Word Formation Processes of Neologisms Found in Women Cosmetic Advertisements in Women Magazines

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Abstract

The main objectives of this study are to investigate the most frequently used processes in forming the neologisms in women cosmetic advertisements in the women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan*, and *Harper's Bazaar*, and to examine whether the most frequently used processes are shortening processes, as suggested by Lehrer (2007). New words were collected from women cosmetic advertisements in the magazines which were published from January 2010 to May 2011. New words were analyzed based on the classification of word formation processes suggested by Yule (2006), Plag (2003), and Aitchison (1994). There are 97 new words which were found for the study.

The results of the study showed that these new words can be categorized into six word formation processes which are compounding, affixation, blending, layering, abbreviation and multiple processes. The

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percentages of these processes are 40.21%, 34.02%, 17.53%, 3.09%, 2.06%, and 3.09% respectively. Among these processes, compounding and affixation are the most common processes used to form new words in women cosmetic advertisements in the magazines. The results of the study are inconsistent with the suggestion of Lehrer (2007) because compounding and affixation are the processes of making words longer than the original ones. There are two main reasons why these processes were frequently employed to form new words in these sources. The first reason is that these processes add a word or an affix which carries additional meaning to the original words so as to make them full of meaning and completely describe the qualification of the advertised products. The second reason is that new words created by these processes can be easily understood and recognized their meanings. The audiences can know immediately about the qualification of the advertised product from the appearance of the word itself.

บทคัดย่อ

จุดประสงค์หลักของงานวิจัยนี้คือ เพื่อศึกษาวิธีการสร้างคำใหม่ที่พบบ่อยมากที่สุดที่ใช้ในการสร้างคำในโฆษณาเครื่องสำอางผู้หญิงที่ตีพิมพ์ในนิตยสารผู้หญิงฉบับภาษาอังกฤษสามเล่มได้แก่ *แมร์รี่ แคลร์ คอสโมโพลิทัน* และ *ฮาร์เพอร์ส บาร์ซาร์* และเพื่อศึกษาว่าวิธีการสร้างคำใหม่ที่ใช้บ่อยมากที่สุดในการสร้างคำนี้เป็นวิธีการที่ทำให้คำใหม่ที่สร้างนั้นสั้นลงกว่าเดิม ตามที่ลีห์เรอร์ (2007) ได้แนะนำไว้หรือไม่ คำใหม่จะถูกเก็บรวบรวมจากโฆษณาเครื่องสำอางผู้หญิงที่ตีพิมพ์ในนิตยสารทั้งสามเล่มนี้ตั้งแต่เดือนมกราคม พ.ศ. 2553 จนถึงเดือนพฤษภาคม พ.ศ. 2554 และจะถูกวิเคราะห์ภายใต้กรอบทฤษฎีวิธีการสร้างคำใหม่ของ ยูล (2006) ปลัก (2003) และเอทชิสัน (1994) มีคำใหม่ที่พบในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ทั้งหมด 97 คำ

ผลการศึกษาพบว่ามีวิธีการสร้างคำใหม่ที่ใช้ในการสร้างคำทั้ง 97 คำนี้อยู่ 6 วิธี ได้แก่การประสมคำ (Compounding) การเติมส่วนของคำไว้ข้างหน้าหรือ

