

FORMATION OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC TERMINOLOGY IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE AS A REFLECTION OF THE NEW SOCIO-CULTURAL SITUATION IN THE WORLD

Alfiya Zaripova

Kazan Federal University – Russia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4602-3315>
E-mail: alfija_kazan@mail.com

Natalya Saenko

Moscow Polytechnic University – Russia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9422-064X>
E-mail: rilke@list.ru

Lyudmila Shvachkina

Institute of Service and Entrepreneurship (branch) DSTU in Shakhty – Russia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9067-0988>
E-mail: shvachkina@mail.ru

Oksana Glazova

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University) – Russia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7221-0483>
E-mail: ksanik23@mail.ru

Irina Sultanova

Russian State Agrarian University - Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy – Russia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5369-8922>
E-mail: irina_sultanova@mail.ru

Valentina Rodionova

Institute of Service and Entrepreneurship (branch) DSTU in Shakhty – Russia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3822-577X>
E-mail: rodionova.disser@mail.ru

ABSTRACT

Objective: This article aims to determine the methods and features of the formation and expansion of terminology related to the coronavirus pandemic in the German language. The study examines the systematic nature of terminology formation, reflecting the specific characteristics of the scientific field in which this terminological system operates, as well as the typological characteristics of German. **Methods:** The German terminology of the coronavirus pandemic primarily evolved from existing medical terms within the language and incorporated loanwords from English. These terms actively participated in word formation processes, resulting in the creation of predominantly new compound words. **Results:** The examined terminological system reveals distinct lexical-semantic groups, characterized by varying quantitative compositions. This can be attributed to the role and significance of specific component elements that structure the hierarchical nature of the analyzed terminological system. **Conclusion:** Despite the global nature of the coronavirus pandemic, each language's terminological system exhibits terms demonstrating unique approaches to addressing prevention and combating the infection. Such terms have been identified within the terminology of the coronavirus pandemic in German.

Keywords: Language; Linguistics; Terminology; Methods of term formation; Loanwords.



O IMPACTO DA PANDEMIA DE COVID-19 NA LINGUAGEM: UM ESTUDO DE CASO SOBRE A FORMAÇÃO DE PALAVRAS EM ALEMÃO

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este artigo tem como objetivo determinar os métodos e as características da formação e da expansão da terminologia relacionada à pandemia do coronavírus na língua alemã. O estudo examina a natureza sistemática da formação da terminologia, refletindo as características específicas do campo científico no qual esse sistema terminológico opera, bem como as características tipológicas da língua alemã. **Métodos:** A terminologia alemã da pandemia do coronavírus evoluiu principalmente a partir de termos médicos existentes na língua e incorporou empréstimos do inglês. Esses termos participaram ativamente dos processos de formação de palavras, resultando na criação de palavras compostas predominantemente novas. **Resultados:** O sistema terminológico examinado revela grupos léxico-semânticos distintos, caracterizados por composições quantitativas variadas. Isso pode ser atribuído ao papel e à importância de elementos componentes específicos que estruturam a natureza hierárquica do sistema terminológico analisado. **Conclusão:** Apesar da natureza global da pandemia do coronavírus, o sistema terminológico de cada idioma apresenta termos que demonstram abordagens exclusivas para tratar da prevenção e do combate à infecção. Esses termos foram identificados na terminologia da pandemia do coronavírus em alemão.

Palavras-chave: Idioma; Linguística; Terminologia; Métodos de formação de termos; Empréstimos.

1 INTRODUCTION

The beginning of 2020 is associated with the coronavirus infection pandemic. This situation has had a significant impact on people's lives and left its mark on the lexical composition of many languages, in particular German. This study focuses on the emergence of new words and expressions associated with this phenomenon, as well as their structural and semantic analysis, the relevance of which is explained by the role played by the coronavirus situation in the world.

