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**Exploring the Cognition of English Neologism  
among EFL Students: A Field Study on Translation  
Impact on Students Daily Practices**

**Amine AYADA<sup>1\*</sup> Hadja MENAD<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Khaldoun University Tiaret, (Algeria),  
aminose47@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret, (Algeria),  
menadtaline@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT**

This research study examines the proficiency of English as foreign language (EFL) students of using the English neologisms. Neologisms are newly created words that emerge in a language. The objective of this study is to assess the EFL students' competence in understanding and utilizing this linguistic novelty into their daily English communication and production. A second part of this research is also to investigate the impact of translation on students' correct practices of these words. The research methodology includes a mixed-methods approach, quantitative and qualitative approaches. The findings made it clear that the level of familiarity, comprehension and accurate usage of neologisms among Master One students can vary among them. However, when students are provided with translations of the neologisms, they immediately use them in the correct way. The study contributed mainly to our understanding of how EFL students adapt to the constant evolving language and show the constant impact of translation on EFL students as an asylum to understand what is unfamiliar to them.

**Keywords:** EFL students, English neologisms, proficiency, linguistic novelty, Translation impact, language evolution.

\*Corresponding author

## INTRODUCTION

Language, as a reflection of human thought and communication, experiences a continuous process of transformation and adaptation. It aims to keep pace with the ever-evolving world, accommodating new concepts, ideas and technologies. In this dynamic linguistic landscape, neologism emerges as a fascinating phenomenon. Neologisms whether through the creation of entirely new words and expressions or the innovative use of the existing ones, embody the spirit of linguistic innovation and it serves as triggers for the linguistic change. This research study aims to delve into the realm of neologism, exploring its multifaceted nature, examining its origins, functions, investigating its impact on language, culture and mainly daily communication. Furthermore, this study will also shed light on the vital role of translation in overcoming the challenges caused by neologisms. It will explore the complex task of neologism translation, analyzing the strategies and approaches used to the accurate and culturally relevant translations of this linguistic phenomenon. Exploring the complexities of neologism and its translation, we gain a better understanding of how language, society, culture and human expression interact.

Neologism has always been an interest for several linguists. They have provided valuable insights into its nature and impact, for instance, **Peter Newmark** (1988) who in his well-known book “A Textbook of Translation” tried to make a classification of neologisms and a comprehensive analysis of neologism in the context of translation. Similarly, **Algeo** (1991) in his book “Fifty Years among the New Words: A Dictionary of Neologisms”, where he discusses all what concern neologisms and its formation and their cultural significance. In addition, **Fischer** (1998), in his book “Lexical Change in Present-day English” delves into the lexical dynamics of neologism and its implications. Accordingly, numerous scholars have offered different processes of forming new words and neologisms. For example, in 1994, **Aitchison** published a book entitled “Words in the Mind: An Introduction to the Mental Lexicon”, he offered a linguistic guide of how words are created and formed. Then, it was developed by **Plag** (2003), in his book *Word Formation in English* and lastly, expanded by **Yule** in 2006, in his book “The Study of Language” and they all agreed on the famous seven techniques of word formation processes.

This huge importance into neologism raised questions to fill the research gap surrounding the ability of graduated students, mainly English language Master students at Tiaret University to use English neologisms correctly.

Neologisms which are newly created words or expression play a significant role in language use, particularly in the constant and rapid evolving English language. The correct usage of neologisms among Master's students includes but not limited to their familiarity, knowledge, awareness and application of neologisms in different linguistic contexts. At the end, the findings of this study will help give a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities linked with translation impact on neologism usage among Master one students, providing valuable insights for language educators and teachers in dealing and enhancing EFL students' proficiency in using neologisms.

## **2. Outlining of Neologism**

Neologism was defined by various linguists. The definitions may change in form but they have the same gist. Starting with the one of **Riggs** (1981, p.291) who stated that neologism is "a newly coined word, expression or usage". This means that any type or form of communication when it is newly used into a language and didn't exist before can be regarded as neologism. We also find the definition of **Peter Newmark** (1988) who described neologism as a newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense. **NewMark** added a new sense to neologism by covering the already existing words in a language however they have to acquire a new meaning this time to be considered as neologisms. **Algeo** (1991) on the other hand avowed that neologism is a form or the use of a form that is not recorded in general dictionaries. Knowing that dictionaries are the archive boxes for vocabularies, Algeo made it easy and clear for a word to be considered as neologism, it shouldn't be recorded in the dictionary prior its usage. **Fischer** (1998, p.03) stated "a neologism is a word which has lost its status of a nonce-formation but is still one which is considered new by the majority of the members of a speech community". We can understand that neologism according to **Fischer** has to be agreed upon by the mass of speakers in one language. The idea of **Fischer** reminds us of **Crystal** (2001) who also defined neologism "the foundation of new lexical items and acceptable within a speech community at a specific time." A more detailed explanation of the above was provided by **Qaisar** (2015, p.148) who said "neologism is a process of morphology through which new words are formed in a language and it serves the purpose of generating new words or forms of words in a language."