ข้างหลังคำหลัก (Affixation) การประสมบางส่วนของคำ (Blending) การเพิ่มความหมาย
ของคำ (Layering) การนำอักษรตัวแรกของคำต่าง ๆ มารวมกัน (Abbreviation) และ
การใช้หลาย ๆ วิธีรวมกัน (Multiple processes)   และพบว่าเปอร์เซนต์ของวิธีการ
ทั้ง 6 วิธีที่ใช้ในการสร้างคำ เป็นดังนี้ 40.21% 34.02%   17.53% 3.09% 2.06%
และ 3.09%   ตามลำดับ ในบรรดาวิธีการสร้างคำใหม่ทั้ง 6 วิธีนี้ การประสมคำ
(Compounding) และการเติมส่วนของคำไว้ข้างหน้าหรือข้างหลังคำหลัก (Affixation)
เป็นวิธีการที่ใช้บ่อยมากที่สุดในการสร้างคำในโฆษณาเครื่องสำอางผู้หญิง ซึ่งผล
จากการศึกษาครั้งนี้ไม่สอดคล้องกับคำแนะนำของลีห์เรอร์ (2007) เนื่องจากว่าวิธีการ
สร้างคำใหม่ทั้งสองวิธีนี้เป็นวิธีการสร้างคำที่ทำให้คำใหม่ยาวขึ้นกว่าคำเดิม มีสอง
เหตุผลหลัก ๆ ที่ทำให้ทั้งสองวิธีนี้ถูกใช้ในการสร้างคำใหม่มากที่สุด เหตุผลแรกคือ
วิธีการทั้งสองวิธีนี้เพิ่มคำหรือส่วนของคำที่มีความหมายเข้าไปในคำเดิม เพื่อทำ
ให้คำใหม่มีความหมายที่ครบถ้วน สามารถใช้บรรยายถึงคุณลักษณะของสินค้าที่
ถูกโฆษณาได้อย่างสมบูรณ์ เหตุผลที่สองคือ ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจความหมายของ
คำใหม่ที่สร้างขึ้นจากสองวิธีการนี้ได้อย่างง่ายดาย และสามารถรู้ถึงข้อมูลและ
คุณลักษณะของสินค้าที่ถูกโฆษณาได้ทันทีที่เห็นคำใหม่นี้ปรากฏอยู่ในโฆษณา

Rationale of the Study

New words are being invented all the time and also come up in
daily communication. As Stockwell and Minkova (2001: 3) pointed out, "new
words enter the language every day and words cease to be used". These
newly-formed words are often referred to as neologisms. According to
Crystal (2003), the most important reason why people create new words is
that there is no proper words in the language for what speakers want to say,
so they create new terms in order to name their invention, and to cover new
concepts, new materials, and abstract phenomena. The processes which are
used to form new words are called 'word formation processes'. There are
various types of word formation processes which can be used to create

neologisms; however, Lehrer (2007) stated that the frequent forms of neologisms tend to become shorter.

One of the commonest places for neologisms to occur is in advertisements because there is always a new product as well as a new invention for existing products frequently launched to the market. Consequently, advertisers have to create new words to name their products and inventions. This is because the advertisers try to get readers' attention by using novel and catchy words. As Lehrer (2007: 116) remarked, "thousands of advertisements use a novel clever word to catch audiences' attention and get them to read or listen to what is being presented". Another purpose of creating neologisms in advertisements is to reinforce a sense that the product itself is a great innovation. Woods (2006).

Given such advantages of neologisms in advertisements, a comprehensive study on word formation processes will be very helpful to novel copywriters and students in the advertising field to create interesting new words for their adverts when they are involved in this kind of work and also help students who learn English as a second/foreign language to have a good guess and gain a better understanding of unfamiliar new words when they encounter them in advertisements, magazines, or other written materials. As Yule (2006: 52) mentioned, "due to the pattern of word formation processes in our language, we can very quickly understand a new word in our language and accept the use of different forms of that new word".

Objectives of the Study

1) To investigate the most frequently used processes in forming the neologisms in women cosmetic advertisements in the women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan*, and *Harper's Bazaar*.

2) To examine whether the most frequently used processes are shortening processes, as suggested by Lehrer (2007).

Research Questions

1) What types of word formation processes of neologisms mostly occur in women cosmetic advertisements in the women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan*, and *Harper's Bazaar*?

2) Do these processes tend to shorten the form of neologisms, as suggested by Lehrer (2007)?

Review of Literature

1.　Definitions of Neologisms

According to Algeo (1991: 2), neologism was defined as "a form or the use of a form not recorded in general dictionaries. Fischer (1998: 3) also gave the same idea about the word 'neologism'. He emphasized that "words and lexicalized word combinations are considered new, if they have not been included in general dictionaries of Standard English". Similarly, Janssen (2002) said in his study (as cited in Levchenko, 2010: 13) "any word that does not occur in the morphological database derived from the dictionary because of its recentness is neologism".

