates was not considered as it was irrelevant for the purpose of the study. Next, all the words were sorted alphabetically to ease the examination of the lexical items and the gathering of the sample. Subsequently, due to the great volume of lexical data available, totalling over 500 words on average for each year, it was essential to establish a manageable and representative sample.

Instead of calculating a sample size for the finite population of the words per year, we opted for doing it for each of the letters of the alphabet. This way it was guaranteed that the frequency of appearance of words belonging to each letter was maintained, and so the data analysed remained proportional to the original frequency per letter. This was useful to eliminate possible bias considering that some prefixes and combinatory forms are more frequent than others and affect the number of words containing them. It should be highlighted that this method affected the number of words analysed since the addition of all the samples per letter exceeded the expected sample size number if the total population per update was considered. To achieve this, we employed the formula below to determine the sample size for a finite population:

$$n = \frac{N \cdot Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{E^2 \cdot (N - 1) + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

Where:

- n is the required sample size.
- N stands for the size of the finite population.
- Z signifies the desired level of confidence.
- p denotes the proportion of success.

- q represents the complement of p, referring to the proportion of failures.
- E is the desired margin of error.

In the case of our study, we established that the level of confidence corresponded to 95 percent, which is one of the most common values, and so the equivalent for Z was 1.96. As for E, it was established at 5 percent as it is the most common value used, too. Then, as the values of p and q were unknown, we estimated that the chances of success and failure were the same resulting in a 50 percent probability for both cases (QuestionPro October 12, 2023). The resulting formula is the following:

$$n = \frac{N \cdot 1.96^2 \cdot 50 \cdot 50}{5^2 \cdot (N - 1) + 1.96^2 \cdot 50 \cdot 50}$$

After determining the sample size for each letter in each year, the next step carried out was to select the words. To eliminate potential bias and to ensure the inclusion of both common and uncommon words within the sample, all words were numbered. Then a random number was drawn from the range of assigned values for each letter. For example, if the words starting with the letter "A" went from 1 to 64, and we needed to select a sample of 55 words, we generated 55 random numbers within that range by using the Excel formula for generating random numbers: =RANDBETWEEN(lowest number, highest number).

3.2. Word categorization

For the systematic analysis and categorization of the word formation process of the sampled words, each word was individually examined to identify its specific word formation mechanism. This analysis was done by checking each word entry in the *OED*, specifically the section devoted to etymology. The word formation process described by the dictionary was considered. In some cases, the name or description was changed to match the names used in the processes described in the section devoted to the theoretical framework of this paper. Whenever the *OED* did not include clear information about

the etymology of the word, the term was labelled as having an unknown origin.

