
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Morphological Analysis of Philippine Ecological Neologisms

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| ABSTRACT

Using a qualitative-descriptive design in analyzing morphological processes and structures, the present study examines the ecological neologisms used in the Philippines. Ecological, environmental, or green neologisms are newly added lexicons used in daily ecological discourses. To appraise the study's aims to identify, define, analyze, and differentiate ecological neologisms from other neologisms as used in the Philippines, the study extracted its data from the Press Release Section website of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources from January 2022 to December 2022. A total of two hundred twenty-nine (229) articles were examined for this paper. Results reveal the presence of fourteen (14) ecological neologisms in the articles: ecological integrity, urban park, climate finance, green job, green city, ecoexpert, ecofrontliner, ecodefender, climate agenda, green assessment, ecoyouth, river ranger, ecohero, and ecoinspector. Further, these neologisms are borrowed from the English vocabulary and are all classified as nouns, and are mainly used to name individuals who engage in environmental initiatives in the Philippines. Moreover, these ecological neologisms are formed through compounding and blending, following the general rule of structuring words in Standard English.

| KEYWORDS

Ecological neologisms, morphology, word formation, word structure

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

In modern linguistics, newly-coined or invented words in discourses are called neologisms. Colic (2015) defines neologisms as lexicons utilized to term a newly spawned concept, idea, or phenomenon. They can also be existing words whose new meanings are added to suit vocabulary gaps in discourses. Neologisms are invented based on the needs of language users and the cultural changes that occur in a specific language community at a particular time. The existence of neologisms proves that language directly relates to its users as a social phenomenon and communication tool. This characteristic of language makes it dynamic. Hence, elucidating why some languages die while some evolve or develop over time. The way users utilize language, such that it fulfills a language experience, contributes significantly to why some words dwindle and others come to exist (Shahlee & Ahmad, 2022).

Today, discourses hugely revolve around topics and issues on the environment and its components. They have recently been put on a pedestal due to their undeniable importance in human survival. Ecological topics like environmental degradation, climate change, sustainability measures, ecological preservation, etc., are common discussion points in the Philippines. These topics usually circulate in the academe, social media, television, and even ordinary conversations, often resulting in the creation and utilization of flexible terminologies. Newly added lexicons in environmental discourses are known as ecological neologisms, green neologisms, or environmental neologisms. These neologisms commonly refer to individuals and activities that aim to protect the environment.

However, despite being widely used and acknowledged globally, only some studies about ecological neologisms exist. Guslyakova (2020) conducted a study that compared green neologisms present in the media spaces of Russia, Britain, and America and how

these neologisms play a role in environmental education. Similarly, Sandhya et al. (2020) analyzed ecological neologisms that emerged to denote several sustainable initiatives against environmental degradation in the United Kingdom.

With these two existing studies on ecological neologisms, it is deemed that there is a need to explore this field more. Studies from other lexicographic sources and locale may be conducted to explain the origin, structure, meaning, purpose, features, and usage of other ecological neologisms. Hence, following the gap in studying neologisms from a perspective of a specific discipline and the need for more studies on ecological neologisms, this present study will focus on the morphological analysis of ecological neologisms used in the Philippines.

In general, this study aims to identify and define ecological neologisms, determine their morphological (word formation) processes, and analyze their morphological structures. Consequently, from these objectives, the study will also differentiate the morphological features of ecological from non-ecological neologisms. It is hoped that through this study, an additional explanation of the features and patterns of neologisms may be deduced. Furthermore, the result of this study can be used in future research, specifically in comparison to the other existing studies on neologisms. Specifically, these objectives guided the study:

- a. Identify and define the ecological neologisms used;
- b. Determine their morphological (word formation) processes;
- c. Analyze the morphological structures of these neologisms; and,
- d. Differentiate the morphological features of ecological from non-ecological neologisms.

