

Social Media Neologisms in Bangladesh: Linguistic Creativity or Catastrophe

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<https://doi.org/10.24071/ijels.v10i1.7312>

received 5 October 2023; accepted 8 March 2024

ABSTRACT

This paper made a lexico-semantic analysis of several social media neologisms, checked their frequencies on the online corpus WebCorp, and checked their usage regarding derivations, conversions, or compounding on Bangladeshi online webpages and newspapers. The selected words were also checked in the recorded conversations and focus group interview scripts collected from the students of the two public universities in Bangladesh to scrutinize the different forms of the words found on WebCorp. The findings revealed that the words were mostly frequent in the written as well as in the spoken languages as nouns and all other formations of each of the base words were not that frequent. Some of the formations seemed to be forced creations. The discussion exposes that these neologisms have been inserted into the Bangla language without any significant changes as if they were Bangla words. Thus, they have become an inseparable part of the Bangla language and important examples of linguistic creativity. Their usage also symbolizes modern identity.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, derivation and compounding, lexico-semantic analysis

INTRODUCTION

The invention of websites, various software, blogs, voiceover communications, messaging applications, videoconferencing, telecom networks, social networks, online chats, and other products along with the increasing advancement of English as the international language has made a drastic evolution in the creation of neologism on social media. This fact has triggered an increasing interest in the morphological, semantic, and stylistic growth of English neologisms and their usage and status in non-native communities. Consequently, research on neologisms especially on 'Internet linguistics' (Crystal, 2011, p. 2) has proliferated.

Čilić and Plauc (2021) believe that neologisms "are usually useful in denominating inventions, new phenomena, or old ideas that have taken on a new cultural context" (p.116). Some of the common processes of neologism in the English language are compounding, blending, derivation, back-formation, shifting meaning, abbreviation, coinage, etc. (Handabura, 2020, p. 221).

Since social media platforms are used by all worldwide from teenagers to senior citizens, the neologisms created have the highest opportunities to enrich the linguistic paradigm of world speech communities regardless of the boundary of a particular community where these were first introduced or originated. This concept is widening the process of welcoming a multidimensional time-befitting lexicon without being biased to any particular variety of English. The dominance of the internet and technology on modern English usage is explicable by the presence of argot, slang, and new meanings added to existing words, for instance, the meaning of *mouse*, *cloud*, and so on.



The predominance of English on the Internet precisely leads to the development and expansion of such words. So, these neologisms can be more conveniently termed ‘Internet linguistics’ as it is the study of language on the Internet. The use of neologisms leads to such definite and far-reaching linguistic and cultural change that it can also shape the identity of a person.

As technology has changed the ways we live, communicate, do business, service, or study, with these new inventions and lifestyles, new words or existing words with new meanings are getting assimilated into the Bangla language too, especially in the computer-mediated world that can hardly be replaced by any other words. For instance, *online chat*, *email*, *SMS*, and so on are pronounced with transliterated forms in our native language as if they were Bangla words. These neologisms are so emphatic that they can change our cognitive faculty and behavior in social as well as real-life contexts.

Hence this paper endeavors to examine and apprehend the use and impact of those social media-mediated English neologisms that can even connote a modern identity. This study aims to contribute to the research domain of neologism by analyzing English neologisms created online, their impacts on the Bangladeshi context, and the sociocultural effects if there are any. The research has high pedagogical implications for the English Language Teaching (ELT) context in Bangladesh. This study will proceed as follows: literature review, methodology, description of neologisms, discussion, and conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Different researchers have tried to shed light on this specific field from different parts of the world considering its importance and huge impact on the day-to-day life of the natives as well as other English language users throughout the world.

Čilić and Plauc (2021) analyzed neologisms that were widely used in online-based communication. They collected data from the four most predominant sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp) and counted and compared their frequencies. They tried to provide socio-linguistic information by stating which particular type of word formation process is found on each site. For example, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter consisted of clipping and blending mostly as interaction takes place in terms of posts and comments. The result from Facebook shows that young people using Facebook are keen on shortened words as they are fast, entertaining, and trendy. On the contrary, WhatsApp is a type of messenger that displays mostly abbreviations and acronyms. However, they admitted that this result found from four sites cannot be generalized to all sites or pages.