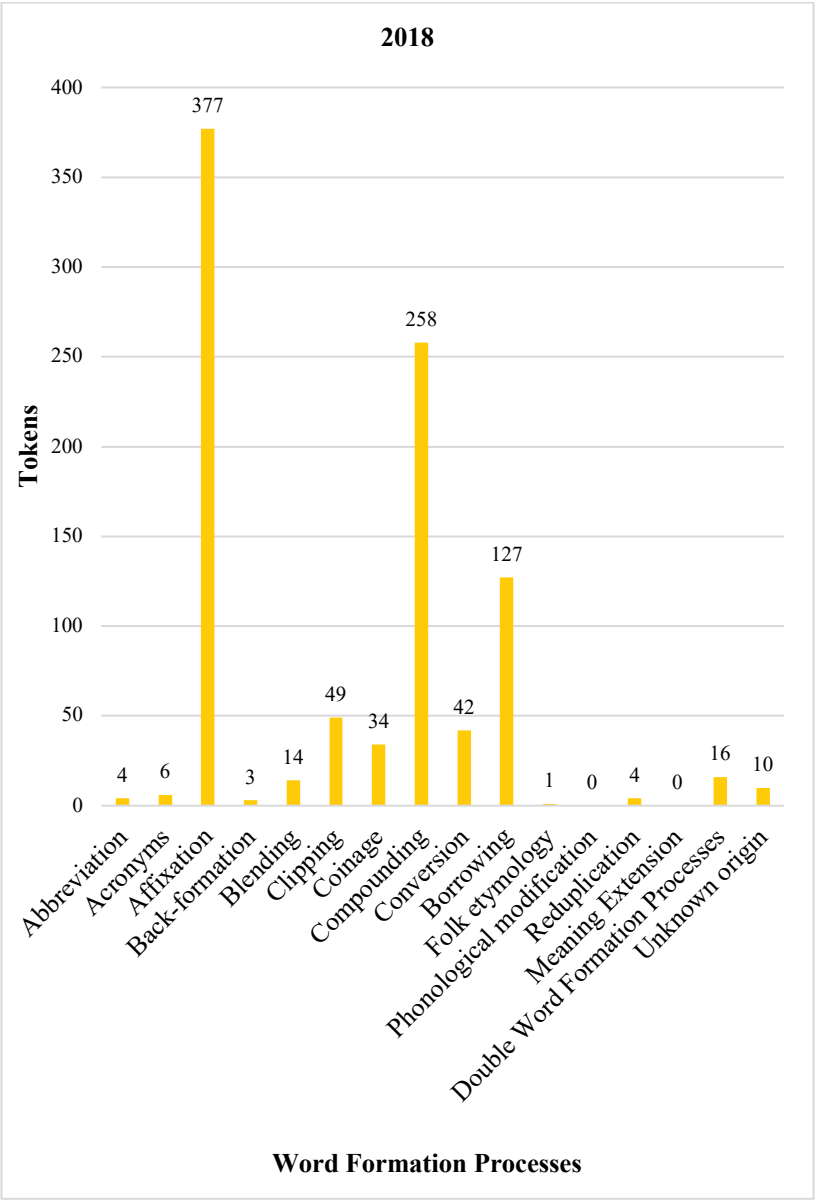
All this information was transferred to bar graphs that aimed to provide a visual representation of the word formation processes and the categorisation of neologisms for each respective year. From them we can derive conclusions for this study to determine which word formation process is the most prolific in the last years and which field of knowledge has included more lexical innovations during that time lapse.

4. Analysis of the Results

4.1. Quantitative analysis

4.1.1. 2018 update

The *Oxford English Dictionary Online* 2018 update included 1174 new words to the dictionary throughout the January, March, June, September, and December updates. However, after calculating the sample size for each of the letters, the data analysed accounted for 945 words. The distribution of these words among the different word formation mechanisms is illustrated in the following bar chart and table.



Graph 1. Word formation processes for the year 2018

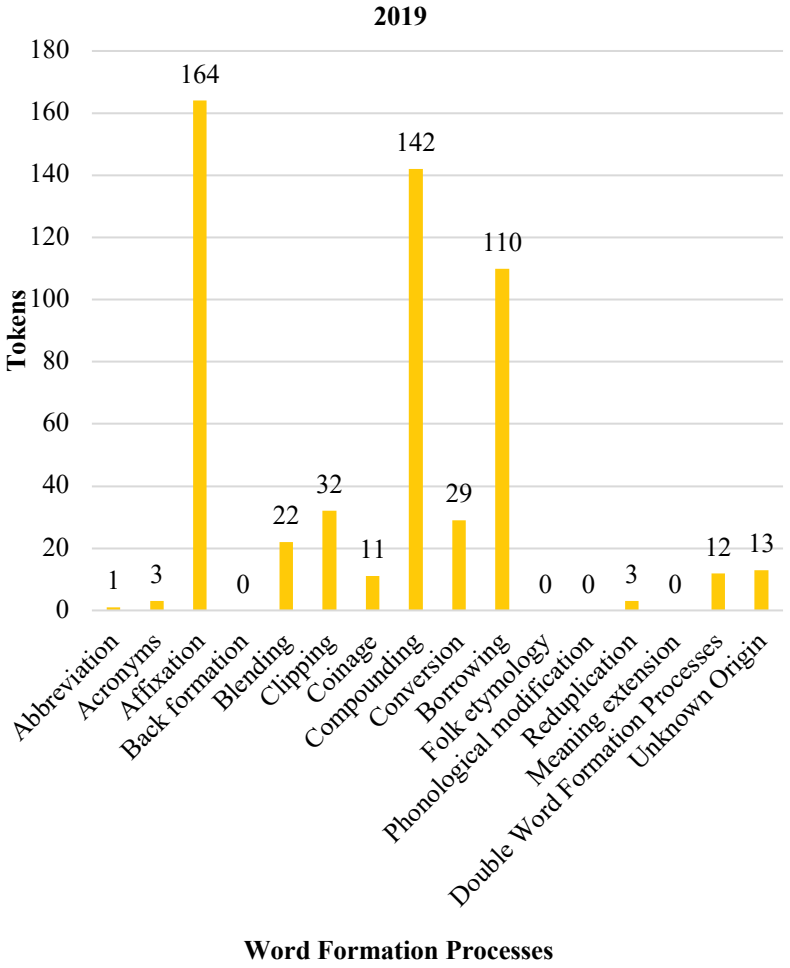
Word Formation Processes	Tokens	%
Abbreviation	4	0,42
Acronyms	6	0,63
Affixation	377	39,89
Back-formation	3	0,32
Blending	14	1,48
Clipping	49	5,19
Coinage	34	3,60
Compounding	258	27,30
Conversion	42	4,44
Borrowing	127	13,44
Folk etymology	1	0,11
Phonological modification	0	0
Reduplication	3	0,42
Meaning Extension	0	0
Double Word Formation Processes	16	1,69
Unknown origin	11	1,16
Total	945	100%

