

ISCKMC 2022**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****NEOLOGISMS OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ERA: LEXEMA
“CORONA” AS PRODUCTIVE ELEMENT OF
CORONEOLOGISMS**

Valentina Nikolaevna Semerdzhidi (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Kuban State University, Krasnodar, Russia, tinasem@rambler.ru

Abstract

The study of neologisms will always be a relevant topic, since the language is in constant development and the emergence of new lexical units expand the vocabulary and change lexicology. This article analyzes Russian neologisms that appeared during the pandemic and are presented in the Dictionary of the Russian Language of the Coronavirus Era published by specialists from the Institute for Linguistic Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2021. Based on the way of derivation, coroneoloisms have been divided into 5 groups (words representing the adhesion of two content words; words with a lexeme “корона” shortened to the form “корон-” and a full stem of the second word, connected by a service morpheme o-; blends with a truncated second lexeme; blends with the application of several letters; suffix derivatives). The study identified borrowed words, a gaming form of derivation and expressive-evaluative coloring of contaminants, metaphorical and allusive images, as well as images of natural phenomena that contain coroneoloisms. The following methods were used in the course of the study: analysis, continuous sampling, classification, quantitative calculation. The practical significance of this study implies the possibility of applying the results obtained in the course of lexicology, in practical classes on the language.

2357-1330 © 2022 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Affixation, corona, lexeme, neologism, neology, word formation

1. Introduction

The urgency of the research is confirmed by the appeal to the topic of neologisms of the pandemic period, which differs in the number and speed of vocabulary neologization. The scientific novelty of this study lies in its focus on the analysis of the words family with the apex “корона/корон-” (corona).

The object of the study was 3,500 words presented in the Dictionary of the Russian Language of the Coronavirus Era published by specialists from the Institute for Linguistic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2021.

The theoretical basis for the study is the works of Budagova, Golovanova, Zyryanova, Madzhaeva, Gromenko, Kotelovaoy, Moskaleva, Popova, Shemchuk, Shmeleva, Crystal, McDonald.

The practical value of this study lies in the possibility of applying the results obtained in the course of lexicology to practical classes on the language.

2. Problem Statement

The subject of the study is the classification of neologisms with the keyword *корона* (corona), which has become a symbol of the historical period of the coronavirus pandemic and the basis for word formation on the principles of thematic groups and the manner of derivation.

3. Research Questions

Therefore, the following tasks are put forward in the article:

- i. to analyze different viewpoints of scientists regarding neologisms and neology, the need to study new words and expressions in terms of socio-historical, cultural, cognitive and linguistic significance;
- ii. to classify coroneologisms according to thematic groups;
- iii. to classify coroneologisms according to the manner of derivation.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to identify, analyze and classify the coroneoloisms of the word family with the apex “корона/корон-” (corona) according to thematic focus and the manner of derivation.

5. Research Methods

In order to support the objectives, the following methods were used: continuous sampling, analysis, classification, quantitative calculation.

6. Findings

Since language features are prominent in reflecting reality, describing and interpreting the world, it instantly reacts to all changes in science, economy, society and people’s lives. Neologisms usually appear either in certain areas of activity, or in connection with certain events that entail new words derivation.

Continuous updating of the lexical composition of a language is its integral characteristic. Consequently, each era enriches the vocabulary with new words, neologisms.

Vocabulary being the most variable part of the language, "... is a kind of indicator of society's development level..." (Semerdzhidi, 2016, p. 147).

For example, Moskaleva (2008) emphasizes that vocabulary is "the most mobile part of the language, it is constantly being improved, updated, and at the same time it reacts to changes in the reality around us, that is, it develops complete with life" (p. 246).

An English linguist Crystal (1963), a well-known British philologist, adheres to the same point of view, that vocabulary is the area where we most often notice the way language changes, because each year hundreds of new words arrive in a language.

We share the opinion of McDonald (2005) on the reason for neologisms derivation:

We coin new words to describe new things but also when no word currently in existence can accurately express our sentiments. The words we invent to describe our experiences of the world inherently and concurrently reflect our attitudes to the world in which we live. (p. 88)

During the period of important or serious events, there is a particularly active process of new words derivation. Scientists studying this phenomenon note the undulating process of neologisms derivation in the language (Shemchuk, 2010) and the avalanche-like nature of their derivation calling this phenomenon "a kind of neological explosion" (Popova, 2005).

We have witnessed such a neological boom in the past two years. New words and expressions appear almost daily and quickly become massively used, which is of great interest to linguists.

Kotelova (2015), a founder of the Russian academic neology and neography noted: "Collecting and studying new words, meanings of words and expressions is of great importance to socio-historical, cultural-cognitive and linguistic relations" (p. 85).

Splash of lexical activity was observed in all languages of the world in 2020-2021, which is explained by the ubiquity of such a large-scale phenomenon as COVID-19, which affected not only medical terminology, but also political, economic, social and psychological spheres.

