

Отримано: 24 вересня 2025 р.

Прорецензовано: 26 жовтня 2025 р.

Прийнято до друку: 1 листопада 2025 р.

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ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-8113-5523>DOI: [http://doi.org/10.25264/2519-2558-2025-27\(95\)-23-26](http://doi.org/10.25264/2519-2558-2025-27(95)-23-26)Seliverstova A. O. Language innovation in Italian mass media: thematic groups of neologisms and their functions. *Наукові записки Національного університету «Острозька академія» : серія «Філологія» : науковий журнал*. Острог : Вид-во НаУОА, 2025. Вип. 27(95). С. 23–26.

УДК: 811.131.1'373.43/.46:[316.774:070:004]

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**LANGUAGE INNOVATION IN ITALIAN MASS MEDIA:  
THEMATIC GROUPS OF NEOLOGISMS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS**

*This article is devoted to the study of linguistic innovation in the Italian mass media and the analysis of neologisms as an important indicator of the contemporary development of the Italian language. In recent decades, there has been an active upgrade of the lexical composition, which is due to both internal linguistic processes and external social, political, and technological factors. Particular attention is paid to the emergence of neologisms in media discourse, where new words become established in the mass consciousness and ensure the transmission of relevant concepts into the public sphere.*

*To systematize lexical innovations, a classification of neologisms into main thematic groups is proposed: these are political, economic, environmental, cultural-social, and technological ones. Each group reflects the specific communication needs arising in connection with contemporary social and cultural transformations. The reasons and mechanisms for the emergence of new words are considered, including borrowings from English, calques, semantic extensions, and internal word formation.*

*Particular attention is paid to trends in 2021–2025, when new terms reflecting the pandemic, digitalization, environmental challenges, and social and cultural changes are recorded in the media and dictionaries. The mechanisms for establishing neologisms in the media space and their role in shaping public consciousness are analyzed.*

*In conclusion, it is found that the Italian language demonstrates a high degree of adaptability to contemporary changes, actively integrating new concepts and maintaining a balance between borrowings and internal word formation mechanisms. The study provides a deeper understanding of the relationship between language and society, identifies trends in the development of media discourse, and outlines prospects for further linguistic innovations in Italian.*

**Keywords:** neologism, classification of neologisms, mass media, political neologisms, economic neologisms, technology, environmental neologisms, socio-cultural aspect, globalization.

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**МОВНА ІННОВАЦІЯ В ІТАЛІЙСЬКИХ МАС-МЕДІА:  
ТЕМАТИЧНІ ГРУПИ НЕОЛОГІЗМІВ ТА ЇХНІ ФУНКЦІЇ**

*Стаття присвячена дослідженню мовних інновацій в італійських засобах масової інформації та аналізу новотворів як важливого показника сучасного розвитку італійської мови. В останні десятиліття відбувається активне оновлення лексичного складу італійської мови, що зумовлено як внутрішніми мовними процесами, так і зовнішніми соціальними, політичними та технологічними чинниками. Особлива увага приділяється появі неологізмів у медійному дискурсі, де нові слова закріплюються в масовій свідомості та забезпечують передачу актуальних понять у публічну сферу.*

*Для систематизації лексичних інновацій пропонується класифікація неологізмів за основними тематичними групами: політичні, економічні, екологічні, культурно-соціальні та технологічні. Кожна група відображає специфічні комунікативні потреби, що виникають у зв'язку із сучасними соціальними та культурними трансформаціями.*

*Визначено причини та досліджено механізми появи нових слів, включаючи англомовні запозичення, кальки, семантичні розширення та внутрішні процеси словотворення. Особливу увагу приділено тенденціям 2021–2025 років, коли в ЗМІ та словниках фіксуються нові терміни, що окреслюють пандемію, цифровізацію, екологічні виклики та соціально-культурні зміни. Проаналізовано механізми закріплення неологізмів у медіапросторі та зазначена їхня роль у формуванні суспільної свідомості.*

*У дослідженні підкреслено, що італійська мова демонструє високий ступінь адаптивності до сучасних змін, активно інтегруючи нові поняття та підтримуючи баланс між запозиченнями та внутрішніми механізмами словотворення. Робота дає глибше розуміння взаємозв'язку мови та суспільства, визначає тенденції розвитку медійного дискурсу та окреслює перспективи подальших мовних інновацій в італійській мові.*

**Ключові слова:** неологізм, класифікація неологізмів, засоби масової інформації, політичні неологізми, економічні неологізми, технологія, екологічні неологізми, соціокультурний аспект, глобалізація.

