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TRANSLATING IT-RELATED NEOLOGISMS: LINGUISTIC FEATURES, CULTURAL CONTEXTS, AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

ПЕРЕКЛАД НЕОЛОГІЗМІВ У СФЕРІ ІТ: ЛІНГВІСТИЧНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ, КУЛЬТУРНИЙ КОНТЕКСТ ТА МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНІ ПІДХОДИ

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The rapid growth of digital technologies has led to a surge of IT-related neologisms – lexical innovations that mirror technological change and pose notable challenges for translators. These neologisms, marked by semantic novelty, cultural specificity, and contextual fluidity, demand more than direct translation. Their accurate rendering requires conceptual transfer, cultural adaptation, and pragmatic alignment. A major issue is the lack of a flexible methodology suited to the dynamic, interdisciplinary nature of digital discourse. Traditional translation theories often prove insufficient when applied to terms from AI, social media, or hacker culture. This article aims to define the scope and boundaries of translating neologisms within IT discourse by focusing on their functional, stylistic, and semiotic dimensions. The task is to determine how emerging lexical units – often informal, hybrid, or derived from interdisciplinary domainscha – llenge existing models of terminological translation.

Scholars such as O. Selivanova, Yu. Zatskyi, V. Karaban, Zh. Holikova, and I. Kozachenko provide valuable insight into neologism classification and transformation. R.A. Alonso, M. Mangura, E. Monti, M. Petrocchi, and M. Saberi explore terminological gaps and machine translation challenges. Informal sources like *The Jargon File* and E. Raymond's *The New Hacker's Dictionary* highlight how IT communities create metaphor-rich vocabulary tied to social identity.

This article analyzes the linguistic and cultural features of IT neologisms, stressing the need for strategies such as transcoding, calquing, and descriptive or approximate translation. Each strategy has its strengths and limitations. Therefore, the translator must consider the category of the word (term, proper noun, abbreviation, etc.), the communicative context, and the intended audience to ensure semantic accuracy, preserve stylistic and emotional connotations, and ensure clarity for Ukrainian-speaking recipients. The study also calls for better AI tools, dynamic termbases, and creating targeted training programs for translators to meet the needs of a fast-evolving digital landscape.

Key words: IT neologisms, technical translation, computer discourse, terminology adaptation, cultural context, translation strategies, digital communication.

Швидкий розвиток цифрових технологій зумовив стрімке зростання кількості неологізмів, пов'язаних з ІТ, – лексичних інновацій, які відображають технологічний прогрес і водночас становлять суттєвий виклик для фахових перекладачів. Такі неологізми, позначені семантичною новизною, культурною специфічністю та контекстуальною мінливістю, вимагають більше, ніж буквального перекладу. Їх адекватне відтворення передбачає концептуальне перенесення, культурну адаптацію та прагматичне узгодження. Основна проблема полягає у відсутності уніфікованої, гнучкої методології, здатної забезпечити ефективну міжмовну передачу в умовах динамічного, міждисциплінарного цифрового дискурсу. Традиційні теорії перекладознавства нерідко виявляються недостатніми щодо новоутворень, які виникають у таких сферах, як штучний інтелект, соціальні медіа та хакерська культура. Метою цієї статті є окреслення меж та особливостей перекладу неологізмів у межах ІТ-дискурсу з урахуванням їхніх функціональних, стилістичних і семіотичних характеристик. Завдання полягає у з'ясуванні, як нові лексичні одиниці – часто неформальні, гібридного походження або міждисциплінарного походження– ставлять під сумнів усталені моделі термінологічного перекладу.

Науковці, зокрема О. Селіванова, Ю. Зацький, В. Карабан, Ж. Голікова та І. Козаченко, пропонують важливі підходи до класифікації та трансформації неологізмів. Дослідження Р. А. Алонсо, М. Мангури, Е. Монті, М. Петроккі та М. Сабері висвітлюють термінологічні лакуни та виклики машинного перекладу. Неофіційні, однак культурно марковані джерела, як-от *The Jargon File* і *The New Hacker's Dictionary* Е. Реймонда, демонструють, як ІТ-спільноти формують метафоризовану лексику, що поєднує технічну змістовність із соціальною ідентичністю.