Nkhata and Jimaima (2020) studied the morphological process of some social media neologisms on Facebook and WhatsApp to find out if they all fit in the traditional word formation process or if they are formed by new creative processes. Interestingly, they found some “Pseudo-elliptical construction” (p. 91) for instance, *gonna*, *wanna*, *kinda*. They admitted that these elliptical constructions require shared knowledge to understand what they refer to. Moreover, they also found pseudo-compounds, such as *Friendversary* “friend and anniversary” (p. 87), and concluded that the most frequent type of formation process on these two platforms was initialism.

Like Handabura (2020), Alfred (2019) also tried to shed light on the *netspeak neologisms*. His main concern was to analyze how these words were having impacts on the Nigerian fashion and communication field. Both morphological processes and meanings conveyed by these words were critically observed and exemplified. After analyzing the commonly used 28 blog post words from 2015-2018, it was revealed that though some of the words were also in use from earlier times, they got a new dimension concerning the semantic extension e.g., “*beef*” (verb) to mean “an unwarranted hatred or disapproval for a person”; “*melanin*” (noun) to mean “a dark-skinned, admirable individual, especially ladies or women”. Some other examples cover words like: “*bodycon*” (noun) to mean “a type of tight-fitting dress” (example of clipping); “*influencer*” (noun) to refer “to an individual who is famous for having a strong influence on the social media” (example of affixation); “*GOAT*” (NOUN) used “to mean

‘Greatest Of All Time’. It is commonly used to compare individuals who have made great achievements” (pp. 108-112).

Shahlee and Ahmad (2022), using the process of lexical semantic analysis, conducted a qualitative study in Malaysia to analyze the morphological process of the widely used social media-based (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) words. The fundamental findings based on the analysis of 93 neologisms exposed that the most common were the use of acronyms (among 11 forms namely borrowing, blending, compounding, onomatopoeia, acronym, abbreviation, antonomasia, reduplication, conversion, affixation, clipping) and noun class formed words. Some of the examples are: “BMF” stands for “Buy Muslim First”. It is a controversial campaign among Malays and Muslims in Malaysia that urges to “buy Muslims” and Malays’ products” that are Halal certified rather than to buy the products “made from non-Malays or non-Muslims”. Examples from other morphological processes include words like “. “aboat” and this an example of blending with the combination of the words “about+boat” to “indicate telling something about boats”; another example of a new formation is “Batday birthman” which has been shaped through the process of compounding (birthday+batman). Nonetheless “the meaning produced does not relate to the compounded word but the original phrase, *birthday batman*”. Most surprisingly, though the words like “aboat”; “Appre-sea-ate”; “Berrylicious” or “Batday birthman” have yet to get dictionary entry (Oxford or netlingo), they are frequently used on Malaysian social media confirming that language can never be static (p. 22-24).

Zainal and Rahmat (2020) stated the growing prominence of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram as the major sources of English vocabulary advancement among the students of Malaysian universities. The most important finding was that English was used more diversely on online sites than in university classrooms. The population conceded that they knew the application of new words they learned from online platforms. It enhanced the understanding of English learners. The stated sites are remedies for language learners as they are collaborative and engaging. Social media is the fastest, most useful, and most entertaining platform for communication used by all generations. These sites are beneficial for enhancing learners’ level of confidence through different types of communication and offer scopes to practice the English language.

Retsa (2016) realized that neologisms should be an integral part of vocabulary material for English language learners. Considering this fact, she surveyed 70 students in the English language teaching department. The students had to define 10 neologisms that were given to them without contextual clues. The neologisms were selected based on their high frequency on the Google search engine. Although only 5% of students successfully explained 90% of the given words, 98% of the students expressed great interest in this activity and wanted to practice new words to improve their communicative and cultural competencies. Thus the author recommended four approaches to studying neologisms in the classroom which she considers experimental but potential.

