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THE ORIGIN, SEMANTICS AND FUNCTIONS OF BUZZWORDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: LINGUODIDACTIC ASPECT

The article focuses on methods for forming buzzwords and their functioning in modern English, illustrated with actual examples from 2025–2026 across different discourses. It deals with the notion of mediology – an interdisciplinary approach to the study of culture that pays specific attention to human symbolic activity and to innovation, especially as a medium of cultural transmission.

The work emphasises the central concept of mediology – buzzwords, in particular, the problem of their typology in modern English. The main typological principles of the classification of these lexical units are analysed and are based on the characteristic features inherent in each of the selected groups of buzzwords.

Modern society's communication operates across interconnected spheres – public, digital, and private. These spheres function as a complex, multi-levelled structure of social networks, deeply influencing both personal perception and mass media landscapes. In this regard, the following areas of usage are considered: formal, mass media and colloquial. The presented factual material demonstrates the dynamics of language development at the global-semantic, pragmatic, and cognitive levels, thereby clarifying usage in the English-language space. Thus, such an approach, on the one hand, contributes to the study of language evolution by reflecting changes in modern linguistic culture under the influence of various extralinguistic factors, such as computerisation and globalisation. On the other hand, the shift in the linguistic paradigm at the turn of the millennium leads to a change and expansion of the language's lexical structure. The need for a theoretical understanding of the constantly emerging material in the form of buzzwords arises.

Key words: linguodidactics, mediology, neologisms, buzzwords, typology and usage of buzzwords, compounding, abbreviation, borrowing.

The statement of the issue. The necessity of teaching foreign languages on a scientific basis, with close integration of linguistic and pedagogical aspects, was emphasised by many linguists. H. Palmer advanced this idea by introducing the term “principles of linguistic pedagogy” into scientific usage, while O. Jespersen promoted a natural and communicative approach. The evidence of this is the fact that key-teaching in modern education is focused on student-centred technology-enhanced learning (TEL) and skill-based learning, for example: “higher-ups”, “higher-order thinking”, “portfolio”, “discovery learning”, “hands on”, “chunking”, “flipped classroom”.

By the term “**buzzwords**” we mean words or expressions from a particular subject area that have become fashionable by being used a lot, especially on television and in the newspapers (e.g., “diversity” is the new buzzword in education) [2]. Modern trends in business, management, marketing, AI, IT, the economy, etc., have been reflected in the processes of formation and usage of buzzwords, representing a new branch of linguistics – mediology. It broadly indicates a wide-ranging method for analysing cultural transmission in society and across societies, a method which challenges the conventional idea that ‘technology is not culture’. The mediological method pays specific attention to the role of organisations and technical innovations, and the ways in which these can ensure the potency of cultural transmission – and thus the transformation of ideas into a civilisational worldview capable of sustained action [6].

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The analysis of relevant research. The theoretical foundations of neology – covering the definition, formation, classification, and translation of new lexical units – have been extensively investigated by both domestic and foreign scholars. Ukrainian researchers such as O. Dziubina, N. Ivanenko, O. Rebrii, M. Shutova, and Y. Zatsny et al. have focused on the mechanisms of word-creation, the typology of neologisms, their adaptation in Ukrainian and English discourse, as well as the challenges of translating new lexical items across languages. At the same time, prominent global experts, including D. Crystal and E. McKean, have examined the emergence of new words in English, their semantic shifts, corpus-based usage patterns, and their codification in modern lexicography. Together, these contributions provide a comprehensive view of how neologisms function across languages and contexts.

It should be noted that some scientists occasionally substitute the notion of neologism for buzzword. Neologisms are newly coined words, phrases, or usages that enter the language to describe new concepts. Buzzwords, in contrast, are jargon terms that are temporarily popular, often used in business to make speech sound more impressive or modern. While all buzzwords are initially neologisms, not all neologisms bear buzzwords.

The difference between these lexical units, in terms of definition and purpose, is that neologisms are specifically created to fill a vocabulary gap, often for new technologies or societal changes. Buzzwords often serve as trendy, vague stand-ins for entire knowledge domains, sometimes used to mask a lack of substantive meaning. The neologisms can become permanent additions to the language or fade away. Buzzwords are generally ephemeral; they gain high popularity at a specific moment and fade when the trend passes.

The purpose of the article is to provide practical usage of the functioning and meaning of buzzwords and their syntactic forms of formation, which cannot be found in modern dictionaries of common vocabulary in practical translation manuals based on the analysis of the spheres of communication. The thematic dictionaries limit the usage and descriptive options of buzzwords and their forms and constructions too much, considering them outside the situations of certain decoding situations (education of the younger generation, its education/eruditeness in various branches of knowledge, self-development and assistance in the formation of “I” self – confidence).