2. Literature Review

Relative to neologisms, Krishnamurthy (2019) developed a three-part neologism model that explains the nature of neologisms as they exist for mainstream use. The first component of this model is word formation. This component highlights morphemes and word formation processes like compounding, blending, affixation, coinage, and acronym. In morphology, morphemes, the smallest meaningful and indivisible units of a word, are commonly examined as they significantly describe how words are formed and structured. The second component is known as borrowing. Borrowing involves using and adopting words from a different language to another language community. Krishnamurthy emphasizes the need to borrow words to suffice communication gaps effectively. The lexical deviation is the last component of this model. This component involves the creation of a neologism using the existing rules of word formation.

Related to the study of neologisms is morphology. Morphology is a linguistic field that deals with the internal structure of a word. In morphology, morphemes, the smallest meaningful and indivisible units of a word, are commonly examined as they significantly describe how words are formed and structured. Brinton & Brinton (2010) described word formation as a dynamic system that may be classified into specific processes, each of which varies in terms of how morphemes were combined or altered to form words.

Accordingly, these morphological processes are the following: derivation, compounding, blending, reduplication, conversion, and clipping. The derivation is the addition of affixes or changing the form of the root to form new words. Examples of derivation involve the addition of prefixes and suffixes to change the semantic class of the word, like 'pre-' in prearrange, 'un-' in unafraid, and '-ship' in the word friendship. Compounding involves the combination of two free roots, like water and bed, to form waterbed. Blending, on the other hand, involves compounding and clipping like sm(oke) + (f)og to form smog. Reduplication involves the doubling of an initial syllable or words like in words mama and papa. Conversion is another process involving converting one part of speech to another. Clipping is dropping a part of a word to form another, like ad from advertisement and rehab from the word rehabilitation.

Another classification of the word-formation processes of new words was explained by Shahlee & Mustaffa (2019); these are compounding, reduplication, borrowing, affixation, conversion, abbreviation, clipping, blending, acronym, onomatopoeia, and antonomasia. This classification highlights five word-formation processes not present in the earlier categories proposed by Brinton & Brinton. Borrowing requires adopting words from one language without alterations in their pronunciation or orthography. Abbreviation entails using the shortened form instead of a whole word or phrase. On the other hand, an acronym uses the initials or first letters of each word. Onomatopoeia involves the use of sounds to indicate the word. Lastly, antonomasia happens when a new meaning is given to a personal name or a brand.

Several researchers have recently explored neologisms in terms of their morphological processes (Amiruddin, 2022; Kang, 2022; Asif, 2021; Akut, 2020). These researches explored neologisms from different categories, e.g., social media, magazines, gay language, and periods, i.e., the global pandemic. Studies by Amiruddin (2022), Kang (2022), and Akut (2020) analyzed neologisms that emerged during the coronavirus pandemic by focusing on their morphological structures and processes. These studies revealed that most of these words are nouns and verbs and were created using compounding, blending, and affixation. These

studies posit the importance of neologisms in communicating and understanding the world, given the period they were invented. These studies further prove the openness of language to create, invent, and alter words to suit a language experience and the users.

In the Philippines, the presence of neologisms in the lexical patterns of the 21st Century Philippine English writing was noted in the study of Dimaculangan & Gustilo (2017). The study utilized a newly built corpus from various Philippine institutions with over 400,000 words of printed texts written from 2005 to 2014. This existing study, however, only investigated neologisms from a broader perspective, thus mainly focusing only on how these words were defined in their respective contexts. Additionally, no studies on ecological neologisms were conducted in the Philippines to date. Hence, making the present study an exploration of how ecological neologisms are used in the context of the Philippines, following its unique discursive orientation.

3. Methodology

The primary aim of this paper is to identify and analyze the ecological neologisms in the Philippines. Hence, this paper employed a qualitative-descriptive design in examining its data. A textual analysis was also adopted to help the researcher define the words as they are used in the context of the corpus.