The aforementioned definitions have addressed neologisms considering it as an ongoing creation of new lexical units in a language that assist the enrichment of the linguistic landscape. Despite the attention given to this

subject, there has been a lack of consensus between theorists and translators on the proper use, handling and translation of neologisms. For this reason, **Retz** (2016) provided 5 basic theories that define neologisms from different perspectives:

1. Stylistic theory
2. Denotation theory
3. Structural theory
4. Etymological theory
5. Lexicographic theory

The previous definitions and information of linguists from different eras can be summarized into a general idea which is neologism is a newly coined word or expression that carries a new meaning, and was not mentioned in dictionaries and it should be perceived by speakers as a new lexical unit.

### **3. Types of Neologisms**

Since the translation of neologisms is very challenging as they often lack an established equivalent in the target language, the British linguist Newmark (1988, p.150) has provided a frame of reference for the translation of neologisms i.e., a classification of neologisms according to their degree of difficulty in translation as follow:

#### **3.1. Existing Lexical Item with New Sense**

This theory refers to the words or expressions that already exist in a language but have taken on a new meaning or a sense in a specific context or cultural setting in the process of translation. And it is divided into two categories.

##### **3.1.1. Words with New Sense**

This means to accurately convey the new sense of the word in the source language (SL) by using a word in the target language (TL) that is brief, functional, and descriptive. To illustrate, the word “Freedom” in English takes a new sense and it might be translated in the target language (TL) using a brief functional or a descriptive term such as “liberty” or “autonomy”. Another example is the word “Gay” from the French word “Gai” that used to mean light-hearted or carefree and now it means being homosexual.

##### **3.1.2. Collocations with New Sense**

Collocations are a combination of words that are commonly used together and have a specific meaning. Yet, have taken on a different sense through the processes of translation. Linguists have classified collocations into several types, the most common types are a verb + noun (e.g., take a break), adjective + noun (e.g., deep sleep), noun + noun (e.g., time management), adverb + noun (e.g., completely exhausted) and there are so many others as well.

### **3.2. New Forms**

#### **3.2.1. New Coinages**

According to **Newmark** (1988, p.142) coinages are a type of neologism, referring to words that have been newly created, typically to express a new concept or an idea. New coinages can be completely new or based on existing words with new meaning

#### **3.2.2. Derived Words**

According to **Newmark** (1988, p.143), this type of neologism involves creating new words by adding affixes (prefixes and suffixes) to existing words. This process can change the meaning or grammatical category of the word. For instance, the word “Cyber-espionage” (which means to spy on others by digital means) derived from the French word “espionage” (means to spy) by adding the English prefix “cyber” which was derived from the Greek word “Kybernan” (means to steer or to navigate).

#### **3.2.3. Abbreviations**

This form of neologism involves shortening a word or a phrase so as to create a new word. This can be done by removing letters, syllables or using initial letters. It is different from acronyms that are pronounced as a full word. (**Newmark**, 1988, p.145) For example: UN “United Nations”, ICC “International Criminal Court” and EU “European Union”.

#### **3.2.4. Collocations**

Cambridge Dictionary defines collocation as “A word or a phrase that is often used with another word or a phrase”. **Newmark** (1988, p.145) consider collocations as a form of neologism, which involves pairing two or more words to form a new expression. This can lead to a new sense that is distinct from the individual meanings of words. In translation, collocations can be challenging because the same combination of words from the source language (SL) may have a different meaning or does not even exist in the target language (TL). For example: SL: “Put forward” which means to suggest or to present. TL: Proposer (French) TL: أقدم (Arabic)

### **3.2.5. Eponyms Phrasal**

Merriam-Webster E-dictionary defines “eponym” as “a word derived from a person’s proper name”. Thus, it can be interfered from this that Eponyms phrasal neologisms would refer to combining the name of a person with a verb or an adjective to create a new word or expression. The person’s name acts as an adjective that modifies the verb or the adjective to create a new meaning. For instance: “*Newtonian physics*” (The law of motion and universal gravitation described by Isaac Newton). “Pascal’s triangle” (a mathematic concept named after **Blaise** Pascal). “*Shakespearean*” (refers to William Shakespeare writings).