У статті здійснено лінгвокультурний аналіз ІТ-неологізмів з акцентом на необхідність застосування таких стратегій, як транскодування, калькування, описовий і наближений переклад. В дослідженні також наголошується на потребі вдосконалення ІТ-інструментів, розробки динамічних термінологічних баз і створення цільових програм професійної підготовки перекладачів для роботи в умовах стрімкої еволюції цифрового простору.

Ключові слова: ІТ-неологізми, технічний переклад, комп'ютерний дискурс, адаптація термінології, культурний контекст, стратегії перекладу, цифрова комунікація.

Problem statement. The rapid growth of digital technologies and the corresponding rise of IT-related neologisms constitute a complex linguistic phenomenon that challenges conventional approaches to terminology translation. These neologisms, while indispensable for precise and effective communication in digital environments, often exhibit semantic innovation, cultural specificity, and contextual fluidity. Consequently, their translation involves not only linguistic equivalence but also conceptual transfer, cultural adaptation, and pragmatic alignment. The core problem lies in the absence of a unified, adaptable methodology for translating such terms – one that ensures both technical accuracy and communicative clarity. Existing theoretical frameworks in translation studies frequently prove inadequate when applied to the fast-paced and interdisciplinary nature of digital discourse, while practical translation efforts often face inconsistencies, semantic ambiguity, and terminological gap in the target language, particularly in Ukrainian. Addressing these challenges is essential for the successful localization of IT content, the standardization of specialized vocabulary, and the facilitation of effective cross-cultural communication in the digital era. Therefore, this study holds both theoretical and practical significance at the intersection of translation studies, linguistics, and digital communication, contributing to scholarly understanding and the professional competence of translators operating in technology-driven linguistic domains.

The analysis of recent research and publications. Recent research reflects a growing academic interest in the dynamic nature of neologisms, particularly within the field of information technology and digital communication. Scholars such as O. Selivanova [13] and Yu. Zatskyi [1] offer theoretical insights into the classification, perception, and cognitive interpretation of neologisms in modern linguistics. Practical aspects of neologism formation and usage are discussed in works by V. Karaban and Zh. Holikova [2], who analyze translation strategies for English terminology, and I. Kozachenko [3], who investigates terminological transformations in the context of IT discourse. Research by Yu. Nizenko and N. Hryhorenko [5], as well as T. Luhova and M. Shutka [4], further highlights the complexities of translating compound and domain-specific neologisms from English into Ukrainian. From an international perspective, Alonso [6] and Mangura [8] explore terminological gaps and strategies in translating scientific neologisms, while Rehman et al. [11] examine the influence of digital environments on contemporary English vocabulary. Monti and Petrocchi [9], along with Saberi and Latifi [12], focus on the challenges of machine translation and terminology transfer in emerging IT contexts. The Jargon File [14] and E. Raymond's *The New Hacker's Dictionary* [10] offer cultural and linguistic perspectives on how informal digital communities contribute to the development of new lexical items. Collectively, these studies provide a comprehensive view of the theoretical foundations, linguistic characteristics, and translation methods associated with IT neologisms in both academic and professional communication.

Identification of previously unresolved aspects of the general problem addressed in this article. Despite numerous scholarly contributions to the study of neologisms and technical translation, several critical aspects remain insufficiently explored. Most existing research focuses on stable, well-established terminologies, whereas the highly dynamic and often informal nature of IT-related neologisms–particularly those emerging from hacker culture, social media, and artificial intelligence–requires a more nuanced and flexible approach. The cultural embeddedness and conceptual ambiguity of many IT terms, such as those recorded in *The Hacker's Dictionary*, are frequently overlooked in standardized translation models. Additionally, the interdisciplinary origins of digital neologisms–blending elements of linguistics, computer science, and sociology–continue to pose challenges for achieving accurate equivalents in Ukrainian. Another under-researched issue is the limited effectiveness of current machine translation tools and AI systems in processing emergent IT vocabulary, which often lacks sufficient context, precedent, or formal definition. This article, therefore, aims to address these unresolved aspects by offering a detailed linguistic and cultural analysis of IT-related neologisms, evaluating the applicability of existing translation strategies, and proposing methodological approaches that account for both terminological innovation and contextual relevance in contemporary Ukrainian translation practice.