Likewise, Crystal (2003: 132) shared his opinion to this point. He remarked that "registers of new words would start referring to it, and within five years or so it would have gathered enough written citations for it to be a serious candidate for inclusion in all the major dictionaries".

Thus, based on the definitions and information mentioned above, it can be concluded that neologism is a new word which is not included in dictionaries until it is widely used and found in many written works.

2. Word Formation Processes

One of the distinctive properties of human language is productivity, by which human has the ability to produce and understand new forms of language (Yule, 2006). The way which people use to create new words is called word formation process. A vast amount of the theories of word formation have been proposed by different linguists for decades. This study will focus on the theories of word formation processes suggested by three linguists: Yule (2006), Plag (2003), and Aitchison (1994). The theories of these three linguists are widely accepted and used as a framework in many studies. Therefore, this study will make use of these three main theories in analyzing data.

Yule (2006), Plag (2003), and Aitchison (1994) presented seven similar processes as follows:

Compounding: new words are created by combining two words together. The created words can be written with a space (e.g. beer bottle), with no separation (e.g. bookcase), and with a hyphen (e.g. sugar-free).

Affixation: new words are created by adding an affix to a word. The affix, which is put in the front of the word, is called *prefix* such as *unhappy* and *recover*. The affix, which is put at the end of the word, is called *suffix* such as *portable* and pur*ity*. Yule (2006) called this process differently from the others. He called this process 'derivation'.

Conversion: new words are created by changing the word class of an existing word. For example, the nouns *water*, *butter,* and *chair* are used as verbs: to *water* flowers, to *butter* the bread, and to *chair* the meeting.

Blending: new words are created by combining parts of two separate words such as *brunch* (<u>br</u>eakfast and l<u>unch</u>), *smog* (<u>sm</u>oke and f<u>og</u>), and *telecast* (<u>tele</u>vision and broad<u>cast</u>).

Abbreviations and acronyms: new words are created by taking the initial letters of a set of words. If the letters are pronounced individually, it is called an abbreviation such as *PC* (personal computer) and *CEO* (Chief executive officer). If the letters are pronounced as a word, it is called acronyms such as *PIN* (personal identification number) and *VAT* (value added tax). However, Yule (2006) used the term 'acronyms' instead of the term 'abbreviations' to refer to the words which are pronounced by saying each separate letter.

Clipping: the syllables of a word are cut off to create a shorter form such as *fax* (facsimile), *condo* (condominium), and *gas* (gasoline).

Borrowing: words are taken from other languages such as *alcohol* (from Arabic), *boss* (from Dutch), and *pizza* (from Italian).

Apart from these seven processes, Yule (2006) suggested three different processes as follows:

Coinage: words are totally invented such as *Kleenex, Teflon*, and *Xerox*.

Backformation: a part of a word of one type is deleted to form a word of another type. For example, the verbs *donate, typewrite*, and *opt* is formed from the nouns *donation, typewriter*, and *option* respectively.

Multiple processes: words are created by the operation of more than one process. For example, the term *deli* was a borrowed word *(delicatessen)* from German and then the syllables of the borrowed word was clipped.

Also, Aitchison (1994) introduced one different process, **layering**, which creates new words by assigning new meanings to an existing word in order to refer to new senses and new properties. For example, the word *lurk* is now used not only to refer to suspicious characters who may hide in the bushes but also someone who enters a chat room on the Internet and reads what other people are writing to each other but does not write any messages to them.

Research Methodology

1.   Data Collection

Based on the definitions of new words given by Algeo (1991), Fischer (1998), and Janssen (2002 cited in Levchenko, 2010: 13), new words used in the study are not general words contained in the English dictionaries: *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th edition, 2009 *and American Heritage Dictionary of English Language*, 4th edition, 2006. These two dictionaries were chosen because they present contemporary forms of both British and American English. Moreover, they are well known and accepted as international Standard English dictionaries.