Table 1. Frequency of appearance of word formation processes in 2018

The previous shows that affixation is the most productive word formation mechanism with a total of 377 words. Some examples include "assless" or "destigmatization". Compounding is the second most productive with 258 words, including "sausage fest" or "mansplain"; followed by 127 borrowed terms such as "sorbetes" or "gabbai". It is worth saying that within words formed by means of double word formation mechanisms, we can find the following combinations: clipping and compounding (8) as in "alt-right"; borrowing and affixation (6) as in "corvid"; abbreviation and compounding (1) as it is the term "GTI"; and clipping and affixation (1) as the case of "tarzy".

4.1.2. 2019 update

In 2019, the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* included 621 words along its three updates in March, June, and October. From that year the sample size of terms analysed was of 542. The bar chart and table below illustrate the distribution of words depending on the word formation processes that created them.



Graph 2. Word formation processes for the year 2019

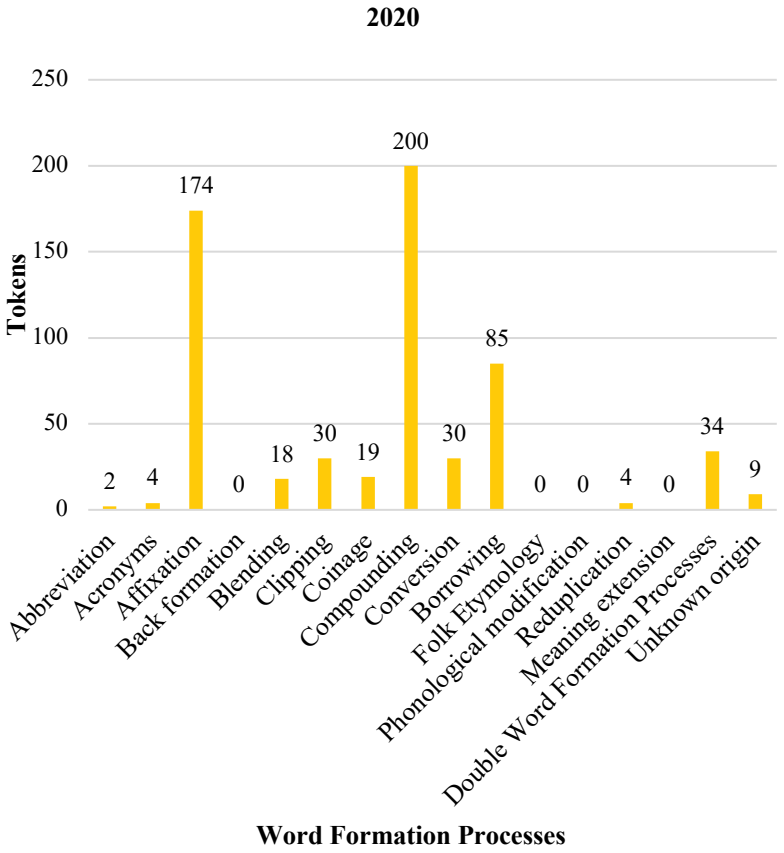
Word Formation Processes	Tokens	%
Abbreviation	1	0,18
Acronyms	3	0,55
Affixation	164	30,26
Back formation	0	0
Blending	22	4,06
Clipping	32	5,90
Coinage	11	2,03
Compounding	142	26,20
Conversion	29	5,35
Borrowing	110	20,30
Folk etymology	0	0
Phonological modification	0	0
Reduplication	3	0,55
Meaning extension	0	0
Double Word Formation Processes	12	2,21
Unknown Origin	13	2,40
Total	542	100%