The above studies show that the morphological study of social media neologism is of great interest these days in non-native countries. Some researchers have also shown different socio-cultural effects and frequencies of these neologisms along with the formation processes. Such modern and handy neologisms are appreciated in ELT classrooms to develop vocabulary, creativity as well as communicative and cultural competencies. Most researchers tried to analyze neologisms from four popular platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp), however, the results appeared to be different from one another. Therefore, this study will attempt an identical work in the Bangladeshi context to understand the usage and extent of multidimensional forms of Internet neologisms incorporating English and technology in distinct processes along with underlying social values which can eventually impact social life and personality.

METHOD

This study aimed to find out the answers to two particular research questions: i) What neologisms are commonly used on Bangladeshi online platforms? ii) How do these neologisms (re)shape the current trends of English usage in the Bangladeshi context? To answer these questions, we checked Bangladeshi online pages and newspapers to accumulate several online neologisms. We selected the prescribed ones based on their frequencies in the Bangladeshi context. Secondly, the usage and the extent of different formations (in terms of derivation, conversation and compounding) of these words were analyzed as found on WebCorp. Accordingly, their socio-cultural impacts were also taken into consideration. Data from several units of recorded conversations and focus group interviews from randomly selected students of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology, and Jashore University of Science and Technology (7th, 9th, and 10th batch students of the Department of English) were also collected to check the other expected formations of these words. Consent from the students was taken before recording the data. At the same time, the participants were also assured that the provided data would be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. These approaches helped this study collect reliable and valid data. The result from WebCorp and the usage produced in the spoken discourse were compared to verify the extent of the word formation processes the words have undergone originally. Using a qualitative descriptive approach in the form of lexico-semantics analysis data were processed and then presented for the discussion. This technique of data processing helped this study scrutinize the aspects of the formation of words, their usage, and impacts on a non-native society in intensive and deliberate ways.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Selfie

Selfie (self + ie) is formed through the affixation process of neologism. It was made by using the diminutive suffix *ie* like *foodie* (a person with gourmet tastes), and *bestie* (best friend). It is a convenient abbreviation of ‘self-photograph’. *Selfie* made its place as an informal countable noun in the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary in 2013. However, the *selfie* has become established as it fulfills a special need for mobile photography. Being a noun, the plural form is *selfies*. A few websites and the concordances on the WebCorp (online corpus) also showed the verb form *selfieing* or *selfied* and the adjective form *selfieable*. Clicking photographs was never an unconventional issue but *selfies* have added a connotation of self-portrayal and self-exposure. Posting *selfies* on social media sites is an expectation of public view, likes, and comments. This growing culture of *selfies* is a factor leading to an increase in an individual’s self-esteem. In the age of the internet, taking and posting a *selfie* is considered a personal and social identity marker. Table 1 presents some sentence examples of *selfie* from WebCorp.

Table 1. Examples of *Selfie* from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

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- | |
|---|
| i. There is no denying that ‘ selfieing ’ is a common practice today. |
| ii. While some view selfieing as pointless, and potentially harmful, daily capturing and sharing of certain images positively affects people |
| iii. One day that breath is going to stop and all that time selfieing won’t matter. |
| iv. She accounts to see if they would like to be selfied , as a means of attracting more followers. |
| v. Why do some people look better in selfies than in real life? |
| vi. The picture topped many selfie lists of the year. |
| vii. “We want Vilamoura to be more selfieable ,” Jenner explains. “We want to modernise the harbour, the beaches, and the marina.” |
| viii. Strangely Selfieable . |
-