In recent decades, the Italian language has undergone active processes of lexical renewal, driven by both internal and external factors. Outdated vocabulary is gradually being replaced by new formations that reflect current social realities. A significant portion of the neologisms appearing in Italian media discourse are of exogenous origin – they arise under the influence of globalization processes, intercultural exchange, and current communicative needs (Nedelcheva, 2024).

The mass media play a key role in popularizing new vocabulary, acting as a transmitter of socially significant concepts in the public sphere. It is through media channels that new words become established in the mass consciousness, acquiring stable use in everyday communication, journalism, political and expert discourse. These processes testify to the close connection between linguistic evolution and social transformations.

**The relevance** of the study is due to rapid changes in society and mass communications, which directly affect language. Italian media discourse reflects new social, political, technological, and cultural realities, accompanied by the emergence of a large number

of neologisms. Studying these linguistic innovations makes it possible to understand how language adapts to modern communication needs and to identify trends in its development in the context of globalization, digitalization, and environmental challenges.

**The aim of this work** is to identify and systematize neologisms in Italian media discourse, determine their functional role, and analyze trends in language development in recent years. Particular attention is paid to the classification of neologisms into thematic groups and the study of the mechanisms of their consolidation in the media space.

**The main tasks** of the article in order to achieve the aim set are:

1. To provide an overview of existing research on neologisms in the Italian language and media discourse.
2. To identify key thematic groups of neologisms.
3. To analyze the mechanisms of new word formation, including borrowing, calques, and internal word formation.
4. To examine trends in the development of neologisms in the media for the period 2021–2025.
5. To draw conclusions about the prospects for the development of the Italian language in the context of media discourse and global changes in society.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** In general, among foreign linguists who studied newly formed words there were: Maurizio Dardano e Pietro Trifone, Ornella Castellani Pollidori, Luca Serianni, Silvia Morgana, Paolo Zolli, Vittorio Coletti, Stefano Bartezzaghi and others (Adamo, 2010).

**Presentation of the main material.** Several main thematic groups of neologisms can be identified in the structure of Italian media discourse: **political**, **ecological (econeologisms)**, **economic**, **cultural-social**, and **technological (technoneologisms)**. Most of them are borrowings or calques from English, which is explained by the dominance of English-language content in the global information space. At the same time, a significant number of words are born within the Italian language to denote new concepts and ideas, which contributes to the expansion of vocabulary and the development of the language system.

Neologisms in media discourse perform not only a nominative function, but also a pragmatic one: they model a new linguistic picture of the world, form or transform public perceptions of certain phenomena, and often carry ideological or evaluative connotations. Thanks to the emergence of new lexemes, language actually “keeps up” with reality, adapting complex and new concepts to the needs of everyday communication. Analysis of neologisms in Italian media discourse enables a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of linguistic innovation and the interaction of language with social changes.

The reasons for distinguishing separate thematic categories of neologisms are diverse:

For example, **political neologisms** arise as a result of active political processes, international cooperation, reforms, elections, crises, and protest movements, which require the emergence of new terms to describe events, actions, and the roles of participants. The following examples can be attributed to this category: *sovranismo*, *post-verità*, *vaxxing*, *green pass*, *complotismo*, *no-vax*, *starmalismo*.

**Ecological neologisms** are formed under the influence of global climate initiatives, international agreements, the emergence of “green” technologies and startups, as well as media projects on eco-education, reflecting new approaches to environmental protection. Striking examples include such lexemes as: *eco-friendly*, *green economy*, *eco-tax*, *carbon neutral*, *ecocidio*, *eco-ansia*, *emissioni climalteranti*, *servizi ecosistemici*, *transizione verde*, *e-fuel*.