Task setting. This article aims to define the scope and boundaries of translating neologisms within IT discourse by focusing on their functional, stylistic, and semiotic dimensions. The task is to determine how emerging lexical units – often informal, hybrid, or derived from interdisciplinary domains – challenge existing models of terminological translation. Rather than offering purely descriptive accounts, the study seeks to systematize the translation mechanisms best suited to handling the dynamic and culturally loaded nature of IT neologisms. The goal is to establish a more structured framework for assessing translation adequacy, particularly

in terms of maintaining semantic integrity, cultural specificity, and user accessibility. Additionally, the article proposes to identify under-researched areas in the field and to outline potential directions for practical and methodological refinement in the training of professional translators working with technical and digital content.

Presentation of the Main Findings. The rapid advancement of science and technology has led to the constant expansion of specialized vocabulary, giving rise to numerous neologisms. These newly coined terms emerge to describe innovative concepts, processes, and discoveries that were previously unknown. Scientific and technical neologisms are essential linguistic tools that ensure precise communication within expert communities and facilitate the dissemination of knowledge. Their formation is often influenced by borrowing, affixation, and abbreviation, reflecting the dynamic nature of language in the era of technological progress.

According to the *Collins Dictionary*, "a neologism is a new word or expression in a language, or a new meaning for an existing word or expression" [7].

Taking into account the diverse views of scholars on the concept of "neologism", O. Selivanova offers a comprehensive definition: a neologism is a word or compound that represents a novel or existing concept in a new context and is recognized as such by native speakers [13, p. 120].

Linguists propose four key criteria for defining neologisms: time, novelty, linguistic space, and linguistic consciousness. Based on these, neologisms are defined as words or expressions perceived as new by the speakers of a given language at a particular point in time due to their novelty in form and content.

Researcher Y. Zatskyi argues that defining neologisms merely as words or phrases coined to describe new phenomena is insufficient, as it does not cover all forms of linguistic innovation [1, pp. 121–122].

Neologism formation is a dynamic process reflecting the evolving relationship between language and society. Neologisms are not random occurrences but markers of social and technological development.

In modern English, the main mechanisms for forming neologisms include:

Derivation
Conversion
Semantic shift
Blending
Eponyms
Borrowing
Reduplication

Derivation involves creating new words by adding prefixes or suffixes. Productive prefixes include anti- (antivirus), de- (deactivate), re- (rewrite), non- (nonsmoker), un- (unhappy), dis- (disconnect), pre- (preview), and super- (supernatural) [4, p.24].

Conversion refers to a word changing its grammatical category without changing form. For example, the verb to email derives from the noun email, and host is now commonly used as a verb in addition to its original noun meaning.

Semantic shift occurs when existing words take on new meanings due to technological or cultural change. For instance, cloud now refers to online data storage rather than weather, and stream denotes the real-time delivery of digital content. Likewise, Google has become a verb, and swipe and troll have developed new digital-era meanings.

Blending creates new words from parts of two or more existing words. For example, smog (smoke + fog), brunch (breakfast + lunch), glamping (glamorous + camping), and malware (malicious + software) are widely used, especially in technology.

Borrowing involves adopting words from other languages. For instance, ballet entered English from French, retaining its form and cultural context.

Eponyms derive from names of people or places associated with an object, invention, or idea. Examples include diesel (Rudolf Diesel), sandwich (Earl of Sandwich), braille (Louis Braille), teddy bear (Theodore Roosevelt), and quixotic (from Don Quixote).

Reduplication involves repeating or modifying a word stem. Common in informal language, examples include *night-night*, *zigzag*, *flip-flop*, *wishy-washy*, *boo-boo*, and *go-go* [2, pp. 134–137].

Neologisms, as responses to societal, cultural, and technological change, are crucial for the growth and relevance of modern language. They manifest in various forms – derivatives, blends, borrowed words, or semantic shifts–and serve as indicators of how language adapts to users' evolving needs. As language evolves, neologisms create a bridge between tradition and innovation, enhancing communication in a constantly changing world. [2, p. 121].