In the first three examples, *selfieing* is used as a gerund and none of the examples analyzed showed *selfieing* as a continuous process. The fourth example shows *selfied* in passive and not in past form. *Selfieable* was initially found in phrases in the caption of an advertisement for toothpaste and home décor. Later we found it in complete sentences. Thus it seems like *selfie* is more acceptable as a noun. However, *selfie* quickly went into forming other blends or compound nouns, such as *selfie stick*, *selfie-esteem*, and *Selfiecide* (the act of accidentally dying while trying to snap a perfect *selfie*). The *selfie* and *selfiecide* got more than 500 hits in the WebCorp but other conjugations were not found with more than 50 hits. Other formations of *selfie* may not be used extensively and may easily get obsolete but the *selfie* itself is going to have a long-lasting journey. In the spoken texts of the student participants, only the use of *selfie* and *selfie stick* were noticed.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is a crime to harm a person or a company's security using a computer and the internet to achieve financial profit. It is a generic word for crimes such as "committing fraud, trafficking in child pornography and intellectual property, stealing an identity, or violating someone's privacy" (Britannica, 2023, n.p.). *Cyber* is a combining form and *crime* is a noun. The combination of two words produces a noun. Table 2 presents some sentence examples of *Cybercrime* from WebCorp.

Table 2. Examples of Cybercrime from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

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- i. **Cybercrimes** take place online.
 - ii. Warren Buffett describes **cybercrime** as the 'number one problem with mankind' and said that it 'poses real risks to humanity'.
 - iii. Yes, you guessed right, Tashi was being **cybercrimed**.
 - iv. I'll never forget when I was **cybercrimed**.
 - v. Cyber will remind you that **cybercriming** is cheap and easy enough that anyone can do it.
 - vi. If he hadn't done his **cybercriming**, he still could get a good paying IT security gig, and not have lost seven years of his life to boot.
 - vii. **Cybercriminals** often work in organized groups.
 - viii. The politically motivated **cybercriminal** usually has a prior criminal record for offenses such as criminal trespass, rioting, and similar activities.
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Cybercrime and *cybercriminal* are nouns and the most common usages. In the third and fourth examples, *cybercrimed* are used as passive. In the fifth and sixth examples, it was used as a gerund. The combining form of **cyber** quickly became handy and created more words with existing nouns, such as *cyberbullying*, *cyberspace*, *cybercafe*, *cyberaddiction*, *cybersecurity*, *cyberattack*, *cyberphobia*, and so on. Except *cybercrimed*, *cyberspace*, and *cyberaddiction*, all other forms including the base word were used in the spoken texts.

TikTok

According to the pronunciation of *TikTok*, it is a play on tick-tock, onomatopoeia for a large clock ticking. It was created as a term for countdowns and minute-by-minute action. It refers to short videos made by anybody online. Presently, *TikTok* is the most popular and interesting app. As a noun, *TikTok* is very popular. The verbs *TikToking* and *TikToked* are also evident. The person who creates videos is called *Tiktoker*. Table 3 presents some sentence examples of *TikTok* from WebCorp.

Table 3. Examples of TikTok from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

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- i. However, we have to admit that **TikToking** films may kill the magical power of story-telling.
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- ii. Engaging with our viewers is a crucial thing, but nowadays we are facing the great challenge of **TikToking** any content we make, without any reasonable feedback from viewers and without any impact on them.
 - iii. She **TikToked** her divorce, and then her husband killed her.
 - iv. Georgia gained 930,000 likes when he **TikToked** his middle school Snapchats earlier this year.
-

In the examples, *TikToking* is used as a gerund and *TikToked* as a simple past. The analysis of the spoken discourse revealed that in all conversations *TikTok*, *TikToking* and *Tiktoker* were widely used and popular among students.

Unfriend

In the world of neologism, *unfriend* is usually used as a verb. It means “to remove (someone) from a list of designated friends on a person's social networking website” (Merriam-Webster, 2022, n.p.) or “to remove (a person) from the list of one's friends on a social networking site” (Collins, 2023, n.p.).