**Economic neologisms** are associated with the digitalization of society, the emergence of new methods of carrying out financial transactions, the growth of cryptocurrencies and online platforms, as well as the development of new professions and positions in the economy and business. In light of recent events, the following neologisms are actively appearing in the media: *fintech*, *blockchain*, *criptovaluta*, *smart contract*, *digitalizzazione*, *reshoring*, *smart working*, *gig economy*, *burnout*, *quiet quitting*, *work-life balance*.

**Cultural-social neologisms** appear as a result of the active influence of social networks, global trends, media and mass culture, fashion trends, memes, lifestyle, and gastronomic innovations, as well as language games in the media aimed at creativity and humor. Examples of such neologisms are given further: *boomer*, *cancel culture*, *ghostare*, *bodyshaming*, *infodemia*, *clickbait*, *binge-watching*, *spoilerare*, *virale*.

**Technological neologisms** reflect the rapid development of information technology, artificial intelligence, robotics, gadgets, online services, and digital platforms. They often overlap with the economic neology, but have a specific lexical focus, for example: *chatbot*, *smartworking*, *NFT*, *metaverso*, *AI-generato*, *smart device*, *techlash*.

i. Therefore, classifying neologisms into thematic groups not only makes it possible to systematize linguistic innovation, but also to trace the connection between linguistic processes and the dynamics of social, economic, environmental, and technological changes in contemporary Italian society.

ii. In addition, it is necessary to make a comparative analysis of thematic groups of neologisms in order to understand the trends in the development of newly formed vocabulary. An analysis of neologisms recorded in Italian media discourse in recent years shows that thematic groups are represented differently depending on the type of publication and target audience. Thus, political and economic neologisms are most actively used in news resources, analytical magazines, official statements, and reports. They serve to inform about events of national and international significance, as well as to introduce new concepts related to politics, finance, and management into the public consciousness.

iii. At the same time, cultural-social and technological neologisms are much more common in electronic media, blogs, social networks, and entertainment portals. Here, they play the role of markers of belonging to a particular community, serve as a means of self-expression, and create a special “language trend” that spreads quickly among young people.

iv. Econeologisms, in turn, occupy an intermediate position: they appear both in serious analytical publications on climate and energy and in the popular press, where their use is associated with coverage of everyday practices – from “green” technologies to eco-trends in lifestyle.

v. Based on the above, it can be argued that the thematic affiliation of neologisms largely determines the channels of their dissemination and the speed of their consolidation in the language: political and economic neologisms are most often established “top-down” through official sources, while cultural-social and technological neologisms spread “bottom-up” through mass culture and internet communication.

vi. It is also important to mention the active influence of external factors on thematic groups. The formation of thematic groups of neologisms is closely linked to current global and national events. Thus, political and economic neologisms appear as a result of crises, international agreements, elections, reforms, and integration processes, which requires the rapid linguistic formulation of new phenomena.

Environmental vocabulary has become more prevalent in media discourse thanks to climate summits, environmental disasters, and the intensification of international initiatives to protect the environment.

Technoneologisms, for example, as already stated, are largely driven by the dynamics of digitalization, the development of artificial intelligence, robotics, and the metaverse, which are forming new terms to describe previously non-existent realities. Many words from the “past” are disappearing from modern language or being “squeezed out” by newly formed terms.

Finally, cultural-social neologisms are most often associated with the transmission of global trends, memes, and phenomena of mass culture, where the Italian media act as intermediaries between the global information space and national culture. In this way, the emergence of names for new concepts and phenomena is characterized by the instantaneous appearance of a neologism to describe this concept.

In general, on the one hand, the emergence of neologisms in each group can be seen as a direct reflection of the processes that determine the vector of development of modern society. But on the other hand, it is also necessary to take into account intra-group differentiation. Each of the identified thematic groups has an internal structural division determined by the specifics of media discourse. Thus, political neologisms can be divided into terms related to domestic politics, international relations, protest movements, and new political roles.