The coronavirus pandemic has given rise to new, complex terms and concepts that required timely interpretation. With the arrival of this virus, along with the existing concepts, many new terms have appeared. People's lives have changed a lot, and with them, the language has changed. This phenomenon has left a strong mark on the lexical level of the German language.

The object of the study is the structural and semantic features of the terms of the coronavirus pandemic in German, and the *main purpose* of this work is to determine methods of creating new terminology for the coronavirus pandemic in the German language.

The purpose of the study allowed us to identify the following *tasks*:



1. to define lexico-semantic terminology groups related to the coronavirus in German;
2. to determine the productivity of different methods of term formation related to the coronavirus pandemic in German;
3. to discover the correlation between the original and borrowed vocabulary in the coronavirus-related German terminology;
4. to characterize the composition of the coronavirus-related German terminology regarding the parts of speech and structure.

The coronavirus vocabulary in German has become the object of many studies by different researchers. First of all, one should note the work on fixing new lexemes of the Institute of the German Language (Institut für Deutsche Sprache, IDS) in Mannheim, Germany. The webpage of this institute contains a large number of articles and publications on the coronavirus pandemic, the German coronavirus dictionary "Deutschlands Coronalexikon", compiled by A. Klosa-Kückelhaus, head of the Department of Lexicography and Fixation of New Concepts of this institute (OWID, n.d.), where she collected the words that appeared exclusively as a result of the pandemic, like Coronamode, Ellenbogengruß, or asynchrone Lehrveranstaltung. The dictionary includes more than 600 lexemes. According to researchers, and in particular C. Möhrs, a research assistant at the IDS, a large number of dictionaries of the coronavirus pandemic appeared during the pandemic. They were published in the German periodical press and focused on various groups of society. Interestingly, among these lexemes, one could find words that had already existed in the language but became popular during the pandemic with a new meaning. One such example is the word Dauerwelle f, which, of course, was not used in the former meaning "chemical perm", but rather denoted the long duration of the next wave of the pandemic. Over time, it will become clear whether new lexemes will remain in the language with a new meaning. Many words are not terms, but euphemisms that characterize life during the pandemic, like neue Normalität.

Another area of research was related to the study of the discourse of the coronavirus pandemic in German. The Professor at the University of Mannheim and researcher at the IDS H.D. Kämper believes that two types of discourse can be distinguished: hidden discourses and other pre-existing discourses that have been burdened by the coronavirus pandemic, for example, migration discourse. Hidden discourses became open during the pandemic, for example, those that were associated with the conspiracy



theory.

The collection of articles "Corona-Pandemie: Diverse Zugänge zu einem aktuellen Superdiskurs", published by M. Jakosz and M. Kalasznik (2022), contains the results of different scholars' research on various aspects of the coronavirus pandemic discourse (lexical, political, emotional, advertising, and others).

In addition to the aforementioned studies, others focus on the specifics of the nomination, functioning, and description of the situation of the coronavirus pandemic.

In this work, the term is defined as a word or phrase of a special sphere of use, which serves as the name of a scientific or industrial/technological concept and has a definition (Danilenko, 1971, p. 11).

The main properties of the term, in our opinion, include its property to designate or express a particular scientific concept in a certain system. The terminology of the coronavirus pandemic may include different parts of speech since it must be described in the form in which it functions in the language. From these positions modern terminology studies approach the study of the term, exploring term systems from the perspective of a realistic approach to the definition, characterization, and evaluation of terminology.

To analyze the methods of formation of coronavirus terms, we used the provisions on the methods of formation of terms outlined in the works by V.P. Danilenko (1967), which identify three methods to replenish terminology:

1. Semantic method;
2. Syntactic method;
3. Morphological method.

2 METHODS

2.1 Research design

We used the following methods to carry out structural and semantic analysis, as well as to analyze the methods of formation and replenishment of the terminology related to the coronavirus pandemic:

- the comparative method that allowed us to identify the typological characteristics of terminological units related to the coronavirus pandemic;



- the systemic and structural method using which it was possible to determine the components (lexico-semantic groups) of the hierarchical structure of the term system under study;
- the method of structural and semantic modeling of terms to determine the term formation model;
- the statistical method (quantitative and qualitative analysis of terms to identify the most productive formation methods).