Table 2. Frequency of appearance of word formation processes in 2019

The most productive word formation process is affixation with a total amount of 164 new words, including "brickery" or "impersonating". The second most prolific word formation process is compounding with 142 instances of neologisms such as "back-pat" or "fever swamp", closely followed by borrowing with 110 terms like "grullo" or "poke. The double word formation processes found consist of instances of borrowing and affixation (4) as in "Amorean"; borrowing and clipping (2) like "bok"; coinage and compounding (2) as in the case of "Schmallenberg virus", affixation and compounding (1) like "ben-feker", borrowing and compounding (1) as in "febrous", clipping and affixation (1) as the case of "presser" and the word "dickite" as the only example of coinage and affixation.

4.1.3. 2020 update

During 2020 the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* was updated in seven different months: January, March, April, June, July, September, and December. The April and July updates were done to consider the Covid-19 related linguistic changes happening at that moment (OED October 25, 2023). The total number of words added throughout this year rises to 710 out of which 609 studied. The bar graph and table below show the distribution of the sample size among the different word formation processes.



Graph 3. Word formation processes for the year 2020

Word Formation Processes	Tokens	%
Abbreviation	2	0,33
Acronyms	4	0,66
Affixation	174	28,57
Back formation	0	0
Blending	18	2,96
Clipping	30	4,93
Coinage	19	3,12
Compounding	200	32,84
Conversion	30	4,93
Borrowing	85	13,96
Folk Etymology	0	0
Phonological modification	0	0
Reduplication	4	0,66
Meaning extension	0	0
Double Word Formation Processes	34	5,58
Unknown origin	9	1,48
Total	609	100%

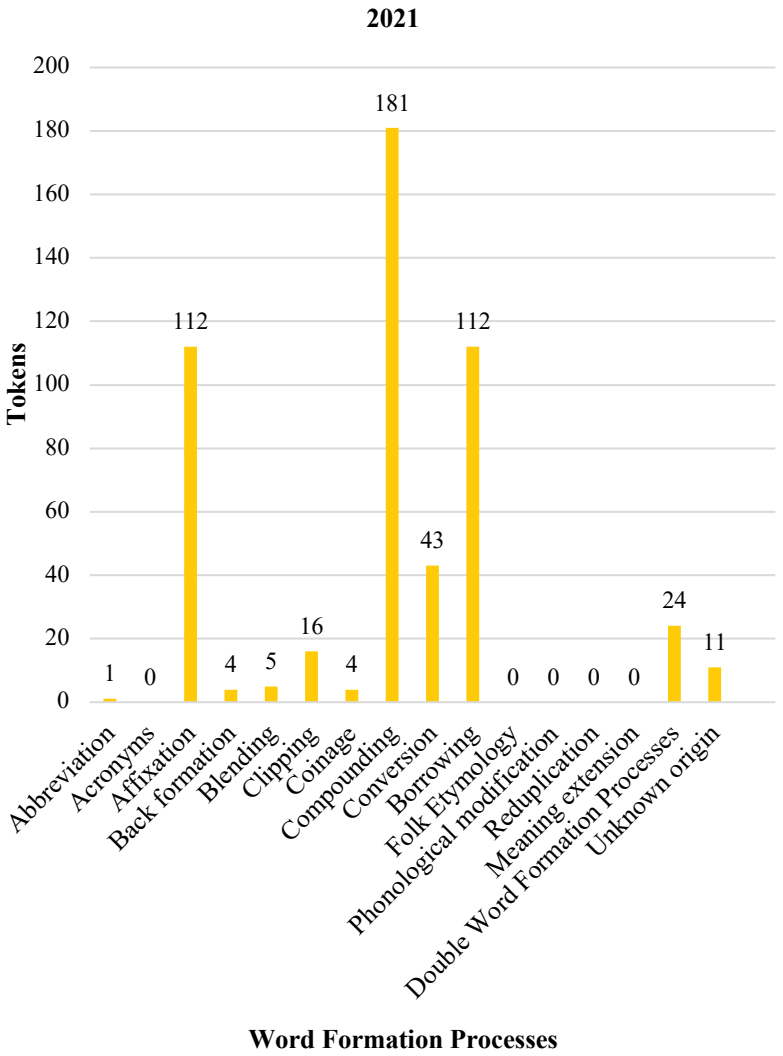
Table 3. Frequency of appearance of word formation processes in 2020