In addition, the article identifies and systematises ways of nominating buzzwords in modern English across certain communicative spheres and determines the main typological principles for classifying them. The influx of these words is evident in all languages worldwide.

The body of the research. Buzzword – a word or expression that is very often used, especially in public discussions because it represents popular opinions (“Listening to the people” – the buzzword among politicians) [2]. It could also be called “buzz phrase” or “loaded word”. The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines a buzzword as a slogan or a fashionable piece of jargon: a chic, fashionable, vogueish, trendy word à la mode. It can also become part of popular culture and daily life. With media platforms now operating across various channels, such as television, radio, print, and increasingly digital (especially with the rise of social media), a “buzzword” can catch on and spread swiftly worldwide [3].

The first known use of the buzzword was in 1946 by business students at Harvard University, who used it to improve their study results. Such language terms were collated and then became what is known today as “buzzwords” [3]. Buzzwords are newly formed words regularly used in business to gain attention, boost morale and describe cultural and social situations. Buzzwords often change over time to reflect trends in how people talk to one another [5] and what attributes are most desirable in any given sphere of communication. Some buzzwords are mainly used in social jargon and slang. Some buzzwords retain their true nominative meaning when used in the correct contexts, for example, AI. Buzzwords often originate in private communication [3].

It has been stated that oral or written discourse cannot function without buzzwords, as they serve as shorthand or internal shortcuts that make perfect sense to people familiar with the context [3]. However, a useful buzzword can become co-opted into colloquial speech and lose its

usefulness. Buzzwords also feature prominently in mass media, where they can result in a process which “privileges rhetoric over reality, producing policies that are ‘operationalised’ first and only ‘conceptualised’ at a later date”. It has been asserted that buzzwords do not simply appear; they are created by groups of people within a business to generate hype. Buzzwords are most closely associated with management and have become the vocabulary that is known as “management speak”, using a pompous or magisterial term or relating to a particular subject employed to impress those outside of the field of expertise [3].

Summing up various theoretical sources carefully examined in this article, we conclude that they originated as jargon, often used in corporations and academies to convey authority or efficiency. Having been popularised in the middle of the 20th century, they grew from nice terminology into “vogue” words to make communication sound more modern, innovative or influential. Therefore, the presented theoretical material can be illustrated in the following scheme (Fig. 1).