The data were extracted from the Press Release Section website of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) from January to December 2022. The DENR is a government agency in the Philippines primarily tasked to plan, draft, implement, mobilize, and evaluate the country's environmental and natural resources initiatives and policies. Meanwhile, its Press Release Section is an online repository of daily articles, statements, and updates published by the department that aim to apprise the public of the country's current ecological issues and discussions. Since the present study concerns the environment, the Press Release Section was deemed a viable source of these ecological neologisms. It will also provide the researcher with what these neologisms mean in the context of the Philippines. Precisely, a three-stage process flow was followed in carrying out the aims of this paper:

Process 1: Identification – This process involves the identification of the ecological neologisms from the two hundred twenty-nine (229) articles of the DENR's Press Release Section from January 2022-December 2022. After the words had been identified, their definitions were also formulated depending on how they were used in the articles. This process also checked and validated the ecological neologisms using credible dictionaries available on the internet: the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (Latest Edition, September 2022), the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, and the Environment Vocabulary Word List of Britannica Dictionary. These online dictionaries were chosen as references to cross-check the gathered data since they are known and accepted Standard English Dictionaries.

Process 2: Analysis- This process involves the morphological word-formation processes introduced by Brinton & Brinton (2010). The words were analyzed using the following processes: compounding, affixation, reduplication, blending, conversion, and clipping. Moreover, this process also involves the analysis of the morphological structure of the neologisms. Free and bound morphemes comprising ecological neologisms were also determined during this process.

Process 3: Differentiation- This process involves comparing and contrasting the ecological and non-ecological neologisms used in the Philippines by closely looking into their morphological processes and structures. The characteristics of non-ecological neologisms used in comparing were from the results of the studies of Cabelita & Gacrama (2020) and Dimaculangan & Gustilo (2017), all examining neologisms used in Philippine English from varying contexts and usage.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of identifying and analyzing the ecological neologisms from the corpus. Table 1 summarizes the ecological neologisms and their definitions revealed from the analysis.

Table 1: Ecological Neologisms Used in the Philippines

Ecological Neologism	Part of Speech	Definition
1. Ecological Integrity	Noun	This term means the Philippines' ability to sustain its natural resources, ecosystems, and biodiversity by promoting community sustainability initiatives.
2. Urban Park	Noun	This term refers to sustainable parks that are built in areas in the country that aim to provide opportunities for recreation while ensuring that environmental impacts are controlled.
3. Climate Finance	Noun	This term refers to the finances from both government and private institutions that seek to fund environmental initiatives in the Philippines.
4. Green Job	Noun	This term means jobs that help reduce the country's negative effects of climate change. These jobs eventually lead to sound environmental and economical sustainability.
5. Green City	Noun	This term refers to environmentally-friendly cities that are designed and built in the Philippines. These cities are known for providing bicycle lanes, urban parks, and effective waste management systems.
6. Ecoexpert	Noun	This term denotes individuals who are known experts in ecological studies, specifically urban ecosystems and their elements.
7. Ecofrontliner	Noun	This term denotes individuals who have been recognized for their environmental preservation and conservation initiatives.
8. Ecodefender	Noun	This term denotes individuals who have been recognized for their selfless contribution to the protection, specifically in safeguarding the environmental quality in the Philippines.
9. Climate Agenda	Noun	This term refers to the government's measures in addressing the issue on climate change in the Philippines.
10. Green Assessment	Noun	This term refers to a report conducted by the government in highly affected areas of typhoons and other natural calamities. This assessment aims to formulate recommendations for the reconstruction, restoration, and resilience of these identified areas.
11. Ecoyouth	Noun	This term denotes youths that help in disseminating environmental initiatives and campaigns in the country.
12. River Ranger	Noun	This term denotes individuals who help in the protection, rehabilitation, and conservation of any water areas in the Philippines.
13. Ecohero	Noun	This term refers to individuals from various parts of the country who have sacrificed their lives to promote and protect the Philippine environment.
14. Ecoinspector	Noun	This term refers to individuals who are tasked to monitor and assess the implementation of various environmental laws and protocols in the Philippines.

As shown, out of the two hundred twenty-nine (229) articles from the Press Release Section website of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Philippines from January 2022-December 2022, only fourteen (14) ecological neologisms emerged from the corpus. Interestingly, the number of neologisms is somewhat low, but it still proves that new terms are present and used in the daily ecological discourses in the Philippines. Following the neologism model of Krishnamurthy, these ecological neologisms used in the Philippines also borrowed words from the English language. The findings also reveal that all fourteen neologisms are classified as nouns based on their usage in the articles. The classification of these neologisms proves that nouns belong to open-class words in Standard English. Indeed, more words are added as nouns due to their relevance in daily conversations, academic or casual.