### **3.2.6. Words Transferred**

According to Newmark (1988, p.147) this type of neologism refers to the phenomenon in which words from one language are borrowed into another language and given a new meaning in the target language (TL). Such as: “*Guru*”, a Sanskrit word meaning “teacher” or “expert”, which is used now in English for the same meaning or adding the meaning of Expert or a Master. The same case with the words: “*Karaoke*», a Japanese word which means “empty orchestra” and it becomes widely used in English nowadays. “*Hakuna Matata*”, a Swahili phrase which means “no worries”, and now it is used in English to say a stress-free or care-free attitude toward life.

### **3.2.7. Phrasal Words (New and old referents)**

Phrasal words with new and old referents neologisms occur when the meaning of the word changes over time and acquire a new referent (Newmark 1988, p. 147) To illustrate this, let’s take the word “E-mail” for instance, it was initially referred to a novel way of communicating electronically, but it became a standard way of communication. Similarly, the word “cloud” which originally referred to a visible mass of water droplets suspended in the atmosphere. Yet, now it refers to internet-based storage and computing services.

### **3.2.8. Acronyms (New and Old referents)**

Oxford e-dictionary defined acronyms as “a word formed from the first letters of the words that make up the name of something, for example ‘AIDS’ is an acronym for ‘Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome’ just like abbreviation, yet acronyms are pronounced as a full word. NewMark considered acronyms with new and old referents as a form of neologisms in translation (1988, p. 148). In this context, an acronym is considered to have a new referent if its meaning in the target language (TL) is different from the meaning of the source language (SL). Examples of acronyms with new and old

referent include the word “NATO” from “North Atlantic Treaty Organization”, which has the same meaning in English and other languages, and the word “NASA” from “National Aeronautics and Space Administration”.

### **3.2.9. Pseudo-neologisms**

In this form of neologism, Newmark (1988, p. 148) stated that they are words or expressions that appear to be new, but they are not actually new, often to make the text seem more up-to-date. Such as using a slang word from one language that has no equivalent in the target language (TL), but it is used anyway to give a text a certain flavor.

### **3.2.10. Internationalisms**

Newmark defined this type of neologisms as words or expressions (including abbreviations and acronyms) that are used in different languages but have a common origin. E.g., Bonjour, Ciao, la Vida loca, voilà, NASA, FBI, Radar.

## **4. Neologisms and Translation**

In translation, neologisms are the chief challenges that encounter professional translators, because of the difficulty of finding the exact equivalent in the target language (TL). Since the technological, cultural, and social life is constantly changing and evolving, the human language requires a newer vocabulary to fill in the gaps. According to the Global Language Monitor (GLM) in August 15<sup>th</sup> 2021, every 98 minutes a new word is created, around 14.7 words a day, and 5400 words a year. These recent neologisms may be created by several processes; they can be borrowed from other languages such as Spanish, e.g., the word “suave” which means smooth and charming. The Italian word “Cartoon”, the Arabic word “Safari” and the Sanskrit word “Avatar”.

The development era has witnessed an uncountable number of technological inventions and creations, naming the smart assistants including, “SIRI”, “CORTANA” and “ALEXA”. In addition, the scientific evolution of discovering new diseases like “Corona virus”, “Ebola”, new remedies, and medicines, for instance “Moderna”, “Pfizer” which are common vaccinations for Covid. Furthermore, the new ideas, slang and dialects that came from media and the social media such as “ghosting” meaning to suddenly cut off the contact with a person without any previous warning or explanation or the word “Situation-ship” which is widely used by the Gen Z, meaning a romantic relationship that is not considered to be formal or serious. All of these have added a considerable number of neologisms into the human language in

general, which make its translation from the source language (SL) to the Target language (TL) very arduous. (Newmark 1988; p.140)

The translation of neologisms requires the use of translation procedures, which have been tackled by many linguists and theorists, but they have referred to it using different terms. Newmark (1988, p.81) stated that “Translation procedures are used for sentences and smaller units of language” Whereas, **Molina** and **Amparo Hurtado** used the word “technique” to refer to the process of translating micro units. These procedures and techniques involve several steps and can vary depending on their context and goal of translation. Some of the techniques and procedures used to translate smaller units such as neologisms include: *Literal translation, explanation, loan translation, adaptation, Calque.*

The choice of technique will depend on several factors, including the context, the goals of translation, the target audience, the cultural and linguistic differences between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). In addition to the aforementioned procedures, there are several prominent linguists who have divided them into two categories in order to simplify its translation:

**a) Linguistic neologisms:** which are new words or phrases that are created within a language and that can emerge as a result of technological and cultural or to fill in the linguistic gap, like the neologism “smartphone”.