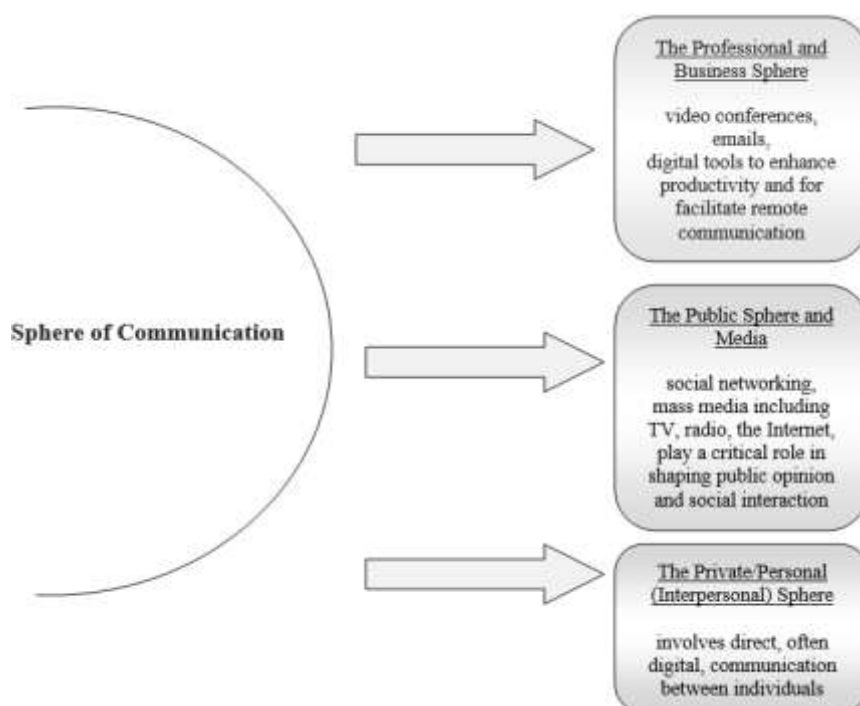


Fig. 1. Lexico-stylistic stratification of buzzwords

The scheme demonstrates that the buzzwords, used in the formal (bookish) sphere, are professional, academic and persuade or mask each of the substance acting fashionable substitutes for concrete information (“Regenerative Eating”, “Well-being Washing”). As for the mass media, they reflect current social, cultural or technoscientific terms (“*Neural Interfaces*” [4], “*Vibe Coding*” [7]). The colloquial sphere – humour and vivid images breaking the monotony of traditional language, increases brightness and emotional intensity of communication (“*Side Hustle*”, “*Loud Budgeting*”). As a result, they help to identify members within a specific professional group, changing the recipient’s perception from “alien” to “insider”.

Let us examine the presented information in more detail in a table 1.

Table 1

Spheres of functioning of buzzwords

Formal	Mass media	Colloquial
1	2	3
business, management, marketing, AI, IT, economics	print media, audio, visual and digital media, social networks, advertising and public media	slang, jargon, dialect

Continuation of Table 1

1	2	3
"The Great Resignation" (or "the Big Quit", "the Great Reshuffle") [8] "The Great Breakup", "The Great Disengagement", "The Great Rethink", "The Great Regret" [8] "The Great Lock-in" [7] "Privacy-Enhancing Tech" [4] "AI Hallucination" "The blind spot of bonuses" additional compensation, such as performance pay and equity, falls outside the law [8]	"Green Computing" – data centres and devices are adopting energy-efficient technologies to reduce environmental impact [4] "Digital Immune System" – combining automation, AI, and analytics, this system offers real-time defence against cyber threats [4] "Data Mesh" a decentralised approach to data architecture that improves data accessibility across organisations [4] "Hustle culture"	"flop" – refers to a person, a social media post, or an event that has failed to gain traction, lost popularity, or met expectations; in modern Internet slang, it is experiencing a new wave of popularity: "in my flop era" "to clock it" – to notice, recognise, or call out a hidden truth, motive, or vibe, usually with playful sass, like "I see what you're doing!" or "You got busted!" [7] "Aura farming" [7]

Taking into account the method of formation of buzzwords, the following classes are distinguished:

1) **Phonological** – a combination of sounds, interjections, exclamations, and slang. This group of vocabulary differs from the language's nominative words in its semantic, word-formation, and grammatical features. They are called "artificial" or "fictional". They have a constant sound syllable, which corresponds to the basic laws of sound combination of a particular language and the meaning motivated by this syllable [1]: "buzzword", "labubu", "rizz", "AI Slop", "delulu" ("Delulu is the solulu" – "delusion is the solution" suggests that having extreme self-confidence or unrealistic dreams can actually lead to success).

2) **Syntactic (word-formation, composition, compounding, morphological compounding, phraseology)** – created according to patterns existing in the language system: "layoffs" [8], "platform capitalism", "financial ghosting", "main character energy", "rage bait" [7].

Morphological buzzwords are combinations of conventionally fixed elements in the language system, which are the result of the action of various regular word-forming processes. Morphological buzzwords are characterised by absolute structure and formal novelty, since they are unique sound combinations and are perceived as inseparable, non-derivative, unmotivated units [1]: "looksmaxxing", "skillmaxxing", "to appify", "biohacker", "shopper-trainer", "geofencing", "eco-anxiety", "hyper-personalisation".

3) **New lexical meanings of the word:** Semantic buzzwords have varying degrees of "medianeological power". Lexical buzzwords (word-forming and borrowed) are new words formed on the basis of existing words and elements (compounds, affixal derivatives, abbreviation formations of all types, etc.) or borrowed from other languages. Lexical buzzwords usually appear in the language following the emergence of new realities to meet the needs in designating new things and concepts [1], for instance, modern AI tools for different purposes (from chatbots and image generators to voice services and platforms for developers): "Gemini", "Nano Banana", "Grok", "ElevenLabs", "Google AI Studio", "Copilot". The factual material also shows semantic buzzwords, when a word fixed by the dictionary acquires a new meaning: "remotes leaders", "zoom firings", "quiet luxury", "quiet quitting", "quiet firing", "quiet hiring" [8].

4) **Borrowing.** Among the borrowings, barbarisms stand out – words that have synonyms in the native language. Barbarisms are characterised by sound configurations that are not typical of English phonotactics and by a typical morphological articulation. Borrowings not only enrich the vocabulary with new units and lexical-semantic variants, but also cause the formation of new word-forming elements and models in the macrosystem of the English language, the emergence

of new mechanisms and means of semantic development [1]: “otrovert” [7] (Latin); “*Meta-verse*”/“*Metaverse*” (Greek/Latin) [4]; “*The Great Remorse*” [8], “*vibe revenue*” – French.