2.2 Corpus of the study

The material of this study was the German terms related to the coronavirus pandemic posted on the German language corpus electronic platform DWDS (Das Digitale Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache [DWDS], n.d.), with a total volume of more than 400 terminological units.

2.3 Procedures

The German terms related to the coronavirus pandemic selected for this study were analyzed from the point of view of semantics since any terminological system is a system characterized by unity, integrity, and hierarchical organization of elements. On the one hand, this terminology exists within the language and at this level interacts with the lexical composition of the general literary language. This interaction happens at the horizontal level. On the other hand, at the vertical level, one can trace and distinguish various spheres and lexico-semantic groups, demonstrating the internal heterogeneity and versatility of the concept of the coronavirus pandemic and, accordingly, the terminology related to it.

Further, we performed an analysis of the methods of term formation and determined the productivity of each of those methods. It should be noted that the productivity of a particular method of term formation is conditioned by the specifics of the terminological system of the coronavirus pandemic, as well as the type of language in which this system functions.

When developing and improving the terminology of any language, foreign sources are used along with national material. The presence of borrowed vocabulary in the German coronavirus pandemic-related terminology is primarily explained by the global nature of the pandemic.



For the part-of-speech verbal characteristics of the terminological system under study, we performed a quantitative analysis of the ratio of one-word, two-word, and multi-word terms. Further, we determined the ratio of parts of speech among the one-word terms. The presence of two-word and multi-word terms along with one-word terms indicates the emergence of various specializations of concepts.

The etymological analysis of the coronavirus pandemic-related terms demonstrated the presence, along with the original vocabulary, of some loanwords from foreign languages (Kalegina et al., 2015).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Lexico-semantic groups of coronavirus-related terminology

Before considering the methods of formation for the coronavirus pandemic-related terms, we will define their lexico-semantic groups. The analysis of the glossary of terms allowed us to identify six groups: a description of the symptoms and development of the disease, precautions, professional life during the pandemic, methods of counteraction, social life during the pandemic, and personal life during the pandemic. Table 1 shows the percentage ratio of the selected lexico-semantic groups.

Table 1. The percentage ratio of the selected lexico-semantic groups

Lexico-semantic groups of coronavirus-related terminology	Percentage ratio
Description of symptoms and development of the disease	32%
Methods of counteraction	20%
Social life during the pandemic	15%
Professional life during the pandemic	12%
Personal life during the pandemic	11.5%
Description of symptoms and development of the disease	11.5%
Precautions	9.5%

3.1.1 Description of the disease and symptoms

This is the largest lexico-semantic group of this terminological system (32%). German has several terminological units for the designation of the coronavirus pandemic itself:

Coronaviren

Covid-19 n

Epidemie f

Prävalenz f (Krankheitshäufigkeit)



Reproduktionszahl f
 Replikationsfaktor m (Übertragungsrate f)

3.1.2 Precautions

This is the second largest lexical and semantic group of this term system (20%), which contains terms that denote precautionary measures. Many countries, including German-speaking ones, were guided by the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Behelfs-Mund-Nasen-Schutz m
 Designermaske f
 Lockdown light
 AHA-Regel (Abstand, Hygiene und Alltagsmaske) f

3.1.3 Methods of counteraction

The following lexical and semantic group (9.5%) contains terms describing measures and methods to counteract the spread of the pandemic. It should be noted that with all the globality of this pandemic and the similarity of the situation, each country defined and introduced its own rules and methods to counter the spread of this viral infection. In this context, the semantic component of homonymous terminological units won't be identical.