As new technologies and applications continue to emerge, computer-related neologisms evolve rapidly. It is therefore essential for professionals working in the technology sector to stay informed about the latest terminology. Staying current with newly coined terms and expressions is crucial for IT specialists who seek to remain competitive and relevant in an ever-changing linguistic and technological landscape. [12, pp. 47–48].

One of the key functions of computer neologisms is their ability to convey complex ideas in a clear and concise manner. This is particularly important in the

tech industry, where constant innovation demands the swift and effective communication of new concepts, tools, and systems. [11, pp. 158–159].

However, computer neologisms can also pose challenges, especially for individuals outside the technology field. Many of these terms are adapted from existing words or concepts, but acquire new, often specialized meanings that may not be immediately clear to non-experts. As such, they can create barriers to understanding and contribute to miscommunication. [8, pp. 90–92].

Like other types of neologisms, computer-related neologisms have distinctive features that set them apart from general terminology. The following are some of the main characteristics:

Adaptation of existing words. Many neologisms in computing are formed by repurposing familiar words. For example, the word *stream*, originally referring to a flow of water, now describes the continuous transmission of digital content. This process involves semantic shift, where the original meaning is modified to fit the new technological context.

Acronyms and abbreviations. A significant portion of IT neologisms are acronyms or initialisms that become widely adopted, such as *RAM* (Random Access Memory), *USB* (Universal Serial Bus), and *IoT* (Internet of Things). These condensed forms often transition from technical jargon into everyday usage.

Technical jargon. Many computer neologisms consist of highly specialized terms that may be obscure to general audiences. For instance, *DevOps*–a blend of *development* and *operations* – refers to collaboration between software developers and IT staff. Another example, *rootkit*, denotes a set of software tools used to gain unauthorized access to a system.

Rapid evolution. The vocabulary of computer discourse is highly dynamic. New words and expressions are regularly introduced to describe emerging technologies, while existing ones frequently acquire new meanings as the technological environment changes.

Global spread. Computer neologisms often transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries. They are frequently formed using English terms and either retained in their original form or adapted into other languages, contributing to the global lexicon of digital communication.

Creativity and playfulness. Many neologisms in IT exhibit humor and creativity, reflecting the innovative and informal culture of the tech industry. Examples such as *glitch*, *crash*, or *spam* often carry metaphorical or vivid imagery that makes them memorable and expressive.

Conceptualization of abstract phenomena. Computer neologisms frequently help users grasp complex or abstract technical ideas. For example, *edge computing* refers to a decentralized model that processes data closer to the source, reducing latency and bandwidth usage. *Zero trust* is another term that encapsulates a cybersecurity strategy where no user or device is automatically trusted, regardless of location.

Interdisciplinary origin. Many IT neologisms arise from the intersection of multiple fields. For example, *quantum supremacy* combines concepts from quantum physics and computer science, denoting a quantum computer's ability to outperform classical computers. The term *digital footprint*, rooted in both information technology and social sciences, refers to the trail of data individuals leave online. Another example is *natural language processing (NLP)*, which merges computational linguistics and artificial intelligence to enable machines to interpret and generate human language. [3, pp. 90–91].

In addition, computer neologisms play a vital role in shaping the evolving language of the IT industry. They not only facilitate effective communication and reflect technological advancement, but also embody the interdisciplinary and dynamic nature of the digital era. At the same time, their complexity and novelty may hinder understanding for those unfamiliar with the field. Therefore, recognizing the key features of these neologisms – including their derivation from existing terms, reliance on acronyms, and continuous evolution–is essential for professionals aiming to navigate and contribute to the discourse of modern technology. [9, pp. 24–26].

The Hacker's Dictionary, commonly referred to as *The Jargon File*, is one of the most intriguing and comprehensive collections of IT-related neologisms. It not only defines technical terms but also provides valuable insights into the culture, humor, and creativity of the hacker and programmer communities. [14].

