

## LANGUAGE CREATIVITY AND GRAMMATICAL PROBLEMS

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### ABSTRAK

Perubahan sosial tidak hanya mempengaruhi kehidupan manusia, tetapi juga bahasa yang digunakan. Perubahan bahasa yang disebut neologi dapat terjadi pada tataran kata, makna, maupun struktur, sehingga dapat ditinjau dari sudut leksikologi, morfologi, sintaksis dan semantik. Neologi terbentuk karena penutur memerlukan istilah baru untuk konsep-konsep baru yang timbul di kalangan penakai bahasa. Selain memperkaya kosa kata, neologi dapat juga menimbulkan persoalan dalam Tatabahasa.

Kata kunci : kreativitas bahasa - neologi - perubahan

### INTRODUCTION

**S**ocial changes cause language creativities. One of them is the neology i.e the creation of new words, expressions or structures, caused by language efficiency, new technology, value system and ideology. This article will describe how social changes influence the language especially the vocabulary creation that enriches the vocabulary but at the same time creates the grammatical problems in certain languages.

Progresses in technology and changes in ideology or the way of thinking in the society have been taking place all the time. New inventions occur in various domains such as in computer science, medicine and technology, while in social science we can find new issues such gender, philosophical issues and political trends. To convey the ideas people need not only certain expressions or words but frequently new grammatical structures which will be observed from synchronic and diachronic approaches. Thus, these language creativities do not only concern

with the lexicology, but also the morphology and syntax. This article will analyze the neology from synchronic and diachronic approaches, because this article will discuss not only the system but also the history or the etymology of words.

The term language creativities discussed in this article is different from the linguistics creativity used by Chomsky who uses it in terms of ability to construct and understand an indefinitely large number of utterances (Lyons, 1977:76). In this article, language creativities are defined as the creation of new words, or structures which do not exist in the repertoire to name new concepts.

Bollinger, D (1975) argues that when the language users create new entities they also create new words to name them. This phenomenon is called neologism. There are some rules which have to be respected for this language creativity, i.e.; they do not come from a random combination of sound-random except for phonological requirements of the language, but they are created. Debove (1971:100) claims that neologism means the

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creation of words newly used in communication, and the words do not exist in the meta-linguistics corpus.

Language creativities may happen on various levels, i.e.; words, meaning, word structure and sentence structure. Thus, neologism can be discussed on the level of lexicology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. However, most of the examples taken in this article are related to new words. Dubois *et als* (1973:334-335) divide neologism into *néologie de forme* 'new form of neology' and *néologie de sens* 'new meaning of neology'. Unlike the one written by Dubois, this article agrees to discuss the neologism from three aspects, i.e.; the pattern of the neology, the reasons for neology, and the meaning caused by neology. Thus, this article sees the reasons that promote neology separated from the form and meaning.

### NEOLOGY IN FORM

Etymology is related to the words history, because it learns the words origine. By learning the history of words we can see how words relate to its original ideas and institutions (Guiraud, 1979:17). However, sometimes people go too far from the truth and create their own false etymology by relating two words without any relations. For example by saying that the word *santai* 'relaxed' coming originally from a regional language in Sumatera, originates from the words *dansa di lantai* 'dancing on the floor'. In French the word *parlement* does not come from *parle* 'talk' and *ment* 'lie' or *chapeau* 'hat' cannot be related to *échappe* 'avoid' and *eau* 'water'.

Bollinger (1975:118) mentions that a new word can be created by derivation, compounding, reduplication, creation, onomatopoeia and acronym. This article however will discuss the neology from other perspective. The classification is based on the components used to form the neology, i.e., new components, abbreviation, old affixes or components, onomatopoeia and simplification.

### New Components

Some words are created to name new elements, objects or conditions by creating new terms, such as *robot*, *computer* and *avion*

(fr) 'aircraft'. These new words appear or are created after the invention of those objects. Those words did not exist before, but they were created because of the needs to name the objects, from the new invention. The same is true with the word *gangster*, which was created when the group of people with this profession appeared. The language creativity increases whenever there is more technology invention.