Exit-Strategie f
 Inzidenz f
 Kontaktverbot m/Ausgangssperren
 Covidmaßnahme f

To the same lexico-semantic group, we attributed some lexemes related to the conspiracy theory, according to which, allegedly, there is a secret government consisting of rich and influential people who rule the world and who provoked this situation.

Corona-Verschwörungstheoretiker m
 Corona-Leugner m

3.1.4 Social life during the pandemic



The lexico-semantic group next in line by the number of terms (15%) combines the terms characterizing social life in the conditions of a pandemic. In each culture and country, there were special features. For example, the term Gabenzaun means a certain place, usually a fence, where food and other things are hung for infected or sick people.

The following examples of terms of this group are:

Corona-Party f

Geistermodus m

Social Distancing n

Gabenzaun m

Corona-Hysterie f

3.1.5 Professional life during the pandemic

This lexico-semantic group makes up 12% of the total number of analyzed terms. In this part of life, significant changes took place, which left their mark even after the pandemic. The same group includes terms that are related to the educational process during the pandemic.

Distanzarbeit f

hybride Videokonferenz

Homeofficepflicht light

Remote Work

Zoomen

3.1.6 Personal life during the pandemic

The smallest in number lexico-semantic group (11.5%) describes people's personal life during the pandemic.

Balkonien n

Corona-Babys

Abstandshochzeit f

Corona-Kilos

Coronaspeck m

3.2 Methods of creating new coronavirus-related terms in German and Russian



The analysis of the formation of the terms related to the coronavirus pandemic allowed us to draw the following conclusions. The most productive term formation method in this study was the semantic method (90%). The syntactic and morphological methods formed a small number of terms, 1.5%, and 8.5%, respectively. These results can be explained as follows. Any terminological system includes not only one-word linguistic means of nomination but also complex structural formations. This circumstance is due to the desire for the accuracy of the designated concept. V.P. Danilenko notes that the phrase terms are the most informative ones, since "they can be used to express the greatest number of necessary features of the concept" (Danilenko & Skvortsov, 1981, p. 79). The appearance of compound phrases in term systems is associated with the late periods of the formation of a particular terminological system. The development of science and technology at a time when part of the term system has already developed results in a need to clarify some of the terms already existing in it for a complete and accurate expression of newly emerging concepts. The disadvantage of such nominative units is their bulkiness and approximation to definitions (Babenko, 2015; Danilenko, 1986). The terminology related to the coronavirus pandemic began its formation not so long ago. Therefore, at an early stage of its formation, the syntactic formation method was unproductive. Besides that, this method is not typologically common for German, where compound word formation remains the most productive model at present. However, given the circumstances of the emergence, spread, and available information on the causes and treatment and prevention methods in this pandemic, the compound word formation method, and therefore the morphological method, cannot become the most productive model at this stage. Among the terminological units formed morphologically, most words are shift terms and compound terms, such as filtering facepiece (FFP) Maske f, Exit-Strategie f, Kontaktverbot m, Ausgangssperren.

The semantic method or semantic derivation method includes a wide range of semantic transformations. These include various types of hyphenation (metonymic, metaphorical, functional), changes in the semantic volume of words (expansion and narrowing, specialization of meanings), and semantic tracing. Semantic derivation can be called a secondary nomination since we are talking about using nominative means already existing in the language with a new meaning to denote new concepts. In contrast to the lexico-semantic formation of words of general use, which is



characterized by a long time of formation and ends with the formation of homonyms, the formation of terms with semantic derivation "occurs without a long evolution" (Danilenko, 1971, p. 32). In this study, 90% of the terms of the coronavirus-related German terminology were formed using the semantic method.

Among the terms formed using this method, we would like to single out one lexical unit Fernunterricht m, which has long existed in the German language and which simply received a new meaning due to the pandemic (distance learning). To demonstrate the dynamics of the use of this word, we used Google Trends (n.d.). The graph shows the frequency of use of this term in Germany for 2021 (Figure 1).