Economic vocabulary is differentiated into financial, corporate, startup vocabulary, and the digital economy, where each subgroup has its own sources and channels of distribution. Economics itself is a rather “broad” science, in which it is possible and necessary to identify subgroups, or rather “sub-directions,” which subsequently become the reason for the emergence of such a large number of new terms.

Econologisms range from scientific and technical terms (“green” technologies, renewable energy) to social and everyday terms related to eco-friendly lifestyles and consumption. Today, environmental protection is on the agenda. This has led to the emergence of new words to describe trends and processes related to nature, as well as the active borrowing of lexemes from English.

The cultural and social group demonstrates the greatest flexibility and can include lexemes from fashion, gastronomy, music, cinema, internet memes, and subcultures, making it the most dynamic and subject to rapid change. Young people are rapidly switching to an online lifestyle and online communication, which is becoming the foundation for the formation of new vocabulary, which, in turn, is actively spreading across different spheres and semantic fields.

For their part, technological neologisms are divided into words related to artificial intelligence, digital platforms, virtual and augmented reality, gadgets, and online services. The digitalization of society is keeping pace with the times, and the lexical composition of the Italian language is not lagging behind, expanding and growing exponentially.

As for the internal structure of each group, it is worth noting that each one reflects not only the specifics of the thematic field, but also the diversity of social practices in which new lexemes function. However, it is also important to consider the trends and prospects for the development of neologisms in Italian media discourse.

For example, in 2021–2022, several key trends are clearly evident in Italian media discourse, reflecting both socio-cultural transformations and active processes of linguistic innovation. One of the most noticeable trends is the emergence of a significant number of neologisms related to the COVID pandemic, healthcare, and biotechnology. Newspapers such as *La Repubblica*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Il Sole 24 Ore*, and other widely read Italian dailies, as well as the new edition of the *Devoto-Oli 2022* dictionary, have recorded lexemes such as *covidico*, *long Covid*, *variante virale*, *proteina spike*, *postumano*, and *green pass*. These examples demonstrate that global medical events have a direct impact on language practice: new words serve as terminological designations, while also becoming established in both everyday speech and journalism (*La Repubblica*, 2021).

Another important direction is the active formation of new environmental and socio-political vocabulary. Terms such as *climaticida*, *emissioni zero*, *impatto zero*, *divario di genere*, and *democrazia elettronica* reflect growing public sensitivity to issues such as climate change, gender equality, and democratic practices. These lexemes not only name new phenomena, but also perform an ideological function, contributing to the formation of value orientations in public discourse (*La Repubblica*, 2021).

The integration of economic and technological terminology with environmental issues is also becoming a noticeable trend. In the publications of *Il Sole 24 Ore*, the key economic terms of recent years are *digitale* and *sostenibilità*, which are perceived as strategic development guidelines in the context of the implementation of the PNRR – Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza (2021). New phrases and calques are appearing in media discourse, for instance, *DOP economy*, *ipercapitalismo*, *recovery plan*, which reflect not only economic processes but also their interaction with global environmental and social issues (*Il Sole 24 Ore*, 2021).

With the arrival of 2023–2025, new waves of linguistic innovation are emerging, reflecting even more diverse social, cultural, and technological changes. First and foremost, these changes are driven by events taking place on the world stage: topics related to war and international politics are actively developing. The 2024 Zingarelli dictionary features neologisms related to the Russian-Ukrainian war, such as *oblast*, *balaclava*, *Holodomor*, *putiniano*, *infowar*, *guerra ibrida* etc. These words capture global political events and their reflection in the mass consciousness and media (Zingarelli, 2023). In addition to military specifics, there is a noticeable increase in topics related to anxiety, exaltation of reality, and virtuality: for example, Zingarelli 2024 notes lexemes such as *eco-ansia*, *iperrealtà*, *bro*, and others.

In addition to words related to politics, ecology, and technology, terms from culture, fashion, and social media are also appearing: *permacrisi*, *price cap*, *hype*, *smishing*, *streammare*, *shippare*, *prompting*, *Large Language Models*. Recently, there has been a trend toward mixing cultures and cultural concepts, leading to the emergence of new lexemes in the Italian language (Mondadori 2023).