**b) Extra-linguistic neologisms:** are new ideas, concepts, or technologies that are not reflected in the existing language such as the word “FOMO” meaning fear of missing out, which is a concept related to social networks. The distinction between the linguistic neologisms and the extra-linguistic neologisms is categorizing new words or phrases based on their source or connection to the language. This distinction has been explored and utilized across many fields including sociolinguistics, lexicography, lexicology, and translation.

## **5. The Importance of Translating Neologisms**

The importance of translating neologisms lies in bridging the gap between languages and cultures, by conveying new meanings, ideas and concepts to a wider audience. Undeniably, the neologisms’ translation contributes to the growth and evolution of languages, it helps adding new words and expression into the target languages. Simultaneously, it ensures consistency and cohesion in terminology. By providing equivalent translations, it contributes to make the (TT) smoother and natural without feeling that it has been translated. Similarly, the translation of neologisms that arise from cultural



or social contexts helps in boosting the cultural exchange, allowing individuals from different linguistic backgrounds to interact and engage with cultures embedded in the neologisms. The translation of neologisms assists in keeping up with times, because language is constantly changing and evolving due to the emergence of neologisms that reflect the changing nature of culture society and technology. In brief, translating neologisms plays a vital role in facilitating communication, fostering cultural exchange and supporting language evolution and bridging the linguistic cultural and social gaps between languages and audiences.

Despite of the challenges encountered translating neologisms, translators, theorist, and linguists agree that neologisms have a vital role to expand the vocabulary of both source languages (SL) and target languages (TL). The accurate translation of neologisms helps the target audience in gaining a better understanding the cultural context of the source text. Neologisms can convey complex or specific meaning that cannot be fully expressed by using the existing words in a language. Thus, translating them accurately is crucial in preserving the intended meaning of the source text. Neologisms help in maintaining the style and tone of a text and it is very important to translate the source text accurately.

Overall, the importance of translating neologism lies in expanding the linguistic landscape of the language, reflecting the cultural change through the language, maintaining the style of the source text, and finally, it lies in preserving the source text's meaning. Translation is a transformative process that could adapt to different cultures and languages, yet still maintain the original idea or message.

## **6. The Challenges of Translating Neologisms**

Professional translators face several difficulties and challenges such as facing a difficulty in understanding the intended meaning of the source language (SL) neologisms and finding the accurate equivalents in the target language (TL).

Moreover, the dramatic increase in technical and technological neologisms due to the constant advancement and rapid evolution cannot be found in dictionaries because the neologism needs to pass by its life cycle that we discussed earlier. Another challenge in translating neologisms is conveying the cultural specify from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) such as the word “mansplaining”, meaning the explanation of something by a man, typically to a woman in a condescending and an overconfident manner, which is a feminist concept that may not be familiar to the non-English speaker cultures. In addition to those neologisms convey different registers and tones,

and it can be difficult to translate these nuances. E.g., the word “LOL” which means “Laughing Out Loud”, but it does not convey the informal and playful tone of the expression. Neologisms can have a significant impact on translation, they can challenge translators as they may not have the accurate equivalence in the target language (TL) and therefore they must be translated creatively to convey the exact same meaning. This can lead to difficulties in maintaining consistency and accuracy in translation, especially while witnessing the technological advancement and social changes so they become widely used by speakers. Additionally, neologisms reflect cultural differences, making it important for translators to have a deep understanding of both source and target cultures to accurately translate them. The overuse of neologisms may lead to confusion and fragmentation, so it is recommended to balance their use with the traditional vocabulary and language structures.