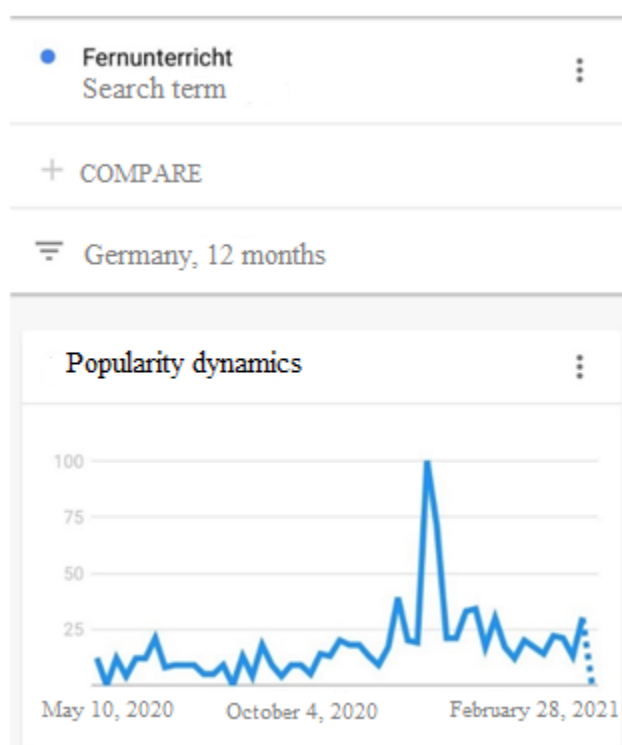


Figure 1. Dynamics of the use of the term Fernunterricht in Google Trends.

In the group of terms formed semantically, one can find loanwords from common vocabulary and medical terminology, including loanwords from Latin and English, like Abstrich m, Ansteckung f, Übertragung f, Quarantane f, Social Distancing n, Lockdown m.

3.3 Borrowed vocabulary

The presence of borrowed vocabulary in the coronavirus-related German terminology is explained, first of all, by the global nature of the spread of the pandemic

around the world. That is why loanwords in the coronavirus terminology can be considered internationalisms since they have the same meaning and sound in many languages of the world.

In the international vocabulary of any terminology, including the terminology of the coronavirus pandemic, a special place is occupied by terms of ancient Greek and Latin origin or words composed of Greek and Latin morphemes. The peculiarity of such terms is that they convey the meaning of the term "using the meaning of the constituent term elements", without causing polysemy (Danilenko, 1977, p. 35). According to M.N. Volodina (1993), "the structure of such terms, as a rule, is not marked by specific linguistic features that make it possible to determine their national origin" (p. 37). In our study, Greek and Latin loanwords correlate with medical terminology, e. g. Kontamination f, Inzidenz f, Pandemie f. The second group of loanwords in the terminology of the coronavirus pandemic is formed by the lexemes borrowed from English.

All foreign-language concepts have undergone the process of adaptation in the coronavirus infection-related terminological system of German. In the process of adaptation of borrowed lexemes, two types of assimilation are distinguished, namely, the formal and functional types. Formal assimilation includes phonetic, graphic, and grammatical assimilation (Krysin, 1996; Sabirova et al., 2019).

All modern loanwords in German, from the phonetic point of view, are assimilated in their original form. That is, they are pronounced according to the norms of the donor language (Takhtarova et al., 2019). Graphic assimilation of new coronavirus infection terms in German refers to nouns, which are written with a capital letter while preserving English graphics. Grammatical assimilation involves the inclusion of the borrowed word in the system of gender, number, and case. When establishing gender, two factors are usually considered, namely, the meaning of the word and its form. When choosing the grammatical gender of a loanword in German, the leading factor is the suffix. Anglo-Americanisms with the suffix -ing become neuter nouns in German, for example, *Tracking n.*

Assimilation of borrowed terms ends only when they become part of the lexical system. Therefore, along with the formal signs of assimilation discussed above, functional, i.e. lexico-semantic changes in the use of loanwords are noted. Lexico-semantic assimilation includes the recognition of the borrowed term and its regular use, as well as its compatibility with the words of the recipient language. In German



coronavirus infection-related terminology, foreign terms are borrowed more often in one specific meaning. For example, the term Triage has five meanings in English. In German terminology, it is used in one meaning, namely, the establishment of the order of assistance to the wounded or injured patients.