Moreover, despite being all classified as nouns, these ecological neologisms can be further grouped based on what they identify or mean. Half of these neologisms are used to name individuals, i.e., ecoexpert, ecofrontliner, ecodefender, ecoyouth, river ranger, ecohero, and ecoinspector. Five were used to name concepts, i.e., ecological integrity, green assessment, green job, climate finance,

and climate agenda. Two were used to name places, i.e., urban park and green city. These groups can elucidate a considerable vantage point regarding what environmental discussions usually focus on.

In context, the neologisms identified were primarily present in articles that depict resilience, accountability, volunteerism, stewardship, cooperation, and responsibility towards the environment. For example, the neologisms ecoexpert, ecofrontliner, and ecohero all name individuals for helping the government and communities towards ecological sustainability. These words usually reoccur in articles that recognize individuals and their notable contributions to the environment in the Philippines.

Similarly, the neologisms used to name concepts, and places also depict the need for terminologies contributing to ecological preservation and sustainability. Neologisms like climate finance, green assessment, and climate agenda precisely define measures formulated by the government that can aid in stopping the ongoing environmental problems experienced in the country today. Although verbs could have also been viable to express the directness of Filipino's responsibility and actions toward the environment, these findings can still imply and emphasize the significance of the roles given to Filipinos, especially in environmental discourses. As primary dwellers and consumers of natural resources, Filipinos are responsible for protecting them against degradation and destruction.

Table 2 presents the morphological processes undergone by the ecological neologisms following the word-formation process of Brinton & Brinton (2010).

Table 2: Morphological Processes of the Ecological Neologisms

Morphological Process	Ecological Neologisms
1. Compounding	Ecological Integrity- Ecological + Integrity Urban Park- Urban + Park Climate Finance- Climate + Finance Green Job- Green + Job Green City- Green + City Climate Agenda- Climate + Agenda Green Assessment- Green + Assessment River Ranger- River + Ranger
2. Blending	Ecofrontliner- (eco)system + frontliner Ecodefender- (eco)system + defender Ecoexpert- (eco)logy + expert Ecoyouth- (eco)system + youth Ecohero- (eco)system + hero Ecoinspector- (eco)system + inspector

As shown in Table 2, the study revealed compounding and blending as the common word-formation processes that make up ecological neologisms in the Philippines, following the concepts introduced by Brinton & Brinton (2010). Accordingly, compounds as a word-formation process involve combining two or more free roots, while blending generally involves compounding and clipping to form new words. An example of compounding is the ecological neologism green job which combines two free morphemes, namely green and job.

Interestingly, for neologisms under blending, it is evident that clipping the word ecosystem and combining it with other free morphemes are shared, i.e., (eco) system + frontliner, (eco) system + defender, (eco)logy + expert, (eco) system + youth, (eco) system + hero, and (eco) system + inspector. This result affirms the studies of Guslyokova & Vatkova (2020) and Sandyha et al. (2020) on ecological neologisms that stated compounding and blending, with roughly 70% combined, are the two most productive word-formation processes for ecological neologisms found in America and the United Kingdom.

Further, this result also posits a unique feature of Philippine ecological neologisms, i.e., Filipinos commonly use the morpheme or the clipped form 'eco-' in forming new terms about the environment. In standard English, 'eco-' could be identified as a prefix directly denoting or prescribing environment or ecology, but the present study identifies 'eco-' as a clipped form of ecology and ecosystem, following these two main reasons: a. the definition noted as they were analyzed in the articles, and, b. following the concept of Brinton & Brinton (2010) on blending, which serves as the framework for the morphological analyses conducted.

Moreover, Table 3 presents the morphological structures of ecological neologisms.