Neologisms are perhaps the non-literary and the professional translators’ biggest problem (Newmark, 1988, p. 140). This quote emphasizes the challenges caused by neologisms in translation and this shows that neologisms often represent new ideas or concepts that may lack equivalents in the target language. Newmark in his book “About Translation Multilingual Matters” (1991, p. 89) argues that when translating technical terms or neologisms, they are often transferred directly from the source language into the target language without considering the linguistic and situational context, maybe because they are often large and specialized terms that have no equivalents in the target language. The translation of neologisms of specific fields such as technology, medicine or architecture, requires great efforts from the translator to gain large knowledge and familiarity with different fields and domains and applying different creative and innovative translation tools, so as to be able to transmit the intended meaning of the neologism. In Newmark’s words “The particular difficulties of sci-tech translators lie in the SL neologisms; the lack of an appropriate technical term in the (TL), forcing the translator to use a descriptive term in its place”. The cultural and contextual adaptation can be a serious problem for translators, since the majority of neologisms are often tied to specific cultural and social contexts, which require from the translator understand, consider and to be familiar with these contexts, in order to convey and adapt the meaning of the neologism to fit the target audience culture, belief and society. The constant language evolution obliges the translator to be updated with current neologisms and must keep up with the linguistic constant change, to ensure the accurate and relevant translations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, neologisms can acquire a new sense. In simpler terms, the translators should be aware of these linguistic changes and be sure that their translations reflect the latest usage and meaning of the neologism. On the whole, translating neologisms cause various problems and challenges starting

from finding their equivalents in the target language, to being updated to the linguistic changes, and overcoming them requires linguistic expertise and cultural awareness and a deep understanding of the neologism's context and intended meaning. The creation of equivalent terms of neologisms can be a helpful strategy, when the translators may create new terms that accurately convey the meaning, considering that it fits the culture and belief of the target audience. Similarly, translators may adapt and borrow terms from other languages, if they have similar concept. This strategy can be useful when the neologism has similar terms in other languages so that the target language may be familiar with it.

### **7. The Effect of Neologism on Translation**

As mentioned before, the translation of neologisms represents a serious challenge for professional translators due to the lack of their equivalents in the target language. This latter has a positive impact on translation that it motivates the translators' creative and innovative translations which reflect the constant evolution and change in society and language. Moreover, the lack of neologisms' equivalents in the target language leads to the creation of new lexical units in the target language, eventually enriching the linguistic landscape of the target language. Also, the translation of neologisms bridges the cultural differences of both source and target languages, resulting in a better understanding and communication between both languages and cultures. Additionally, neologisms can help in clarifying the translation when used appropriately because they can provide a precise and a concise way to convey a new idea or a concept. Furthermore, the use of neologisms by translators, can add interest to the translation and make more appealing, as Newmark (1988, p.140) argues that "neologisms usually attract and please everyone". Cultural adaptation is needed when translating neologisms, because most of the time they are tied to a cultural or a social context that may cause offense to the target audience. For that reason, the translator should be aware of the cultural and social dimensions of the neologism so as to ensure the appropriate translation that fits the references of the target audience. Similarly, the tone and style of the neologism should be considered by the translators, because they often carry a specific tone and style. Thus, the translator should be aware of the situational and cultural factors associated to the neologism to accurately convey the desired tone and style of the translated neologism. Taking everything into consideration, the effect of neologism on translation can be both positive and negative, depending on the specific term and context in which it is used, and on the translator's prior knowledge of both source and target languages.

## **8. Field Study Methods and Materials:**

This study tried to investigate the ability of Master's students of the English language at the department of Tiaret University to use English neologisms correctly. Neologisms, which are newly created words that are not widely used yet, can be a challenge for both translators and language learners. English is known for being the current lingua franca, which allows this language to expand its linguistic landscape. As mentioned before, English is one of the languages that witness a large number of neologisms every year. It is important to understand how well EFL are able to interpret, rely on translation and use these new words appropriately.

To achieve this objective, two questionnaires were presented to a sample of Master One students specialized in two distinct fields (Linguistics and Didactics). The first questionnaire was quantitative and aimed to determine the students' level of familiarity with the concept of neologisms, their knowledge background in terms of translating them and the translation strategies they use when facing neologisms. The second questionnaire was qualitative and aimed to explore their knowledge, awareness of English neologisms, and to provide an insight on the students' ability to convey the meaning accurately in the target language (TL). For that reason, participants were asked to use a number of English neologism in sentences or at least give their meanings in Arabic or English. The scale to determine the success of this research study was **Familiarity** or **Unfamiliarity** with neologism. Another determining factor was providing the students who weren't familiar with neologism with the correct translation in Arabic. Afterwards, students were asked to employ the already given neologism into simple sentences (after becoming familiar with the meaning in Arabic). The rate of success was very high as most of the given sentences were correct and neologisms were also correctly employed.

The overall results of this study will provide insights into the abilities and challenges faced by Master's students in using neologisms in English and to identify any gaps in the knowledge of participants.