In 2020 the most prolific word formation process is compounding with 200 neologisms created such as "bear dancing" or "chatbot". The second most productive process is affixation with 174 new words as the case of "comorbidity" or "pronoid", followed by borrowing with 85 terms including "farmacia" or "megalodon". As for the words created by double word-formation processes the instances found included the following combinations: coinage and affixation (12) as in "Japhetan", coinage and compounding (11) as the case of "Dobson unit", borrowing and affixation (10) like in the term "fumfer", and the word "metallous" which is the only example of borrowing and compounding.

4.1.4. 2021 update

The 2021 update included 576 new linguistic items added along its March, June, September, October, and December updates. The

sample size for this year included 513 words, whose distribution according to the word formation process that created them is graphically represented as follows.



Graph 4. Word formation processes for the year 2021

Word Formation Processes	Tokens	%
Abbreviation	1	0,19
Acronyms	0	0
Affixation	112	21,83
Back formation	4	0,78
Blending	5	0,97
Clipping	16	3,12
Coinage	4	0,78
Compounding	181	35,28
Conversion	43	8,38
Borrowing	112	21,83
Folk Etymology	0	0
Phonological modification	0	0
Reduplication	0	0
Meaning extension	0	0
Double Word Formation Processes	24	4,68
Unknown origin	11	2,14
Total	513	100%

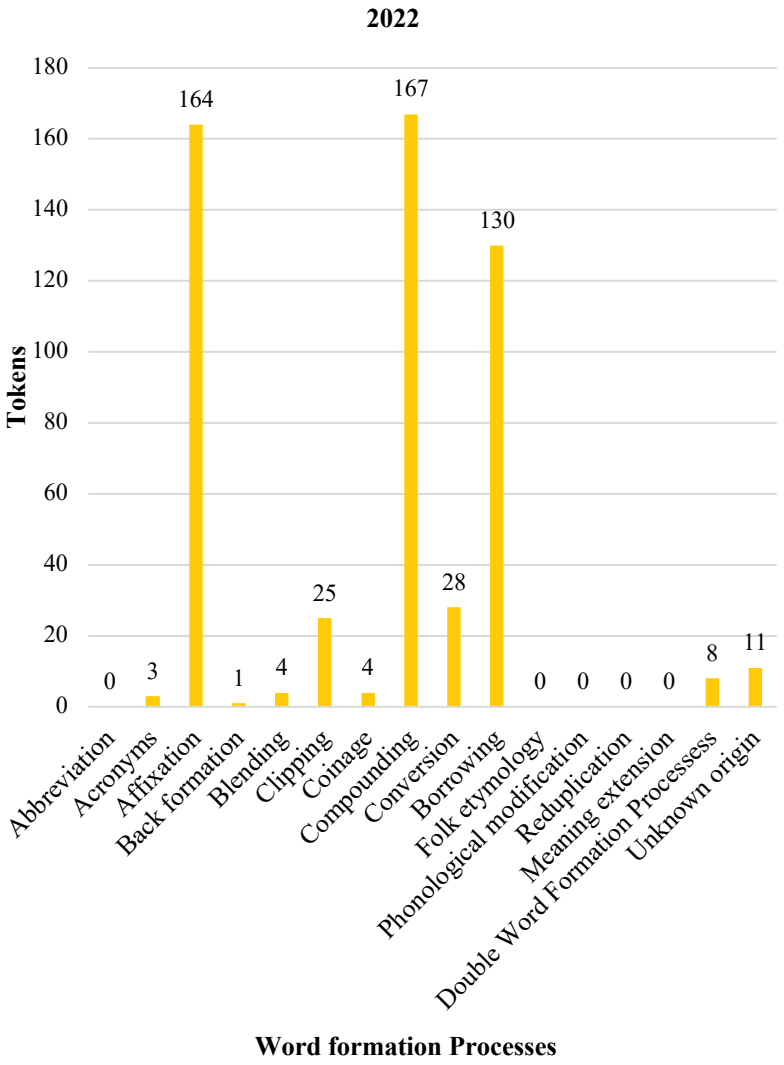
Table 4. Frequency of appearance of word formation processes in 2021