Table 3: Morphological Structures of the Ecological Neologisms

Ecological Neologism	Morphemes	
	Free	Bound
1. Ecological Integrity	ecolog(y)-, integrity	-cal
2. Urban Park	urban, park	
3. Climate Finance	climate, finance	
4. Green Job	green, job	
5. Green City	green, city	
6. Ecoexpert	eco-(system), expert	
7. Ecofrontliner	eco-(system), frontline	-r
8. Ecodefender	eco-(system), defend	-er
9. Climate Agenda	climate, agenda	
10. Green Assessment	green, assess	-ment
11. Ecoyouth	eco-(system), youth	
12. River ranger	river, range	-r
13. Ecohero	eco-(system), hero	
14. Ecoinspector	eco-(system), inspect	-or

As presented in Table 3, most ecological neologisms are classified as compound words. This result proves that the noted Philippine ecological neologisms are structured comprising meaningful units, following the process in standard English. This result is expected since the data revealed that all ecological neologisms were borrowed from existing English terms. Further, this result also affirms the neologism model of Krishnamurthy, which identified borrowing as a second component of neologisms.

In light of the differences between ecological from non-ecological neologisms, the ecological neologisms listed above were noted to have distinct characteristics compared to other non-ecological neologisms used in Philippine discourses.

Firstly, ecological neologisms used in the Philippines are borrowed from the English language, e.g., climate, agenda, finance, expert, etc. None of the noted ecological neologisms used terms from the Filipino language. This could be because environmental discourses usually occur in academic, formal, and scientific settings. Mostly named phenomena, concepts, and ideologies on the environment rooted in Western countries where environmental movements are more prevalent. Thus, the equivalence of these terms in the Philippine language is a factor in why English terms were borrowed.

Secondly, the ecological neologisms in the Philippines were also unique regarding the word-formation process. As stated, compounding and blending emerged as the most productive word-formation processes from the data. This result asserts the earlier studies of Guslyokova (2020) and Sandyha et al. (2020) on ecological neologisms, stating that compounding and blending are the two most productive word-formation processes for ecological neologisms. Further, this result affirms the findings of earlier studies conducted by Amiruddin (2022), Kang (2022), Asif (2021), and Akut (2020) where they found compounding, blending, and affixation as the central word-formation processes for neologisms.

Lastly, clipping the word ecosystem and ecology is a distinct feature of ecological neologisms. The study reveals the presence of 'eco-' to denote and prescribe the environment. This means the morpheme 'eco-' is usually combined with another free morpheme, like in 'eco-' + hero, 'eco-' + expert, etc., to form new words and concepts. This is a unique feature of ecological neologisms since, aside from only clipping the terms, they use the clipped word and blend them with other existing free morphemes to form ecological neologisms.

Based on the results of the present study, it can be ascertained that the fourteen ecological neologisms used in the Philippine setting postulate their presence and uniqueness in daily environmental discourses, following the general structure of the English vocabulary in terms of morphological process (word formation) and morphological structure (word structure).

5. Conclusion

The present study aimed to examine the ecological neologisms used in the Philippines using the concepts of morphology and word-formation processes of Brinton & Brinton (2010), the neologism model of Krishnamurthy (2010), and several conducted studies about neologisms in Philippine discourses. By looking into the two hundred twenty-nine articles of the Press Release Section of the DENR, the study revealed the presence of fourteen ecological neologisms, namely: ecological integrity, urban park, climate finance, green job, green city, ecoexpert, ecofrontliner, ecodefender, climate agenda, green assessment, ecoyouth, river ranger, ecohero, and ecoinspector. These neologisms are borrowed from the English vocabulary and are all nouns mostly invented to refer to individuals. Moreover, the study also found that compounding and blending are the two most productive word-formation processes in forming these neologisms, with compounding as the most prevalent word structure. These results elucidate the similarity of ecological neologisms in terms of word formation and structure with that of other words in the English vocabulary. These ecological neologisms, therefore, prove the English language's dynamism, especially in its ability to form new words depending on a specific language community's need. It has to be pointed out, however, that this study is limited only to written, published online articles that may have a different structure and conventions from actual spoken environmental discourses used in the Philippines. Considering this limitation, the study recommends an in-depth, authentic (spoken discourses), and broader corpus that may be adopted in further studying ecological neologisms. Studies from other lexicographic sources and locale may be examined to explain the origin, structure, meaning, purpose, features, and usage of ecological neologisms in the Philippines.

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