Though it is thought that this word started to be used in the middle of the noughties and particularly in 2003 on social networking platforms, it has a history of much older use (Macmillan, 2022). The OUPblog (2009) stated that this word was marked as the “Word of the Year” in 2009 by The New Oxford American Dictionary which indicated its huge and remarkable usage on online platforms. In the English language ‘un’ prefix is usually used to form adjectives e.g., *uncommon*, *unacceptable*, and the formation of verbs is less observed e.g., *unpack*. This word is formed with the combination of ‘un’ prefix+ noun (friend) = ‘unfriend’ and takes the form of a verb (OUPblog, 2009). Table 4 presents some sentence examples of *unfriend* from WebCorp.

Table 4. Examples of Unfriend from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

- i. Felicity's **unfriending** spree is easy to empathize with.
 - ii. What my **unfriending** spree taught me was accepting accountability for the harmful social media use that got me to that point in the first place.
 - iii. Facebook **unfriending** should be called “Facebook estrangement” because by **unfriending** you, the person has officially severed social ties with you.
 - iv. People have to give **unfriending** much more thought than they give to friending.
 - v. Along with six other students, she's forced to join an after-school group created for those who are deemed '**unfrienable**'.
 - vi. Do your best to show just enough interest in the other losers around to appease the folks while still having time to chase after all the attractive guys in the MC's afterschool group, which just so happens to be a group for chronically **unfrienable** people.
 - vii. **Unfriended** is a 2014 screenlife supernatural horror film directed by Levan Gabriadze and produced by Timur Bekmambetov.
-

Unfriending in the first two examples is an adjective as it is modifying *spree*. In the third and fourth examples, *unfriending* is a gerund as it is the subject and object of the sentences. *Unfriended* is used as a noun being the name of a movie so the *ed* form did not produce any past form. With the suffix ‘able’ *unfrienable* is made an adjective. The spoken corpus produced only *unfriend* and *unfriending*.

Influencer

Influencer is a derivative noun derived from the existing verb influence. The ‘r’ is added to make it a noun. The Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (2023, n.p.) defines the influencer to be (celebrity or popular) “... a person with the ability to influence potential buyers of a product or

service by promoting or recommending the items on social media”. An influencer often has enough credibility and authority on social media to affect human behaviour tremendously. He or she has a huge number of followers and fans on social media sites like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. In recent years, business worlds have exploited influencers to harness the power of social media to reach their target audience and increase brand recognition. On the contrary, people tend to depend more on influencers so that they do not have to suffer from choice fatigue or choice anxiety. However, the influencers’ devotion to the company may also force people to buy products even when they are not necessary.

Besides selling commodities, influencers have other roles to play. For example, during the pandemic of COVID-19, the rise of *TikTok* stars to make people aware of COVID and the importance of hygiene was appreciable. Moreover, the viral TikTok videos showcasing the depth of the war in Ukraine spread more awareness of the situation than it would have been through any News channel or Radio. Table 5 presents some sentence examples of *influencer* from WebCorp.

Table 5. Examples of influencers from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Influencers can add serious credibility to your brand. ii. For centuries, influencers have been forcing us to admit an uncomfortable truth: we are neither entirely self-determining nor self-contained. iii. Influencer is an anodyne, commercial label, describing someone who monetizes an online following by endorsing products or services—a celebrity spokesperson for the social-media age. iv. What will the Influencer Platform Market Size be in 2021? |
|---|

Influencers is a noun and is used everywhere in the noun form. The word *influencing* is used as an adjective as it modifies the word *Platform*, a noun. Other varieties were not found. However, several compound words were frequently available, such as *social media influencers*, *cybersecurity influencers*, *TikTok influencer*, *brand influencer*, and so on. *Social media influencer* is a generic name for all other influencers such as *cybersecurity influencers*, *TikTok influencer*, and *brand influencer*. All other forms of *influencer*, except *influencing* and *cybersecurity influencers*, were concurrently used in the spoken discourse.