New words which are the main data of the study were collected from women cosmetic advertisements in women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan,* and *Harper's Bazaar* which were published from January 2010 to May 2011. These magazines were chosen because they are the media in which advertisements are common feature and the readers are able to access widely and regularly. Moreover, the magazines published in this period are up-to-date issues when the study was conducted. To gain data for the study, all of the women cosmetic advertisements in the magazines were carefully observed and identified whether new words occur or not by

checking for their existence in the dictionaries mentioned above. If they are not found, they are considered as new words. Then they were selected for the study and analyzed for their types of word formation processes.

Figure 1: Women magazines: *Marie Claire and Cosmopolitan*

2.   **Data Analysis**

The selected words were analyzes for their types of word formation processes by following the three stages.

First, the new words were classified for their word formation processes based on the classification of Yule (2006), Plag (2003), and Aitchison (1994).

Second, after new words were categorized for their word formation processes, the total number of each type of word formation processes were counted and the percentage of each process were calculated by applying the following formula to find out the most frequent usage of particular types of word formation processes nowadays. The details of the total number and the percentage of each process were put in the table of finding.

Percentage of each type =   (A/B) x 100%

A = Total number of new words of each type of word formation processes

B = Total number of the whole new words in the advertisements in the magazines.

Third, after the most frequent processes of word formation were found the first two processes were selected to examine whether they are the process which shortens the old forms of words like clipping, backformation, abbreviations and acronyms.

Results of the Study

1.   Word Formation Processes of Neologisms in the Advertisements in the Magazines

After exploring all women cosmetic advertisements in three women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan*, and *Harper's Bazaar* which were published from January 2010 to May 2011, there are 97 new words found in the study. Based on the classifications of word formation processes which were proposed by Yule (2006), Plag (2003), and Aitchison (1994), these 97 new words were created by six word formation processes namely compounding, affixation, blending, layering, abbreviations, and multiple processes.

Compounding

New words are created by combining two words together. For example, in the word *longwear* in the context 'No other longwear lasts longer period', the adjective *long* was combined with the noun *wear*, resulting in a new noun *longwear*. From the context, the nominal compound *longwear* was

used to refer to the lipstick whose color can stay on your lip for many hours without bleeding and transferring. According to Plag (2003), there are two main types of compounds which were found in the study. They are nominal compounds and adjectival compounds. Nominal compounds can be divided into three subtypes which are noun and noun (e.g. lipperfection and flowerbomb), verb and noun (e.g. grow-lash and fade-defiance), and adjective and noun (e.g. longwear and deepshine). Adjectival compounds can be divided into two subtypes which are noun and adjective (e.g. colorsensational and photoready) and adjective and adjective (e.g. magicsmooth and sexysassy).

Affixation

New words are created by adding an affix to a word. For example, in the word *ultra-fine* in the context 'Ultra-fine powder for polished, seamless coverage', the prefix *ultra-* meaning 'an extreme degree' was added to the adjective base fine, resulting in the new adjective *ultra-fine*. From the context, this word was used to modify the noun *powder* so as to suggest that the powder can perfectly blend with your skin tone, and it can make your skin naturally bright and smooth. For the study, there are three main types of the addition of affixes to the words. The first type is the addition of a prefix such as <u>ultra</u>-fine and <u>micro</u>-flex. The second type is the addition of a suffix such as blush<u>able</u> and million<u>ize</u>. The last type is the addition of both prefix and suffix to the base word such as <u>ultra</u>-hydrat<u>ing</u> and <u>micro</u>-<u>sculpting</u>.