3.4 Partial and structural composition of the German coronavirus-related terminology

The German coronavirus pandemic-related terms are represented by one-word and multi-word terms. The number of one-word nominative concepts equals 90%. The predominance of one-word terms in German is explained by the structure of the language. Multi-word terms are mostly represented by attributive two-component phrases. Characterizing the partial composition of one-word terms, it is necessary to note the predominantly nominative nature of the composition of this terminology, and, consequently, the quantitative predominance of nouns relative to other parts of speech. The total ratio of nouns in our study in percentage terms is as follows: nouns account for 99%, while verbs for 1%.

4 DISCUSSION

The year 2020 was marked by the coronavirus pandemic, which is perhaps the worst pandemic in the world in the last 100 years. According to the WHO, coronavirus is a large family of viruses that can infect birds and mammals, including humans. A new type of coronavirus known as COVID-19 caused an outbreak in China in December 2019, which resulted in an international wave of concern and diseases. It has caused more than 75 million cases of the disease and about 1.6 million deaths worldwide.

The disease has affected almost all aspects of people's lives, from professional activities and education to everyday routines, for example, grocery shopping, as well as the usual routine of our day. The most significant characteristics of this time were the medical masks, the appearance of problems with the psychological state of people, and the transition to distance learning and remote work.

The first area touched by the pandemic is related to the attributes of our everyday appearance. We are talking about the mandatory wearing of medical masks. Moreover, only surgical masks, FFP2 masks, or KN95/ N95 respirators without a valve were allowed in Germany. Fabric hygienic masks were considered an insufficient measure, and attempts to cover the nose and mouth with a scarf, shawl, or other fabric were



prohibited (RBC daily, 2021).

The pandemic has seriously affected people's mental health in 2020. One study published in August by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) found that levels of anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts soared amid the pandemic. The study could not determine the cause of the increase in mental disorders, but factors associated with the pandemic, such as social isolation, closed schools and universities, unemployment, and other financial problems played a significant role.

As a result of the spread of the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, the educational process around the world switched to distance learning. This had both its pros and cons. Some people believe that the transition to virtual learning has led to negative consequences, such as deterioration of academic performance, insufficient quality of education, and the development of diseases associated with constant work with a computer or phone. However, this has its advantages, like convenience, speed, easy access to information, and so on.

The changes associated with the coronavirus pandemic have also had a strong impact on the vocabulary of all languages. Many new words and phrases entered the general lexicon in 2020 (Klosa-Kückelhaus, 2021; Smiljanic, 2020). Words such as "social distance" began to appear, which meant being 1.5 meters apart from each other so that we could slow down the spread of the disease, as well as reduce the burden on the healthcare system. Most people have become aware of the meanings of hitherto incomprehensible epidemiological terms, such as "reproduction index" denoting the average number of people who become infected with the virus from one infected person. Besides that, of course, COVID-19 itself has become a new term.

5 CONCLUSION

The terminology related to the coronavirus pandemic in German is a rather interesting object of research. It reflects the uniqueness of the typological properties of the German language, as well as the specific nature of the appearance and spread of this virus in the world. The terminology related to the coronavirus pandemic was formed through the use of already existing terms, as well as through loanwords from English. All units of this term system build a hierarchical structure where six lexical and semantic groups can be distinguished, reflecting the entire palette of spheres of human activity aimed at the prevention, treatment, and control of this virus.

Speaking about the structural and partial composition, it is necessary to note the



prevailing number of compound nouns and a small number of verbs, as well as phrases.

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