Compounding is the most productive word formation process among the words analysed with 181 instances of neologisms added in the 2021 update including terms like "image server" or "sheg-up". The next most prolific processes are affixation (e.g., "anagrammed" or "unmute") and borrowing (e.g., "amae" or "oppa") with 112 new words each. In this case, the combinations of word formation processes include the following: coinage and affixation (e.g., "Cardiffian") and coinage and compounding (e.g., "Barbudian") with 8 new words in each case, borrowing and affixation (e.g., "Anacreontical") with 6, and borrowing and compounding with 2, which are "astraphobia" and "Zil lane".

4.1.5. 2022 update

The corresponding update for the year 2022 included 621 words throughout its four updates in March, June, September, and

December. The sample size of terms analysed for that year was of 545. The chart below illustrates the distribution of neologisms according to their word formation processes.



Graph 5. Word formation processes for the year 2022

Word Formation Mechanism	Tokens	%
Abbreviation	0	0
Acronyms	3	0,55
Affixation	164	30,09
Back formation	1	0,18
Blending	4	0,73
Clipping	25	4,59
Coinage	4	0,73
Compounding	167	30,64
Conversion	28	5,14
Borrowing	130	23,85
Folk etymology	0	0
Phonological modification	0	0
Reduplication	0	0
Meaning extension	0	0
Double Word Formation Processes	8	1,47
Unknown origin	11	2,02
Total	545	100%

Table 5. Frequency of appearance of word formation processes in 2022

The most productive word formation process in the 2022 update is compounding with 167 new words added in the dictionary such as "bioeconomy" or "back to front". The second most productive word formation process is affixation with 164 words like "decolonialize" or "unprocedural". Then, 130 new terms were borrowed including words like "andiamo" or "fard". The combinations of word formation processes in this update are the following: coinage and compounding (4) as seen in terms like "Dear Jane" or "Mozart and Liszt", borrowing and compounding (2) as the case of "anonyma" and "Rix-chancellor", and the example of "annexture" for borrowing and affixation; and the word "annite" as the only example of coinage and affixation.

4.2. Qualitative analysis

The most productive word formation mechanisms during the time span 2018-2022 are affixation, compounding, and borrowing. The three processes typically account for 75% of the new linguistic items included in the dictionary in each year. These are normally followed by clipping and conversion, each one representing 5% of the new additions to the dictionary. When considering the most prolific word formation process, there is a shift between affixation and compounding. Affixation was the most productive one in 2018 and 2019. However, a change is spotted from 2020 onwards as the frequency of appearance of compound words becomes the highest in 2021 and 2022.

On the contrary, the least productive word formation processes are phonological modification and meaning extension which had no instances of neologisms created during the period under analysis. There are other word formation processes whose additions to the *Oxford English Dictionary* seem anecdotical due to them representing less than 1% of the new words added for each year as it is the seen with abbreviation, acronyms, back formation, reduplication, and folk etymology. Likewise, neologisms resulting from blending and coinage tend to have a marginal appearance as both range from having a frequency close to 1% without reaching more than a 4%. In a middle ground, with few instances but displaying a constant trend throughout the years we find new linguistic items with an unknown origin. Lastly, neologisms formed by more than one word formation process show a fluctuating frequency throughout the years starting, reaching their peak in 2020, and slowly decreasing in the following years.

Apart from productiveness it is important to consider the growing tendency of word formation processes because processes with a growing tendency are more likely to have a greater influence in the future while those with a decreasing tendency are bound to lose any relevance or even become unproductive. The following formula is required to calculate growth rate (Parker 2002):

$$GR\% = \frac{VPresent - Vpast}{Vpast} \times 100$$

Where:

- *GR* stands for growth rate.
- *Vpresent* refers to the latest result, in this case the result from 2022.
- *Vpast* is the initial result, in this case the figures from 2018.