### **8.1. Findings**

**Table 1. First Questionnaires Data Collection**

Questions	Yes	No
<b>Q1:</b> Have you ever encountered neologisms (newly created words) in English that you were not familiar with?	83.6%	16.4%
<b>Q2:</b> Do you consult a dictionary when translating neologisms?	90.9%	9.1%
<b>Q3:</b> Is it a printed dictionary?	16.4%	83.6%
<b>Q4:</b> Have you ever encountered difficulties or challenges while translating neologisms?	70.9%	29.1%
<b>Q5:</b> Do you think that context plays a significant role in translating neologisms?	98.2%	1.8%
<b>Q6:</b> Have you ever encountered neologisms in Arabic that you were not familiar with?	69.1%	30.9%

**Source: From the researchers' Collected Data base (2023).**

### **8.1.1. Readings from table 1:**

- **Q1:** Based on the results, we can notice that the majority of participants (83.6%) have encountered neologisms in English that they were not familiar with, this shows that the use neologisms is quite common and may cause a challenge to EFL who are unfamiliar with them. (they depend on their mother language in understanding foreign neologisms)

- **Q2:** Based on the results of this question, the majority of respondents (90.9%) consult a dictionary to translate neologisms. This suggests that the use of dictionaries is a common strategy among students when they encounter English neologisms which are logic and a good step to start with, in finding the accurate translation. In addition, dictionaries can help to learn about the word's origins and history (etymology), which will make them more familiar with the word.

- **Q3:** The results of the third question, shows that the majority of students (83.6%) reported that they use the electronic dictionaries when translating neologisms, while only a small minority of students (16.4%) reported using printed dictionaries. This shows that the electronic dictionaries are more popular and accessible among the students compared to the printed dictionaries. It was an expectable result, due to the technological advancement, and also due to the convenience and ease of use of electronic dictionaries that can be accessed through smart phones and computers. And also because of the rapid process of searching the word's meaning just by typing it. In contrast to the printed one, it is difficult to search for a specific word, especially in larger dictionaries.

- **Q4:** The results show that the majority of students (70.9%) have already encountered difficulties in translating neologisms, while just a minority (29.1%) has not. These results indicate that the process of translating neologisms can be a challenging task for master one student, which may be due to the nature and novelty of neologisms in English language. The difficulties encountered could include not being able to understand the meaning of the neologism, not finding the appropriate equivalent in the target language (TL), or the lack of translation skills. The cultural differences of the English and Arabic can be another reason, because neologisms often emerge from cultural contexts and it could be difficult for EFL to grasp the meaning if the cultural meaning is not understood.

- **Q5:** Based on the results, we can tell that the overwhelming majority of students (54 out of 55) believe that context plays a vital role in translating neologisms. That show that master one students do consider the context in their translations of neologisms which help them to find the intended meaning and the appropriate equivalent, by consequence provide the accurate translation of the neologism. Concerning that one student who have reported that context is not a vital factor in translating neologisms, indicate his/her misinterpretation of the question or s/he have a different perspective on the role of context in translation.

- **Q6:** The results show that the majority of students (69.1%) have reported that they have already encountered Arabic neologisms that they were not familiar with. This indicates that neologisms are not unique to English and that the Arabic language also experiences the creation of new lexical units. It is worth noting that despite of the fact that Arabic is the mother language of the sample i.e., master one students of English language, they still face ambiguity in accordance to Arabic neologisms. It is possible that the minority of students (30.9%) who have reported that they have not encountered Arabic neologisms may not have come across them yet or they have not pay attention to them, because it is known that Arabic language is the richest language in the world in term of vocabulary and it is constantly evolving through the creation of new words.

### **8.1.2. Readings from table 2:**

**Table 2. Second Questionnaires Data Collection**

<b>Neologism</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Unfamiliar</b>
1-Drama-queen	23.61%	76.39 %
2-Crush	77.78%	22.22%
3-unfriend	55.56%	44.44%
4-Catfish	40.28%	59.72%
5-Lowkey	25.00%	75.00%

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6-lockdown	19.44%	80.56%
7-Self-quarantine	26.39%	73.61%
8-GOAT	47.22%	52.78%
9- Delta variant	13.89%	86.11%
10- Pandemic wave	26.39%	73.61%

**Source: From the researchers' Collected Data base (2023).**

This questionnaire aimed to investigate the participants' ability to understand neologisms prior translation and use them properly in English and Arabic. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended answers, put in a sentence task, provide the English or Arabic equivalent, explain the meaning or put in a coherent sentence.