Blending

Parts of two separate words are combined together to create a single word. For instance, in the word *liplicious* in the context 'Liplicious Moisturizing Balm SPF 15', the beginning of the word *lipstick* was combined with the end of the word *delicious* so as to create a new blend *liplicious*. From the context, the new blend was used to refer to the lip balm having soft

colors with subtle fruity scents and flavors. For the study, there are four main types of the combination of words. The first type is the combination of the initial part of the first word and the final part of the second word such as *liplicious* (<u>lip</u>stick and de<u>licious</u>) and *cosmedicine* (<u>cosme</u>tic and me<u>dicine</u>). The second type is the combination of an entire word and the final part of the second word such as *purescreen* (<u>pure</u> and sun<u>screen</u>) and *sparitual* (<u>spa</u> and spi<u>ritual</u>). The third type is the combination of the initial part of the first word and an entire word such as *lipclick* (<u>lip</u>stick and <u>click</u>) and *botafirm* (<u>bota</u>nic and <u>firm</u>). The last type is the combination of the initial part of the first word and the initial part of the second word such as *mani-pedi* (<u>mani</u>cure and <u>pedi</u>cure).

Layering

An existing word is assigned a new meaning in order to refer to a new sense or a new property. For instance, the word *pearls* in the context 'new colorsensational pearls' was assigned a new meaning with regard to the color of the original reference. From the context, it was used to refer to soft color lipsticks that can make your lips shimmery and shiny. Another example is the word *butter* in the context 'Watch and feel Almond Body Butter sink into the skin'. With regard to the texture of butter, the word *butter* was used to refer to skin moisturizer which is richer than creams and lotions and suitable for dry skin.

Abbreviation

New words are formed from the initial letters of several words and these letters are individually pronounced. For example, the abbreviation *EPF* and *NYC* was abbreviated from *<u>E</u>nvironmental <u>P</u>rotection <u>F</u>actor* and *<u>N</u>ew <u>Y</u>ork <u>C</u>olor* respectively.

Multiple processes

Two or more word formation processes are employed to create a new word. For example, the term *GF-Complex* in the context 'New GF-Complex helps support cellular communication' resulted from the processes of abbreviation and compounding. *GF* was firstly abbreviated from <u>G</u>rowth <u>F</u>actors and then it was combined with the noun *complex*. From the context, the new term *GF-Complex* was used to refer to a new technology in a facial cream. Another example is the word *natureluxe* in the context 'New natureluxe silk foundaiton' resulted from the processes of borrowing and compounding. The word *luxe* first came to English as a borrowed word from French. Then, it was joined with the noun *nature*. From the context, the word *natureluxe* was used to modify the noun foundation in order to suggest that the foundation is made from natural ingredients and it can makes your face naturally brighter, smoother and elegant.

2. **The Most Frequent Word Formation Processes**

Among the six types of word formation processes, the study found that compounding is the most typical process used to form neologisms. There are 39 new words or 40.21% of the total number of new words in the advertisements in the magazines which were created by compounding process. The second most frequent type of word formation is affixation. There are 33 new words or 34.02% of the total number of new words undergone this process. Blending is the third common process which has 17 new words or 17.53% of the total amount of new words. Layering and multiple processes are not different. There are three neologisms were formed by layering and multiple processes which occupy 3.09% of the total new words. The less common process is abbreviation. There are two abbreviations or 2.06% of the total new words. Table 1 summarizes the total number of new words and the percentage of each type of word formation processes.

Types of word formation processes	Total number of new words	Percentage
1. Compounding	39	40%
2. Affixation	33	34%
3. Blending	17	18%
4. Layering	3	3%
5. Multiple processes	3	3%
6. Abbreviation	2	2%
Total	97	100%

Table 1 The total number and the percentage of each type of word formation processes

The results revealed that the first two types of word formation processes are compounding and affixation. They are the process of making new words longer than the original ones. Compounding creates neologisms by joining two or more separate words to form a single word, and affixation adds an affix to a word to create a new one.

In conclusion, the word formation processes which were typically used to create neologisms in women cosmetic advertisements in the women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan,* and *Harper's Bazaar* which were published from January 2010 to May 2011 are not shortening processes. Therefore, the results of the study are inconsistent with the suggestion of Lehrer (2007) that the frequent forms of new words tend to become shorter.