Flash Mob

Flash mob, a compound word works as a noun and sometimes as a verb. It has been formed with the combination of two words i.e., *flash* and *mob* which have their meanings distinctly different from the holistic meaning. Individually, *flash* means —to shine brightly and suddenly and *mob* means —a large, angry crowd, especially one that could easily become violent (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023, n.p.). Though *mob* is usually used to express some types of violence, flash mob has a positive connotation. To clarify, *flash mob* is a group of people who, being organized on a social platform, gather in a place at a particular time to express their outlooks through dance or other amusing activities with attractive costumes to grab the attention of the public. *Flash mob* acts not only for entertainment purposes but also for raising awareness of different cultural, social, or political concerns. The typography of this word in dictionary entries provides different expressions. In the Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries (2023), it is rendered as two distinct words, in the Cambridge Dictionary (2023) it is presented as a single word without any space or hyphen. Being inspired by the words like *mob*, *smartmob* was coined. *Flash mob* became famous when university students started to perform them as an important activity during orientations, rag days, or the last day. However, the surprising emergence of the words like *flash robbery* indicates a darker mode of usage. Some of the uses

in the media include the ‘Million Man Flash Mob’ (African-American people in Philadelphia in 2006); ‘Flash Mob Dance Party’ (New York City in 2009); ‘Flash Mob Wedding’ (Times Square in 2010). Table 6 presents some sentence examples of *flash mob* from WebCorp.

Table 6. Examples of Flash Mob from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

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- i. This Beethoven **flashmob** in a historic German city will remind you of the pure joy of music.
 - ii. This dramatic **flashmob** will at once make you feel small and entirely awestruck.
 - iii. The first **flash mobs** were created in Manhattan in 2003, by Bill Wasik, senior editor of Harper's Magazine.
 - iv. By the end of the night Dani who used to dance professionally and her friends surprised Jordan by making a choreographed **flashmobbed** dance!
 - v. Remember those **flashmobbing** that were popular enough before covid pandemic?
 - vi. You have been **flash mobbed**.
-

Flash mob has generally been used as a noun. It had not undergone any significant morphological process. The abovementioned *ed* or *ing* forms are single appearances on the WebCorp and to a certain extent a forced creation. Student participants used only the noun form *flash mob* in their all-over spoken sessions.

Facebook

Facebook is a website where people can show their information and communicate with friends, families, or other groups. It was founded by Mark Zuckerberg and his fellow mates in 2004 at Harvard University campus as a medium of communication among students and by 2006 it was made available to the world community and has been popularized as the world's largest social networking platform consisting of more than 3 billion of monthly active users in 2023 (Britannica, 2023, n.p.). This word is the combination of the two separate noun words namely *face* and *book* and the combined form also acts as a noun. The meaning of *Facebook* is coined by the symbolic meaning of *face* and *book*. Table 7 presents some sentence examples of *Facebook* from WebCorp.

Table 7. Examples of Facebook from WebCorp (1998- 2023)

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- i. We were not able to sign you up for **Facebook**.
 - ii. **Facebook** also helps you keep up with the latest news and current events around the world.
 - iii. I **facebooked** some photos of my cat.
 - iv. His future employer **Facebooked** him and decided to withdraw the job offer.
 - v. Tragedy struck our small town when the prom queen was **facebooked** at a party last night.
 - vi. I **facebooked** him and he told me where he lived on campus.
 - vii. **Facebooking** takes up a lot of my time.
 - viii. Research suggests that **Facebooking** can be both beneficial and detrimental for users' psychological well-being.
 - ix. Get the **facebookable** mug.
 - x. Johnson is too common to be **facebookable** because too many people share that name it is harder to find that person.
-

Facebook is used as a noun in the first two examples, the *ed* form is used in simple past and passive, whereas, the *ing* form works as a gerund. *Facebookable* is an adjective. Analyzing the examples, it can be said that *Facebook* has undergone various word formation processes and they are widely accepted. Rather than *facebookable* and *facebooked*, other forms of *Facebook* seem extensively handy in the spoken corpus.