The second part of this questionnaire provided FLL students the right translations of neologisms and asked them to re-use them coherently. The

**-Drama-queen:** is a colloquial expression, which means someone who exaggerates and overreacts to situations and it can be used in different contexts. It is often used in a humorous way to describe someone, man or a woman who is being overly dramatic about a situation. The results show that only 23.61% of students are familiar with the term, and the majority (76.39%) are unfamiliar with it, which indicate that most participants are not familiar with casual and informal contexts, and since the term is widely used in social media specifically, between young people, it means that the algorithm of the students' social media accounts are not set to expose English or American contents. Despite of the fact that 48 students (66.67%), tried to figure out the meaning of the neologism "drama-queen" by applying the word-for-word translation strategy, the answer they provided, namely "الدراما ملكة" was technically correct. However, the answer is still incorrect, because they did not provide the accurate translation and contextual meaning of the term. Consequently, they are unable to use this neologism correctly, in different contexts and situations.

The 23.61% of students indicate their familiarity with slang words and their language proficiency or they may simply have encountered the term in their daily conversation or through social media such as TikTok.

**- Crush:** is an existing lexical item with a new sense. In this case it is a word with a new sense. (See Types of neologism). The meaning of the word "crush" according to oxford dictionary online, is to press something so hard that it is damaged or injured, or loses its shape. However, younger people have given it a new sense, so it is used in a different context to describe the secret situation of having a romantic interest in someone. The results show the familiarity of 77.78% students with this neologism, which suggests their ability to use it correctly in its different English and Arabic contexts. Only 22.22% of

participants did not provide the right answer, probably because they have not encountered the term in their language learning experience or may not have paid attention to it if they did. It is important to note that the neologism “crush” is widely used in the target language, and it may be beneficial for English language students to learn its meaning and usage in order to enhance their language skills and cultural awareness. It was expected that the majority of participants will provide the right answer, since the word “crush” is used with its new meaning, in both varieties informal English and ADA.

- **Unfriend:** According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the verb “to unfriend” is to remove someone from a list of designated friends on a person’s social networking website. In other words, the term unfriend refers to the act of removing someone from one’s social media connections, particularly on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. The term has become widely used in casual conversations and online discussions and has even take various grammatical functions such as “unfriending” or “unfriendship” i.e., the state of no longer being friend on social media. The results shows that 55.56% of participants are familiar with the term “unfriend”, and a close percentage of 44.44% of participants are unfamiliar with it, which suggest that the neologism “unfriend” may be a recent term that is not widely known or used by participants or in the contexts which they interact with. Since the term “unfriend” is commonly used in social media or online contexts, explains why 55.56% of students were familiar with it.

- **Catfish:** The term “Catfish” is another existing lexical item with a new sense, i.e., an existing new word with a new sense. The word “catfish” is used to describe a type of fish that has whiskers around its mouth that resembles to cat’s whiskers. However, the term “catfish” has become a neologism and gain a new sense that is used in context of online dating and social media, “catfish” or “catfishing” refers to the act of creating a fake identity to deceive someone into a romantic or emotional relationship. The findings show that the majority of the surveyed participants (59.72%) are unfamiliar with the term “catfish”, while only 40.28% reported being familiar with it. This suggest that the majority of students are not surrounded by English language in their daily life by watching TV channels in English, and since the term “catfish” is social media word, it is possible that the content of their social media accounts is whether in Arabic or it is not trendy. The findings of this neologism were unexpected, due to the wide use of this term on social media and specially on TikTok which the most popular platform.

- **Lowkey:** or Low-key, according to Merriam-Webster E-dictionary as an adverb: in a way or a degree that is moderate or limited. The term “Lowkey” is an informal slang word that is often used to describe something that is done



in modest manner without drawing attention to it. For example, “I am lowkey exited for the weekend” meaning that the person is excited but not overly excessive about it. Based on the results, the dominant part of students (75%), are not familiar with the term “Lowkey” probably because it is a slang word that is not used in all regions of native English speakers, and it is possible that reason of their unfamiliarity with the term is its use in different contexts which may make it difficult to grab the exact meaning. While only 25% of students are familiar with it, and this suggest that the minority is exposed to English low variety and can use the term appropriately.

**-Lockdown:** refers to the state in which people are required to stay in their homes in order to prevent the spread of a disease. Lockdowns are imposed by the government authorities. The term gained a widespread during COVID-19 pandemic. 58 Based on the findings, only 19.44% of students are familiar with the neologism “Lockdown”, that suggest they have watched the news of COVID-19 in English language or they have read COVID-19 articles. While most of the participants (80.56%) reported not being familiar with the term which suggest that they know the word in French only since the term “Couvre feu” has been used in the Algerian society instead of “Lockdown”, or simply, they did not search for its meaning in English.