The table below gathers the data obtained after calculating the growth rate for word formation processes considered in this study:

Word Formation Process	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Growth Rate %**
Abbreviation	4	1	2	1	0	-100
Acronyms	6	3	4	0	3	-50
Affixation	377	164	174	112	164	-56,50
Back-formation	3	0	0	4	1	-66,67
Blending	14	22	18	5	4	-71,43
Borrowing	127	110	85	112	130	2,36
Clipping	49	32	30	16	25	-48,98
Coinage	34	11	19	4	4	-88,24
Compounding	258	142	200	181	167	-35,27
Conversion	42	29	30	43	28	-33,33
Double Word Formation Processes	16	12	34	24	8	-50
Folk etymology	1	0	0	0	0	-100
Meaning extension	0	0	0	0	0	-
Phonological modification	0	0	0	0	0	-
Reduplication	3	3	4	0	0	-100,00

Table 6. Growth rate of word formation processes

From the findings above, the only word formation process displaying growth rate is borrowing as it is the only with a positive result. On the contrary, abbreviation, folk etymology, and

reduplication show a complete decrease of their growth rate, closely followed by coinage, blending, and back-formation. Then, affixation, acronyms, double word formation processes, and clipping show a decrease of, approximately, half of their occurrences. The inclusion of affixation within this group is remarkable since it is one of the most fruitful processes, which shows that despite being productive, it is decreasing in use. Finally, the ones closer to showing a growing tendency are compounding and conversion since they only lose one third of their occurrences. There is no data available for neither meaning extension nor phonological modification because they had no instances of words created by these processes. Words with an unknown origin are not considered here since we are only analysing the growth rate of word formation processes.

Precisely, words with an unknown origin are an interesting finding among the data collected. The neologisms labelled as such have a low and steady number of occurrences throughout the years, ranging from 9 tokens to 13. In the table below they are featured ordered yearly and alphabetically alongside extra information taken from their dictionary entries.

Year	#	Word	Word Class	Additional information
2018	1	bobowler	n.	English regional
	2	jarg	adj.	Scottish English
	3	mast	v.3	English regional
	4	monk	n.3	English regional
	5	munted	adj.	Slang
	6	nurdle	n.	US regional
	7	tash	v.	English regional
	8	teet	v.	Scottish English
	9	teg	n.2	English regional
	10	wesley-bob	n.	English regional
	1	chess	n.5	US regional
	2	embassady	n.	A variant of another term
	3	o	n.5	Uncertain origin

	4	Padawan	n.	An arbitrary formation
	5	wally	n.2	English regional
	6	wankered	adj.1	English regional
	7	wanky	adj.1	English regional
	8	whang	n.4	US regional and Irish regional
	9	yairs	adv.	Australian English
	10	yark	v.3	English regional
	11	yassum	adv.	US English Slang
	12	yayus	adv.	US English Slang
	13	yeesh	int.	US English Slang
2020	1	finna	v.	US regional Slang
	2	jam	adj.2	US English Slang
	3	kitchen	n.2	African American English
	4	noonie	n.	British English Slang
	5	oobleck	n.	US English
	6	Suisse muslin	n.	A variant of another term
	7	tinkerman	n.1	A variant of another term
	8	vot	pron.	Regional
	9	zhuzh	n.	Slang
2021	1	Frick	n.	US English Slang
	2	fudder	n.2	Scottish English
	3	Gombey	n.	Bermudian English
	4	mug	adj.2	Bermudian English
	5	washikong	n.	Caribbean English
	6	whoo-ee	int.	A variant of another term
	7	wine	v.2	Caribbean English
	8	womxn	n.	A variant of another term
	9	wrinch	v.2	Bermudian English
	10	wuk	v.	Caribbean English
	11	Zippie	n.1	US English
2022	1	apeth	n.	English regional
	2	damfino	int.	US English Slang

	3	delph	n.	Irish English
	4	flava	n.	A variant of another term
	5	fluthered	adj.	Irish English Slang
	6	folx	n.	A variant of another term
	7	gooh	n.	US English Slang
	8	kumbaya	n. and adj.	US English
	9	langered	adj.	Irish English Slang
	10	langers	adj.	Irish English Slang
	11	segotia	n.	Irish English
Total	54			