Freelance

Freelance was created by combining *free* and *lance*. In Medieval times, the word meant lending oneself and his weapon to any activity. Today, it refers to someone who does specific work for different organizations. Freelancing is now prevailing in sectors such as coding, programming, web design, music, writing, and translating. In the modern day, the term can be used as an adjective, a verb, and an adverb, as well as the derivative noun *freelancer*. *Freelancer* is the derivative noun that is regularly used today, but the original term was *freelance*; as in, 'He is a *freelance*'. Table 8 presents some sentence examples of *freelance* from WebCorp.

Table 8. Examples of *freelance* from WebCorp (1998-2023)

- i. If you **freelance**, you do freelance work.
- ii. She has **freelanced** as a writer and researcher.
- iii. The illustrator used to be employed by us but is **freelancing** now.
- iv. She **freelanced** for years while her children were in school.
- v. And according to the same study, 53% of workers aged 18-22 are **freelancing**.
- vi. With the rise of the gig economy, people are talking about **freelancing** more than ever before.
- vii. **Freelancing** provides a lot of flexibility and control to the individual.
- viii. In fact, even most **freelancers** refer to themselves as "self-employed."
- ix. What do you think are the more '**freelancable**' technologies and skills?
- x. Having the luxury of **freelancable** career, I will do my best to fix this no-time issue.

In the above examples, *freelance*, *freelanced*, *freelancing* are verbs though the *ing* form also is used as a gerund. *Freelancers* is a noun. *Freelancable* is an adjective. It is mostly collocated with technologies, careers, and skills. The adjective form was not that frequent still it did not look like it was a forced creation. The spoken corpus produced the noun and verb forms recurrently.

Discussion

We used several online Bangladeshi newspapers, webpages, and *Facebook* timelines as a corpus to find out the actual use and frequency of the mentioned words. The findings of the corpus analysis divulged that in the Bangladeshi context, these words are simply written in Bangla letters as if they were Bangla words for example, *selfie* (সেলফি), *TikTok* (টিকটক). This can be a unique example of important lexical change in the paradigm of Bangla linguistics. Since the emergence of the word *email* (ইমেইল), Bangla linguists seem to have stopped creating meaning for technology-based new English words. These words are so popular in everyday spoken and online written languages that even if there were Bangla equivalent for them, they would not have been used by Bangladeshi speakers and writers.

Below is an example of the heading of a news article "Today is Selfie Day" (translated form) published in The Daily Star বাংলা on June 21, 2023, where *selfie* was deliberately transliterated into Bangla সেলফি without any second thought.

আজ সেলফি তোনার দিন

Figure 1. News article headline by Komol (2023)

Words like *Facebook* (ফেসবুক) and *facebooking* (ফেসবুকিং) both are frequently found in Bangla online newspapers in Bangla letters. *Freelancer* (ফ্রিল্যান্সার), *freelancing*

(ফ্রিল্যান্সিং) are also available as these sorts of jobs are very popular nowadays. The same result is seen for *unfriend* (আনফ্রেন্ড). Whenever the newly added connotation is used, *unfriend* is written or spoken instead of its Bangla equivalent. On the other hand, *influencer* seems to be a different case. It is an old word that has gained a new meaning thus, the old Bangla equivalent is generally used but the newly added meaning has a specific connotation. It means a celebrity spokesperson who recommends products or services on social media. Thus, while addressing a celebrity *influencer*, the English word *influencer* (ইনফ্লুয়েন্সার) is used on Facebook and webpages instead of the Bangla equivalent. To express the specified connotation *influencer* is added to some other base words like *social*, *urban*, and so on in such a way as if they were Bangla equivalents e.g., *social media influencer* (সামাজিক মাধ্যম ইনফ্লুয়েন্সার), *urban influencer* (শহুরে ইনফ্লুয়েন্সার), etc.