**- Self-quarantine:** according to Merriam Webster E-dictionary, is to refrain from any contact with other individuals for a period of time (such as two weeks) during the outbreak of a contagious disease usually by remaining in one's home and limiting contact with family members. The results demonstrate that less than half of the participants (26.39%) are familiar with the neologism “self-quarantine” which indicate their familiarity with the dynamic and evolving nature of language. Meanwhile, the dominant part of the participants (73.61%) has reported being unfamiliar with the neologism “self-quarantine” which highlight that their ignorance of the meaning of the word, since most of the students have given the French word “confinement” as a response.

**- G.O.A.T:** /gouʔ/, is an acronym that stands for “Greatest Of All Time”. It is used to describe someone who is considered to be the best at something in their field for instance, Messi in sport or Leonardo Da Vinci in painting. The term has become popular in recent years, particularly in social media. The findings show that 47.22% of the surveyed participants provided the write answer, which indicate their familiarity and appropriate use of the neologism “G.O.A.T” and they even gave examples such as Messi, to show their understanding of the term. On the other hand 52.78% of participants reported being unfamiliar with the term which indicates their limited exposure to popular and trendy culture, particularly in the world of sports and

entertainment. Some of the participants provided the answer of “ماعز” i.e., the animal goat and that suggest their unfamiliarity with acronyms.

- **Delta-Variant:** Delta variant (متحور دلتا in Arabic) is a highly contagious strain of COVID-19 that was first identified in India in December 2020. The term “Delta variant” appeared during the pandemic COVID-19 and it was coined by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2021 and became widely used all over the world. In the light of the results, most of students (86.11%) provided incorrect answers, which illustrate that their concern with COVID-19 and its news vanished which may have led to lack of interest in expanding their vocabulary related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Simultaneously, a small number of the participants (13.89%) are familiar with the term “Delta variant”. This may suggest that these individuals were highly engaged with the disease and followed all the instructions and they have built a strong foundation of knowledge related to COVID-19.

- **Pandemic wave:** also known as epidemic spike (in Arabic موجة وبائية) refers to the period of time when a contagious disease such as COVID-19, spreads rapidly and widely in a population. The term “Pandemic wave” appeared during the Spanish Flu in 1918, but it became widely used during the COVID-19 pandemic to describe the first wave in early 2020, the second wave in late 2020, and the other waves that have followed. According to the results (26.39%) are familiar with the neologism “pandemic wave”. This indicates that they may have a greater level of awareness and engagement with COVID-19. At the same time, more than half of the participants (73.61%) provided wrong answers. This suggests their lack of awareness around COVID-19 pandemic vocabulary.

## **9. Success Indicator**

We used this indicator as a determining factor so the outcomes of the questionnaires will have an effective role to attain the main objective of this study which is measuring the correct practices of neologism by EFL. The results have already indicated to us that most students were not familiar with the provided neologism. We provided them with the correct translations of these neologisms in Arabic. Afterwards, students were asked to employ the already given neologism into simple sentences (after becoming familiar with the meaning in Arabic) into English. The rate of success was very high as most of the given sentences were correct and neologisms were also correctly employed.

This shows that students found it hard to understand the meaning without translation. Translation had a direct impact on them by pushing them to use their cultural background to realize the direct sense of the Neologisms It is

clear that the translations we provided helped the students to easily understand the meaning of all the given neologism, and eventually use them in a coherent sentence in English Language.

Finally, we have to point out that the cooperation of the students had a high contribution to obtain these results. Through the results of the questionnaire analysis we conclude that translation can help EFL to discover and learn about the new words which leads to a better communication practices.

## **10. Conclusion**

At the end, in the final analysis, based on the findings of this qualitative questionnaire, some students are able to correctly identify and use English neologisms. Meanwhile, many struggle with understanding these newly-coined words. It has been found that factors such as language level, language background, language varieties and the exposure to different types of media can influence the ability of Master's students to understand and use neologisms correctly. EFL should improve their English language skills so that they become more fluent. It is worth noting that some students have a limited English language background since it was obvious in their attempts to translate some neologisms using word-for-word translation technique, such as the neologism "Catfish" that was understood and used in sentences as سمكة القَط. This indicates their unfamiliarity with various contexts of English language and their lack of comprehension which can influence their English language learning process.

This insufficient mastery of English which is the source of a great number of neologisms has affected their performance in understanding and using them correctly and appropriately. It is important to mention that the students' exposure to different types of social media platforms can also influence their language updating, understanding and fluency because many neologisms could come from memes that are found in social media such as TikTok , Instagram and twitter.

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*Amine AYADA*

*Hadja MENAD*

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