### Abbreviation

Neology might be the result of the abbreviation of some common words, such as; *radar* that comes from Radio Detecting And Ranging; and *bandara* 'airport' from Bandar Udara 'airport'. The words are sometimes so well integrated in the language that the language users do not realize that the words are abbreviations. Furthermore, the words have obtained affixes, such as *capessien* (fr) 'someone who owns his or her CAPES' which is the abbreviation of *Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement Secondaire* 'certificate for teaching on the secondary education.'

The Indonesian military is very productive in creating words from abbreviation. It is so productive that sometimes many people do not know what the words stand for. The word *mahmilub* which is the abbreviation of *Mahkamah Militer Luar Biasa* may be used more often than *Mahkamah Militer Luar Biasa*, and there is a verb *dimahmilubkan* based on this abbreviation meaning 'is brought to the military court.' This type of words gives difficulty especially to foreigners learning Bahasa.

Besides abbreviation there are also some words which are created by blending process. Akmajian (1979:113) mentions certain examples like the word *brunch* which is blended from *breakfast* and *lunch*, *motel* from *motor hotel*. These two examples do not have the same position for the language users. In the word *motel* we can see the relation between the word and the word *hotel*, but we do not see the relation with the word *motor* anymore. Unlike *motel*, in the word *brunch* we can still feel the sense, that the time of *brunch* is related to the time between breakfast and lunch.

### Old affixes or components

Certain new words are created by using affixes which already exist and they are also the result of previous neology, such as; *cinémathèque* was created in 1921 from the word *cinéma*, by using the suffix *thèque* 'cupboard,' and the word *cinéma* itself which was created in 1900 as the abbreviation of *cinématographe*. Later the word *cinéma* is simplified to *ciné*.

The productivity of the suffix varies from one suffix to another. The suffix *ism* or *isme* and *logie* from Greek are frequently used for political, scientific and ideological issues in many languages such; *Leninism*, *feminism*, *neologism* (Engl) and *biologie* (fr). Yaguello (2003:40) states that in 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries 50% of the abstract vocabularies were neologies used to name historical and conceptual realities because the translators did not find the French terms.

### Onomatopoeia

A number of new words are onomatopoeia or created by imitating the sound of the object. Bollinger (1975: 217) says that according to the history of the language, the primitive form imitates the nature, for examples: *J'ai entendu un boum* 'I heard boum' or *shh* 'quiet'. Nowadays this type of creation still exists as when the use of computer is increasing, we can find the verb *click* or *cliquer* (fr) which is the onomatopoeia of the mouse of the computer.

Some onomatopoeias are related to children language such: *teuf-teuf* (fr) 'car' which imitates the explosion of a machine; and *coucou* (fr) 'bird'. Though children's language is rich with reduplication like *teuf-teuf*, onomatopoeias are sometimes not reduplication such as the word; *minou* (fr) 'kitten' which imitates the kitten's cry.

The words *plunge* (Eng), *nyemplung* (Ind) and *plonger* (Fr) 'fall into water' phonetically and semantically are close and can be considered as onomatopoeia.

### Simplification

Some new terms are created by simplifying the old terms. *Télévision* (fr) for

example is shortened to *télé*, *autobus* and *autocar* 'bus' to *bus*, and *car*, *television* (Engl) to *TV*. Apparently there is no fix regulation for simplification, because the rule for simplification varies from one language to another. The examples show that the new English term is different from the French one. Even in one language the simplification is not always the same. In French sometimes we omit the end sometimes the beginning. There are times the affix disappears but in some words we keep the affix. *Télévision* for example has the prefix *télé* which means 'far' like in *téléphone* but the new term is taken from the prefix, while in the words *autobus* and *autocar* the prefix *auto* disappears.

### THE REASONS FOR NEOLOGY

It was mentioned before that neology occurs because of the needs of the language users. The writer assumes that neology happens because of language efficiency, new technology, value system and ideology.