There has also been active growth in neologisms related to identity, humor, and generational differences: words such as *amichettismo*, *pezzotto*, *campo largo*, *fuffa guru*, *sdigiunino*, recorded by Treccani 2024, show a strengthening of cultural-social vocabulary, often with evaluative or humorous connotations. Most of the newly formed vocabulary appears thanks to the younger generations, which is why many linguists classify some lexical units as slang and internet speech (*La Repubblica*, 2025).

Technological, digital, and media innovations continue to play an important role: humanity today cannot exist without artificial intelligence, internet, and messengers. This has given rise to technological neologisms to define terms such as *ChatGPT*, *cyberstalking*, *Intelligenza Artificiale Generativa*, *overtourism* (*sovraffollamento turistico*), and *prompting*, which reflect the influence of AI, digital platforms, and new media practices.

The prospects for the development of neologisms in the Italian media space are primarily linked to a sharp increase in the number of interdisciplinary linguistic innovations. In recent years, there has been a growing trend towards “mixed” neologisms covering several thematic fields at once: politics and technology (*democrazia elettronica*), economics and ecology (*eco-attivismo*, *impatto zero*), culture and technology (*autonomia differenziata*, *overtourism*).

At the same time, it is the media that remains the leading platform for testing new words: through the print press, online publications, and social networks, new vocabulary is rapidly spreading and becoming established in the mass consciousness, becoming an integral part of the vocabulary of the average person.

On the basis of the above, the following predictions can be made based on data from the last five years:

- in the near future, there will be an increase in interdisciplinary vocabulary. This means that there will be an increase in the number of neologisms that simultaneously reflect ecological, technological, political, and socio-cultural aspects. New types of word-constructions combining several spheres and linking different semantic fields will also come into vogue;
- thanks to the media, particularly social networks and online publications, new terms will spread faster than before and be more widely accepted, including in less formal contexts;
- with the development of new technologies, there will be an increase in the number of neologisms reflecting contemporary processes and digital transformation. This is especially true for topics such as artificial intelligence, automation, algorithms, digital ethics (*algoristica*), models such as LLM, new platforms, and communication formats;
- increased cultural and social variability: there will be even more neologisms related to identity, generational differences, memetics, youth slang, and images of modern life;
- in the long term and in an ideal scenario, there may also be a strengthening of the trend towards the creation of Italian equivalents, calques, or adaptations, which will contribute to the preservation of linguistic identity and reduce the dominance of English-language vocabulary in media discourse. But there is another side to the medal: English is the language of globalization and intercultural exchange, so quite often the appearance of new lexemes in Italian is nothing more than the borrowing of Anglicisms into the Romance language.

Thus, contemporary trends testify not only to the quantitative growth of neologisms, but also to the qualitative transformation of the lexical fund: Italian media discourse is increasingly producing vocabulary that lies at the intersection of politics, economics, culture, and technology, reflecting the complexity of a globalized society and its value orientations.

**Conclusions.** Contemporary Italian media discourse is one of the most productive areas for the formation and consolidation of neologisms. New vocabulary reflects the dynamics of social processes, political events, technological and cultural transformations, confirming the close relationship between language and society. The emergence and spread of neologisms demonstrates the ability of the Italian language to respond quickly to changes in the outside world, offering new means for understanding and naming current phenomena.

Classifying new formations by thematic groups allows us to systematize the material and identify key areas of linguistic innovation. Political, economic, environmental, and cultural-social neologisms reflect priority areas of public interest, while technological and media lexemes indicate the growing role of the digital environment in modern society. This distribution confirms not only the multifaceted nature of linguistic innovations, but also their functional conditioning.

Neologisms in the mass media perform a dual function: on the one hand, they serve to name new realities, and on the other, they shape values, set the framework for interpreting events and phenomena, and influence public consciousness. Thus, linguistic innovation is not merely a reflection, but also an active tool for constructing a modern picture of the world.

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