Originally developed in the 1970s, *The Hacker's Dictionary* began as a compilation of insider jargon used by programmers at Stanford University and MIT's AI Lab. Over time, it evolved into a collaborative effort aimed at documenting the distinctive language and linguistic innovation of hacker culture. In the early 1990s, Eric S. Raymond edited and expanded the project, eventually publishing it as *The New Hacker's Dictionary*. Despite its age, the dictionary remains a valuable resource for understanding the informal yet highly expressive vocabulary of the computing world. [14].

One of the dictionary's most notable features is its ability to capture the spontaneous creation of neologisms. Unlike formal IT glossaries or academic

terminologies, *The Hacker's Dictionary* reflects the way real people – programmers, developers, and hackers – talk about their work. Many of the terms included are humorous, metaphorical, or even sardonic, often revealing a deep understanding of both technology and human behavior. For example, placeholder names like *foo* and *bar*, the term *kluge* (a clumsy but functional workaround), or *bit rot* (the gradual degradation of software performance or relevance over time) illustrate how technical issues are described through creative and culturally embedded language. [14].

These neologisms are not merely amusing additions to the language – they serve important communicative functions. In the fast-paced world of software development, professionals require efficient ways to express complex ideas. Neologisms often condense multiple layers of meaning into a single, widely understood term. Consider the word *hack*: while the general public may associate it with illegal activity, in *The Hacker's Dictionary* it refers to a clever or unconventional solution to a problem. This semantic shift demonstrates how meaning evolves within specific communities, and how cultural context shapes interpretation. [10]

Moreover, *The Hacker's Dictionary* underscores the role of culture and community in language formation. The hacker subculture has long embraced wit, irony, and experimentation – values that are clearly reflected in its vocabulary. The dictionary frequently employs wordplay, puns, and humorous anecdotes to explain technical concepts, making it as much a cultural artifact as a linguistic resource. In doing so, it not only defines words but also documents the values, attitudes, and creative expressions of a distinct social group. In this way, it serves as a linguistic time capsule – preserving not just the terminology used by early computing pioneers, but also how they thought, interacted, and viewed their digital world. [10].

To summarize, *The Hacker's Dictionary* is far more than a repository of technical jargon. It offers a vibrant and often humorous portrayal of how language evolves in response to technological innovation and shifting social contexts. It illustrates how the hacker and programming communities have made significant contributions to the development of IT vocabulary, often through novel and unexpected means. For linguists and translators alike, it provides a compelling case study in how neologisms originate, spread, and eventually become part of our everyday digital lexicon. [10].

Translating neologisms is one of the most challenging tasks in the field of translation studies, requiring in-depth research, contextual awareness, and linguistic flexibility. IT-related neologisms, in particular, pose a unique challenge due to their rapid emergence, technical specificity, and frequent lack of established equivalents in the target language [6, p. 58].

According to Y. Nizenko and N. Hryhorenko [5, p. 17], the most suitable techniques for translating neologisms include:

the use of descriptive translation, interpretation, or explanation of the conceptual-logical meaning;

the search for a non-standard equivalent with comparable expressiveness.

Contemporary research literature identifies several principal methods for translating neologisms, especially in technical contexts [2, pp. 246–253].

These include:

Transcoding
Transliteration
Transcription
Mixed transcoding
Adaptive transcoding
Calquing (Loan translation)
Descriptive translation
Transplantation (direct inclusion)
Approximate translation
Equivalent translation

Transcoding is the process of rendering the sound and/or graphic form of a source-language word using the target language's alphabet. It is typically used when the target culture or scientific domain lacks a corresponding concept or established equivalent. As V. I. Karaban and Zh. A. Holikova note, transcoding is employed when no appropriate translation can be found, but the term must still be communicated [2, p. 250].

Transliteration – the transfer of graphic form, i.e., letter-to-letter conversion:

Michael is interested in programming and wants to become a senior developer. → *Майкл цікавиться програмуванням і хоче стати сеньйор-розробником.*

Here, *senior* is transliterated as *сеньйор*, maintaining recognizability within the IT context.