#### Language efficiency

As in the principle of economics the tendency for simplification also happens in language use. Some long words are simplified by omitting the affix for example; *television* (fr) becomes *tele*, *photographe* becomes *photo*. Abbreviation and acronym, as we have discussed before might be related to language efficiency because it creates shorter forms. *ABRI* which the abbreviation of *Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia* 'Indonesian Army' is simpler or more economic than *Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia*.

For the shake of efficiency, language users also create acronyms such as *O.K.*, sometimes written *okay*, which becomes an international vocabulary. Akmajian (1979: 113) thinks that there are various opinions to explain this. One theory says that it stands for *Old Kinderhook*, the party which supported President Van Buren, while another theory says that it stands for *all correct*. Both theory shows that the users make a neology to get some efficiency. Youth is also creative in this type of neology for example *ados* (fr) for

adolescence 'youth', *Aussie* for *Australian* and *ava* for afternoon and *teens* for *teenagers*.

### New Technology or invention

As mentioned before, some inventions are the byproducts of new technology. As a consequence of these inventions there is also a need to name the products, such as; *television*, *teleconference*, *telephone* and the like. However, this does not only concern the sophisticated technology inventions. In 1884 Mr. Poubelle, the mayor of Paris imposed the use of rubbish bin in front of the house. Later on his name became a new French word *poubelle* (fr) 'rubbish bin'. In modern time many brands become new words to name the product (Akmajian, 1979:113) like the word *xerox* which is a brand of a photocopy machine becomes a verb to *xerox* 'to photocopy' and adjective *xeroxable*. *Kodak* which is also a brand of a camera becomes a noun which means camera. Usually the brands used are the first brand or the famous one such as; *Kleenex* for tissue paper, *Honda* for motorcycle, and *Frigidaire* for ice box or refrigerator.

Some new words are borrowings from other languages such as *durian* (blnd) which is an exotic Asian fruit is used in English and in other languages that do not have their own term.

Some borrowings or neologies are necessary because the language does not have a suitable term to name the new product like *durian* which is imported together with the product. However, there are unnecessary borrowings such as the problem of Anglicism in French. Kusri (2000) mentions that many English words are used now in French and found in magazines for women, like; *gay*, *baby sitter* and *star*. The word *week-end* has chased away the French word *fin de la semaine*.

It is true that Anglicism is often considered snobbism by the purists or those who want to conserve the language. Though in France it is a common practice to say *bon week end* 'have a nice week-end', the French Canadians still conserve the *bonne fin de la semaine*.

### New Value system

Recently the whole world has been preoccupied by the feminism that has been fighting for gender equality. The church and the education that are supposed to be egalitarian actually are still fighting against the patriarch system. Certain profession that used to be considered related to gender discrimination may create debates. Some professions like bus driver, ambassador, director, due to cultural background, were or are related to gender. During the presidential election certain party provokes the gender issue that a woman cannot be elected as president since it is considered as a male profession. When the society develops through education, migration or globalization, new value system comes as well to the society, and people have been wiping away the gender discrimination. As the society, due to feminist fight, accepts women to occupy any kind of position for equality opportunity there is also a need to find a new term especially to remove the man superiority from the old term. In France there is a commission for feminization of certain profession in 1984 opposed by l'Académie Française (French Academic) which is the decision maker for the French language (Yaguello 2003:141). Some new words appear in many languages to replace sexist words, such as *chairperson* replaces *chairman* to show that this position is not only for male. French especially Canadian French seems to succeed to fight against the male superiority in language. Words like *écrivaine* (fr) 'female writer', *présidente* 'female president', *consoeur* 'female colleague' are competing with words that show male profession; *écrivain*, *president* and *confrère*.

Bahasa Indonesia does not seem very sexist in certain case. The word *saudara* 'brother, sister' for example can be applied to male and female.

### New Ideology

In 2.3 there are some examples related to ideology. *Leninism* for example, appeared when Lenin became an influential leader and succeeded to introduce or impose his ideology.

This phenomenon is frequent in politics and philosophy and it may have a positive or negative meaning depending on the leader, as what happened in Indonesia, *Soekarnoism* was negative during Suharto regime. However, for Megawati's campaign *Soekarnoism* became positive, and a slogan that attracted people.