Basic models of word formation of buzzwords

According to their frequency of use, the formation of buzzwords is characterised by the high productivity of: 1) compounding (composition); 2) affixation; 3) conversion; 4) abbreviation; 5) blending, and 6) borrowing.

Compounding (composition). Composition – creation of new words from two or more bases, most often a model N + N or Adj + N: “*gig economy*”, “*analogue bag*”, “*clip farming*”, “*the power pendulum*” [8], “*doomscroll detox*”, “*Cloud-Native Applications*”, “*agentic engineering*”, “*vocal fry*”, “*Dead Internet Theory*”, “*biohack*”/“*biohacking*” [4]. There is an interesting example of compounding numerals – “6-7” or “six-seven”. Its meaning in the colloquial speech is as “so-so” or “maybe this, maybe that.” The term’s power lies in its vagueness [4].

Affixation – addition of suffixes or prefixes. The affixal method prevails in the creation of buzzwords themselves. The most popular suffixes are: -ify/-ification (“to *blandify*”), -maxxing (“*friction-maxxing*”), -er (“*zoomer*”, “*exfluencer*”), -ship (“*situationship*”), -ism (“*inheritourism*”, “*casperism*”). Among the most popular prefixes are en- (“*enshittification*” – “en” + “shit” + “ification”), bio- (“*biohacking*”), geo- (“*geobragging*”), eco- (“*ecosystem*” [5], “*eco-minimalism*”), hyper- (“*hyperautomation*”, “*hyperlocal*” [5]), multi- (“*Multi-Cloud Strategy*” [4]), para- (“*parasocial*” [7]).

Conversion – the transition of one part of a thing to another without changing the form (N → V or V → N): “to *photobomb*”, “to *umba*”, “to *hot-desk*”, “to *rizz up*”, “to *ghost*”, “to *shopify*”. In modern slang the word “to *slay*” (verb) means to do something exceptionally well, to look incredibly stylish, or to impress others with great success or confidence (“She *slayed* that performance”), as a noun – an instance of being exceptionally impressive, stylish, or successful (“That red carpet look was a total *slay*”), as an exclamation – used as approval, encouragement, or celebration (“You look gorgeous in that dress! *Slay!*”).

Abbreviations or initial abbreviations. Abbreviation is the process of reducing the number of phonemes and/or morphemes in words and word combinations existing in the language without changing their lexical and grammatical meaning, as a result of which a new nominative unit appears. Abbreviations are classified as irregular ways of creating buzzwords, but the number of such words formed in this way is constantly growing. This is explained by the fact that abbreviations strive to rationalize language and save linguistic effort: “TOBO” (Trading On Behalf Of), “OpenAI” (Open Artificial Intelligence), “AR” (Augmented Reality), “VR” (Virtual Reality), “MR” (Mixed Reality), “RPA” (Robotic Process Automation), “DeFi” (Decentralized Finance), “AIaaS” (AI-as-a-Service), “Gen AI” (Generative Artificial Intelligence), “AGI” (Artificial General Intelligence), “XR” (Extended Reality), “XAI” (Explainable AI) [4].

Blending – combining parts of two words: “*workation*” (“work” + “vacation”), “*fintech*” (“finance” + “technology”), “*glamping*” (“glamorous” + “camping”), “*infotainment*” (“information” + “entertainment”), “*hangry*” (“hungry” + “angry”), “*crowdsourcing*” (“crowd” + “outsourcing”), “*chatfishing*” (“chat” + “catfishing”), “*staycation*” (“stay” + “vacation”), “*Flexitarian*” (“flexible” + “vegetarian”), “*frenemy dynamics*” (“friend” + enemy), “*strategic co-opetition*” (“cooperation” + “competition”), “*climavore*” (“climate” + “carnivore/omnivore”).

Borrowing. One of the main sources of enrichment of the English language is borrowing from other languages. The main “suppliers” of buzzwords are Latin, Greek, French, and German. This was due to historical reasons. And although in the beginning of our century the tendency to borrow somewhat decreased in recent decades, the influence of foreign vocabulary has been felt, which is a source of terms and word-forming elements: Greek – “*sigma*”, “*AI Rizz*”; Latin – “*Status Quo*”, “*Neurodivergent Pride*”; French – “*work spouse*”, “*Proximity bias*”; German – “*Schadenfreude*”, “*Gedankenexperiment*”. There are also borrowings from other languages – Japanese, Spanish, etc.: “*Ikigai*” (Japanese), “*Aficionado*” (Spanish).