Transcription – the transfer of phonetic form into the target language alphabet:

google → *гугл*
bitcoin → *біткоїн*
hacker → *хакер*
driver → *драйвер*

Mixed transcoding – a combination of transcription and transliteration: *smartphone* → *смартфон*, *laptop* → *лептоп*, *streamer* → *стрімер*, *interface* → *інтерфейс*.

Adaptive transcoding – modifying the term to fit the grammatical or lexical norms of the target language: *Facebooker → Фейсбукер*, *YouTuber → Ютубер*, *gamer → геймер*, *domain → домен*.

Calquing (loan translation) consists of replicating a word's internal form by translating its components literally, preserving its semantic structure. This method is most appropriate when dealing with terms that have already become conceptually familiar:

chain reaction → ланцюгова реакція brainstorm → мозковий штурм blacklist → чорний список.

Descriptive translation involves explaining the meaning of a term using a phrase or sentence in the target language. Though informative, this method can result in verbosity, making it less suitable for contexts requiring terminological precision:

burning → процес запису даних на компакт-диск; business application → програмне забезпечення для ведення комерційної діяльності; crossfade → поступовий перехід між двома аудіофрагментами; deluxe → розширена версія програмного продукту з додатковими функціями.

Transplantation (direct inclusion) refers to using the original term unchanged in the target text. This approach is increasingly common when none of the previous methods can fully convey the meaning or when the original form is already widely recognized:

You need to enable Bluetooth on your device.→ Тобі треба увімкнути Bluetooth на твоєму пристрої. She's been using ChatGPT for content creation. → Вона використовує ChatGPT для створення контенту. Please upload the files to the cloud.→ Будь ласка, завантаж файли в cloud.

Approximate translation is defined by Y. Nizenko and N. Hryhorenko [5, pp. 19] as "the use of a target-language grammatical or lexical unit that partially corresponds to the source-language equivalent in a given context", while it may not retain all nuances, it conveys the core meaning: *cloud computing → хмарні технології* (emphasis on the general system, not computing); *cookie → куки / файл cookie* (function-based explanation, not literal «печиво») *frontend / backend → клієнтська частина / серверна частина* (functional equivalents); *bug → помилка* (conveys the error, not the metaphor of an "insect"); *sandbox → тестове середовище* (meaning preserved, metaphor lost).

I. Kozachenko notes that although approximate translation may not meet all linguistic expectations, it remains a viable strategy to preserve core semantics when full equivalence is unavailable [3, pp. 92–97].

10. Equivalent translation is used when there is a precise match between the source and target terms. Despite limited full equivalents in Ukrainian, this method remains common in technical contexts:

drive → дисковод
error → помилка
keyboard → клавіатура
mode → режим
network → мережа
pitch → висота (звуку)

The analysis of translation strategies – ranging from transcoding and calquing to descriptive and approximate methods – demonstrates that each neologism must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account its structure, degree of specialization, cultural resonance, and functional role in communication.

Conclusion and prospects for further research. To conclude, no single translation method can be universally applied to all IT-related neologisms. Each strategy has its strengths and limitations. Therefore, the translator must consider the category of the word (term, proper noun, abbreviation, etc.), the communicative context, and the intended audience to ensure semantic accuracy, preserve stylistic and emotional connotations, and ensure clarity for Ukrainian-speaking recipients.

Given the pace at which new digital terms are created – particularly with the rise of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and virtual environments – there is a growing need for ongoing terminological monitoring and methodological refinement. Future research should focus on: developing dynamic databases of IT neologisms with cross-linguistic equivalents and usage contexts; exploring cognitive and cultural factors that influence how new terms are interpreted and integrated in the target language; analyzing real-time translation practices in digital communication, media localization, and technical documentation; investigating the role of AI and machine translation tools in processing and adapting neologisms, including their limitations and potential for improvement; creating targeted training programs for translators, with an emphasis on IT discourse, neologism recognition, and domain-specific knowledge.

The study of IT-related neologisms and their translation is an area of high relevance and rich academic potential. As digital communication continues to reshape language in real time, linguists and translators must remain agile, informed, and critically engaged with the evolving intersection of language, technology, and culture. This field invites continuous scholarly attention and interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure both linguistic accuracy and communicative effectiveness in the global digital era.

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