### NEOLOGY IN MEANING

In general neology is language creativity in term of *expression* or using Saussure's term *signifiant*. However, since expression is also related to *meaning* or *signifié* (fr) this article is also interested in discussing the meaning issues caused by the neology.

Though the main reason for neology is to name a new concept, sometimes the language has the synonym of the words. In Indonesian Catholic church we can find leaders by the names of *Romo* and *Pastor* for the same occupation. These words are synonym but *Romo* is borrowed from *Javanese* while *Pastor* from Latin and both are frequently used in Indonesian.

Besides synonym, the neology may create doublet in the language when the language already has a term to name the object before the new term is created. Dubois (1973: 168) affirms that doublet is a couple of words issued from the same etymology. However, there is no perfect synonym in one language, because there is always a circumstance where a word cannot substitute one another, or even if grammatically it is possible, there is always a slight fine difference. The word *perempuan* and *wanita* for example, are synonym. At present the feminists prefer the term *perempuan* which is considered free from man domination. Even for doublet, there is still difference between the words. The French words *livrer* and *libérer* 'to free' are synonym and doublet because they come from the same word *liberare* (Lat), but *livrer* is more archaic than *libérer*.

In neology the meaning may have certain extension or modification. Some created words using old components change the previous meaning, like the word *square* had a positive meaning 'honest' in 30's and

40's, but during the late '50's and into the 60's it had a negative connotation 'conventional and uncomprehending' and dropped out of use (Akmajian, 1979: 116). The word *réticent* (fr) for example in the 16th century meant 'to be silent.' Nowadays, the word means 'to be careful' like in *Les Indonésiens sont plus réticents pour accepter des avortements* 'Indonesians are more reserved in accepting abortion.'

Changes in meaning are often related to the metaphor. The word *banteng* 'buffalo' during the campaign means PDIP or *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Pembaruan* 'Democratic Party' and *beringin* means *Golongan Karya* 'Professional Group'.

Certain words can be considered as anagramme, such as Roma which can be related to Amor 'love', 'the city of love'.

### NEOLOGY AND GRAMMATICAL PROBLEMS

Neology is not only related to the vocabulary but also to the word and sentence structure. Neology has made contribution to the nomenclature by enriching the number of words. However, the language creation creates some grammatical problems. In French, nouns have gender which is shown by the articles *la* and *une* female nouns while *le* and *un* male nouns, for examples *la dame* 'the women' and *le monsieur* 'the man'.

Gender and sex do not always have the same meaning. Gender is used for human and non-human, but there is no reason why a non-human object is considered as female or male i.e.; *la maison* or *une maison* 'house' is a female noun and *le camion* or *un camion* 'truck' is a male noun. Thus, gender is related to grammar rule not to the sex of the noun itself. The non-human borrowings are usually considered male, such as: *le durian*, *le gamelan* and *le parking*. But this regulation does not work for the neology such as *écrivaine* the feminine form of *écrivain* 'male writer'. Since the suffix *e* is a female suffix, the feminine word has to use the female article *la* and *une*.

Grammatical problems are provoked by the feminists. Some of them think that there



must be feminine term of the words such as; *président*, *ministre*, and *professeur* which are used to being grammatically male with the article *le* and *un*. But there is still hesitation whether they will use feminine, article noun or both.

At the moment, there are various opinions in saying the female profession such as; *la professeur*, *le professeur*, *la professeur femme*, and *la femme professeur* which means 'female teacher'. All of this is different from the old French grammatical structure where the three masculine words are also used to name the opposite sex. Besides the grammatical issue in choosing the right term, Meillet claims in Paveau (2003:229) that there is also a pejorative connotation in certain feminine affix such as *chef* (male boss) and *chêfesse* (female boss).

Certain neology also creates antistructurale such as; *\*mondisation* 'international generalization.' This word comes from the word *monde* 'world', because the derivation is *monde à mondial àmondialisation*. In this case efficiency does not work.

## CONCLUSION

Modification of social structure is shown by language changes. Neology as a language creation which shows the language modificat-

ion is very useful to enrich new terms. However, this enrichment causes certain problems such as grammatical and semantic problems.

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