Cybersecurity is an interesting combination, where *cyber* is used in English but *security* is used in Bangla because there was no newly added meaning to *security*. The prefix *cyber* (সাইবার) does not have any Bangla equivalent. It is often compounded with existing established words like *space*, *punk*, *crime*, *criminal*, and *defense* which have well-known Bangla equivalents. Thus, *cyber* is used in English and the conventional words are used in Bangla for instance, *cybercriminal* (সাইবার দুর্ত্ত), *cybercrime* (সাইবার অপরাধ).

These words are social media-based technical terms. The study and analysis of such words motivate learners towards the word formation process, and the development of lexical and semantic change stimulates learners' creativity, keeps them updated, and certainly enriches their vocabulary. Thus, these words are becoming the constituent part of the modern English vocabulary. Without the knowledge of these trendy neologisms, learners can even face communication breakdowns because neologisms are not mere sensible signs of language rather they are the outputs of our conceptual system. Their social and cultural reference helps us to understand their usage. A new product or a new cultural encounter is expressed through neologisms. They confirm the current trends and the development of vocabulary development. Thus, the study of neologisms of a particular language helps us to learn about the cultural values and ways of thinking of the current world as well as to have clear ideas about the living styles or norms of that speech community (McDonald, 2005). As a result, studying and practicing neologisms can make classroom lessons more engaging and facilitating for students.

The findings of this study are similar to those of Zainal and Rahmat (2020) who found that university students in Malaysia recommended the referred online sites as prominent sources of exercising English vocabulary. The students stated their understanding of the usage of new words and their socio-cultural impact through social media. The post and comment sections are lively, interactive, and entertaining to use and comprehend online neologisms.

Analyzing the above-mentioned words, it can be said that modern online neologisms are an identity marker for anyone who uses the Internet. It is a creation of an identity that has made it such a modern sensation that not using these words may result in slower typing, social complexities and importantly being old fashioned.

CONCLUSION

This study explored several online neologisms that are frequent in Bangladeshi webpages and checked their actual usage on WebCorp and in recorded spoken corpus collected from the two public universities of Bangladesh. The results show that words like *selfie*, *cybercrime*, *tiktok*, *influncer*, *flashmob*, *Facebook*, *freelancer* are frequent as nouns and *unfriend* is frequent as verb in written as well as spoken corpus. The *ing* forms are usually used as gerunds in the WebCorp. Their verbs are mostly found in passive forms and rarely found in the past form. Among the adjective forms, *selfiable* and *facebookable* seem usable still they are rarely used. Though WebCorp mentions some of the adjective forms, they are rarely used in the spoken corpus which proves them to be forced creations and these are not usual communicative words. However, *selfie*, *cyber* and *influencer* make several compound nouns and most of them become common usage.

The key limitation of the present study is that the data was confined to only eight words. If we could arrange in-depth interview sessions with the individual young adults who regularly use these words or survey a good number of netizens along with the recorded spoken corpus, we could have gained more information regarding sociolinguistic attributes. However, as the prime objective of this study is to study neologisms that have already become everyday words and their usage in the Bangladeshi context, analyzing the eight words and checking them on WebCorp and in the spoken corpus provide quite a rich source of data.

This study leaves scope for further research on an in-depth interview with the netizens of Bangladesh to understand the sociolinguistic aspects of online neologisms along with the lexico-semantic analysis.

The analysis of online neologisms has implications for English language learners as well as teachers. In this age of globalization, the understanding of online neologisms can undoubtedly teach us about super-diversity, cultural blending and local functionalities.

This study is important to show that the creation of neologisms is modestly a reflection of advancement in culture or technology. It notifies that neither English nor Bangla language is static but rather an ever-growing work that is subject to change, additions, adjustments, and deletions. The invention of new things makes slang acceptable, again when new technologies emerge, new words are created to express them. Since a great number of netizens are young adults, who like shortened forms, trendy words, and new creations, neologism will make its way online every day. Thus, like other foreign language learners, it is rational that neologisms used in Bangladeshi learners' interactions will reflect new trends, innovations, and modern lifestyles in a global world. Consequently, the widely used neologisms discussed above are spectacularly linguistic creativity and not a catastrophe.

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