There are two main reasons why compounding and affixation processes were frequently used to create neologisms in women cosmetic advertisements in three women magazines: *Marie Claire*, *Cosmopolitan,* and *Harper's Bazaar*.

The first reason is that these processes complete the meaning of the original words which were used to advertise the good quality of products. In order to convince the audiences, the advertisements for women cosmetics usually present special characteristics, superb ingredients of the advertised products, and impressive results after using the product. Consequently, a word or an affix which carry additional meanings was added to the original words, resulting in new words which were full of meanings and ready to be used to convey complete messages. For example, the noun compound *longwear* resulted from the combination of the adjective *long* and the noun *wear*. It was used to present the special characteristic of lipstick and satisfactory result after using it. The word *longwear* suggested that the color of the lipstick is very long lasting. It will stay on your lip for many hours without bleeding and transferring, so your lips will stay beautiful all day long. Another example is the word *ultra-fine* which was created by the addition of the prefix *ultra-* meaning 'an extreme degree' to the adjective base *fine*, resulting in a new adjective *ultra-fine*. The new adjective was used to modify the noun *powder* to suggest that the powder can make your face look perfectly bright and smooth. In contrast, shortening processes like clipping, backformation, abbreviations and acronyms are the process of cutting out a part of a word—not the process of adding any word or affix which carries additional meaning to words. Thus, the words may not cover all verbal contents that the advertising wants to convey about the advertised product.

The second reason is that the meanings of the words formed by compounding and affixation processes can be clearly understood and easily recognized. We can know immediately about the qualification of the advertised product from the appearance of the word itself. As the examples previously given above, the meanings of the words *longwear* and *ultra-fine*,

which were created by compounding and affixation processes respectively can be easily understood and recognized. The words were used to clearly present the characteristics of the advertised products in order to let the audiences suddenly know the information about the product without doubt. As Wells, Burnett, and Moriarty (2006) suggested the message objectives in advertisements that the message should firstly create audiences' perception by attracting their attention and then it should establish audiences' cognition by leading them to understand the important features of the advertised products. New words created by compounding and affixation processes can achieve these two objectives. They can attract audiences' attention because they are new and they can also encourage the audiences' understanding about the advertised products. On the other hand, the meanings of the words which were created by shortening processes were hardly understood and recognized such as the abbreviations *NYC* and *EPF* which were found in the study. Without the presence of the full forms of these abbreviations in the advertisements, we may not know the meanings of the words and the massages that the advertising want to convey about the advertised products.

In summary, compounding and affixation processes are the most frequent processes used to create neologism in women cosmetic advertisements in three women magazines: *Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan,* and *Harper's Bazaar* which were published from January 2010 to May 2011. They are the processes of making the words longer than the original ones— not the processes of shortening the forms of the original words. They were often employed because new words formed by these processes contain complete messages which the advertising want to convey about the advertised products, and the meanings of the words can be easily and clearly understood.

Limitation and Recommendations

The conclusions drawn in this study are preliminary and need to be supported by further study to arrive at more definite conclusions regarding the word formation processes of neologisms in advertising.

The findings may be constrained by the following points, and further studies are recommended in order to ascertain this finding.

Due to time constraint in conducting the research, the data were collected in quite a short period. Thus, there were not a lot of samples of new words created by the processes of layering, abbreviation, and multiple processes found in the study. The data should be collected over a longer period in order to find more new words formed by these processes which can represent the most distinctive feature of new words used in women cosmetic advertisements in women magazines.

Furthermore, this study investigated word formation processes that were commonly used to form neologisms only in women cosmetic advertisements. Therefore, the new words and their word formation processes found in the study may not relate to those in other types of advertising such as the advertising for men cosmetics, fashion (i.e. clothing, footwear, bags and accessories), Technology (i.e. cars, notebooks and mobile phones), or food and beverage, etc. Thus, the study of word formation processes of new words in these sources should be conducted in order to see the differences and similarities in creating new words among these sources. This may be a useful guide to help copywriters to employ proper processes of word formation in creating appropriate words for a certain kind of advertisements.

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