The factual material analysis demonstrates that language functions as a powerful instrument in shaping social reality, operating through two main approaches: language-in-use and socio-political methods. It has been established that buzzwords play a distinct yet

interconnected role in the development of English's lexical system, with their functioning determined by both linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

Conclusions. The emergence of buzzwords in contemporary English is driven by economic, technocratic, political, environmental, and social influences. The societal cult of beauty and youth has stimulated the creation of numerous lexical items related to human appearance, healthy lifestyles, age categories, medicine, and psychology. The English vocabulary is continually enriched, reflecting new communicative needs that foster the expansion of word-formation processes and the introduction of new derivational elements. The absence of strict boundaries between analysed spheres of communication, combined with the interaction of national variants of English, facilitates the realisation of the language's word-forming potential.

The analysed words primarily fulfil stylistic functions. They enhance textual expressiveness, generate immediate positive connotations, and signal group identity. As marked units of public and professional discourse, buzzwords combine simplicity with semantic richness, intensify emotional impact, and improve communicative efficiency. They compress complicated concepts into available linguistic forms, replicate existing cultural, social, and pedagogical trends, and often do not have direct equivalents in other languages, underscoring their unique role in modern English and globalised communication.

As for the colloquial (private) sphere of usage, the buzzwords are characterised by the following features in their formation: they are usually represented by monosyllabic and disyllabic words, some of them have affixational morphemes, and their figurative meanings are vividly evident.

Buzzwords function as linguistic markers of trendiness, professional jargon conveying expressiveness, intensity, irony, humour and satire. They attract attention to the participant, build in-group solidarity, simplify complex concepts, or confuse meaning, adding colour and emphasis to discourse. Buzzwords frequently employ irony, sarcasm, and satire to make content more entertaining, shareable, and engaging. As follows, buzzwords capture current public and private sentiment according to a given situation. They are marked by rapid spread and frequent repetition in colloquial communication. So, they create a friendly atmosphere among the companions or demonstrate a negative attitude toward what is happening.

The projected surge in lexical innovations within the English language for 2025–2026 has stimulated profound scholarly interest in how newly formed words reshape modern communication. While the emotive nature of human communication constantly drives the formation of buzzwords, AI systems still struggle to capture these affective nuances, which remain a primary challenge for natural language processing. Modern linguists are studying language to identify evolving patterns that assist bots, algorithms, large language models, and recommendation engines in enhancing natural language understanding, sentiment analysis, and the pragmatic complexities of digital communication. Linguistic shifts are reflected in the emergence of new terms, jargon, and slang within different types of discourse. Compiling and documenting these changes defines the perspectives of our research.

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ПОХОДЖЕННЯ, СЕМАНТИКА ТА ФУНКЦІЇ BUZZWORDS В АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ: ЛІНГВОДИДАКТИЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ

У пропонованій статті ми виходимо із положення про те, що викладання іноземних мов потребує науково-теоретичного підходу з тісною інтеграцією лінгвістичного та педагогічного аспектів. Робота присвячена дослідженню способів утворення *buzzwords* та їх функцій у сучасній англійській мові, спираючись на реальні приклади їх використання у 2025–2026 роках у різних дискурсах англійської мови. Зосереджено увагу на центральному понятті медіології – *buzzwords*, зокрема, на проблемі їх типології в сучасній англійській мові.

Під *buzzwords* розуміємо емоційно забарвлені слова, слова з підтекстом, що мають вагоме емоційно-соціальне та ідеологічне значення. Проаналізовано основні типологічні принципи класифікації цих лексичних одиниць, зазначено, що вона може ґрунтуватися на характерних ознаках, властивих кожній з виділених груп *buzzwords*.

Представлений фактичний матеріал демонструє динаміку розвитку мови на глобально-семантичному, прагматичному та когнітивному рівнях, що допомагає уточнити вживання мовних одиниць в англійськомовному просторі. Таким чином, дане дослідження, з одного боку, сприяє вивченню розвитку мови як способу відображення змін у сучасній лінгвістичній культурі під впливом різних екстралінгвістичних факторів, таких як комп'ютеризація та глобалізація. З іншого боку, зміна сучасної лінгвістичної парадигми призводить до зміни та розширення лексичної структури мови.

Ключові слова: лінгводидактика, медіологія, неологізми, *buzzwords*, типологія та використання *buzzwords*, словоскладання, аббревіатура, запозичення.

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