Table 7. Compilation of words with unknown origin from the years 2018 to 2022

As seen above, 46 out of the 54 words are labelled as belonging to one of the following varieties of the English language: English regional (Midlands or Northern varieties), Scottish, Irish, Caribbean, Bermudian, Australian or American (US or African American). These regionalisms show the diatopic variation of language within English as a sign of direct contact with other languages in bilingual contexts like the Caribbean, the Bermudas, Ireland or Scotland, but they are also a sign of how lexicon differences serve to differentiate one community of speakers from another by having specific words existing within their geographical area.

Another interesting finding, which is only considered by Yule (2010), are neologisms resulting from the combination of different processes. In a previous study on neologisms by Ratih and Gusdian (2018), these processes are described as "interesting" and "not stated in previous research" (32). In this study, the distribution and occurrences of double word formation processes is collected in the table below.

Combinations	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total/year	%
Abbreviation and compounding	1	0	0	0	0	1	1,06
Affixation and compounding	0	1	0	0	0	1	1,06

Borrowing and affixation	6	4	10	6	1	27	28,72
Borrowing and clipping	0	2	0	0	0	2	2,13
Borrowing and compounding	0	1	1	2	2	6	6,38
Clipping and affixation	1	1	0	0	0	2	2,13
Clipping and compounding	4	0	0	0	0	4	4,26
Coinage and affixation	0	1	12	8	1	22	23,40
Coinage and compounding	4	2	11	8	4	29	30,85
Total	16	12	34	24	8	94	100%

Table 8. Double word formation processes seen in the years 2018 to 2022

From the data gathered in the table, it is seen that affixation or compounding are always one of the combined processes alongside abbreviation, affixation, borrowing, clipping, or coinage. There are only two cases in which neither compounding nor affixation are used. These correspond to examples of the combination of borrowing and clipping. Also, the most productive combinations are coinage and compounding with 29 occurrences closely followed by borrowing and affixation with 27 instances. Both combinations are the only ones seen with examples of neologisms in all the five years under analysis. It is also quite productive the combination of coinage and affixation, having 22 occurrences. All three combinations amount for 82,97% of the total.

5. Concluding remarks

Most linguists and handbooks agree on the existence of 15 main word formation processes, but while some are still productive nowadays (e.g., compounding, affixation or borrowing) others have turned out to become anecdotally productive (e.g., acronyms, abbreviations, or reduplication) or completely unproductive (e.g., phonological modification and meaning extension). In fact, the latter is coincident with those processes that are only considered by

few authors as is the case of meaning extension, only discussed by Meyer (2009), and phonological modification only studied by Bauer and Huddleston (2002).

Considering productivity among word formation processes, affixation and compounding are by far the most productive. Currently, compounding is the most productive one. This contrasts with the conclusion asserted by Ratih and Gusdian (2018) on their study of neologisms added to the *OED Online* from the year 2012 to 2016 as they found out that "affixation is the dominant process of creating English new words" (2018, 33). Nonetheless, the results for the year 2022 show that the distance in the frequency between both processes could be narrowing.

In terms of growth rate, borrowing is the only word formation processes with showing positive figures. This growing tendency could mean that borrowing may eventually overpass affixation or compounding as the most productive mechanism.

Regarding double word formation processes, it is observed that affixation and compounding are always used alongside other process. This supports their status as the most productive source for neologisms.

Likewise, the incorporation and recognition of words belonging to different varieties of the language in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* depicts the impact of speakers within the lexicon of their language. This highlights the importance of the diatopic variation of language considering that in almost all the cases studied, these terms with an unknown origin were regionalisms. This is also supported by the growing appearance of slang words belonging to different varieties. The appearance of slang words in the dictionary is a way of acknowledging the colloquial or less standard uses of the language, allowing us to understand current linguistic tendencies.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that this study is a descriptive analysis on the neologisms recently added to the *OED Online*, but that the scope of neology is broader, since not all new words will survive and eventually be normalized by including them

in a dictionary. Thus, considering the changing nature of languages, further lines of research can be developed using the findings included in this study as the basis.

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