Coroneologisms are becoming characteristic features of our time. The process of linguistic innovation has attracted the attention of linguists and lexicographers. Major English dictionaries have published special sections and blogs dedicated to the language of COVID-19. For example, Tony Thorne, a British linguist and expert in English slang, has compiled a list of words "Coronaspeak" that includes more than 200 lexemes related to COVID-19. Thorne's "Covidictionary: Glossary of Coronacoinages" includes neologisms, occasionalisms, jargon, slang, acronyms, and others.

The Dictionary of the Russian Language of the Coronavirus Era presents about 3,500 words that have appeared or become especially relevant in the Russian language in 2020 and 2021.

Since 2020, *corona* – *корона* and *covid* – *ковид* have become the key words. These two words are in the focus of social and political attention. Therefore, they turned out to be the symbols of the historical period of the pandemic. Moreover, they became the basic foundations of word formation, which was confirmed in the new dictionary.

Budagov (2002) wrote that key words “become characteristic features of the given epoch itself and thus transcend the boundaries of purely linguistic associations”.

In our work, we understand neologisms as words that are structurally, semantically or stylistically new and appeared in the language during the 2020-2021 pandemic.

The present study considers the noun *корона* (corona) as the top of a big word-building family, far ahead of such lexemes as *coronavirus* and the neologism *Covid-19*, which appeared in mass media in February 2020 and is considered as a contaminant formed on the basis of fragments of three words *Corona + Virus + Disease*.

In this regard, first of all, we note that as early as 1971, virologists took the English noun *corona* as the basis for designating a new group of viruses due to the similarity in the structure of the virus with the solar corona. It is worth noting that unlike English, the semantic structure of English word *corona* (*корона*) in the Russian language contains the meaning of a golden crown with precious ornaments as a symbol of royal authority.

The word *корона*, which has acquired a new meaning within the framework of new realities, has expanded its semantic meaning. The element *корона* performs the function of a root morpheme and shows high productivity.

The totality of the new vocabulary created in the era of the spread of the coronavirus infection COVID-19 is called *коронояз* (*corona language*), *коронаречь* (*corona speech*), *коронасловарь* (*corona dictionary*) in Russian, and the language innovations are called *коронаслово* (*corona word*), *короналексика* (*corona lexicon*), *коронатермин* (*corona term*), etc.

The active semantic potential of the Russian lexeme *корона* is confirmed not only by its interaction with the commonly used word, but also by its incorporation into the derivational system of the Russian language.

Based on a continuous sample and a quantitative calculation, it was revealed that the element *корона* is contained in 738 words out of 3,500 words as a root morpheme in the “Dictionary of the Russian language of the coronavirus era”, which is 21%.

The abundance and peculiarity of coroneologisms demonstrate the involvement of all spheres and not just the medical one, and all members of society, not just medical workers, in new living conditions. Having appeared in the medical field, new words became widely used, as the coronavirus disease affected all people on the planet.

Our analysis enables to classify coroneologisms into the following thematic groups:

1. illness and health: *коронавирус* (*coronavirus*), *коронаинфекция/коронаинфекция* (*corona infection*), *короназаболевание* (*corona illness*), *коронапандемия* (*coronapandemic*), *корона-симптом* (*corona symptom*), *коронасмерть* (*corona death*), *коронавакцина/коронавакцина* (*corona vaccine*), *короназдоровье* (*corona health*), *корона-ожирение* (*corona obesity*), *коронатерапия* (*corona therapy*), *коронагрипп* (*corona flu*), *короналетальность* (*coronal mortality*)
2. statistics: *коронадневник* (*corona diary*), *коронакарта* (*corona map*), *коронаиндекс* (*corona index*), *коронастатистика* (*corona statistics*), *коронасводка* (*corona summary*)
3. space: *коронамир* (*corona world*), *корона-глобализация* (*corona globalization*)

4. place: *коронаобсерватор (corona bservation), коронаотделение (corona department), коронагоспиталь (corona hospital), коронарка (corona arch)*

5. time period: *корона-время/короновремя (corona period), коронаэпоха (corona epoch), коронатайм (coronatime), короникулы (corona holidays), коронажизнь (corona life), короналето (corona summer), короназима/коронозима (corona winter), коронапауза (corona pause), коронагод (corona year)*

6. economy and financial transactions: *коронаэкономика (corona economy), коронамика (coronomics), короназайм (corona loan), коронаоблигация/коронаоблигация (corona bond), коронабюджет/коронабюджет (corona budget), коронаинвестор (corona investor), коронаскидки (corona discount), коронаиндустрия (corona industry), коронарубль (corona ruble), коронашопинг (corona shopping), коронабезработица (corona unemployment)*

7. cultural activity: *коронкультура (corona culture), коронамюзикл (corona musical), коронапьеса (coronaplay), коронафильм (corona movie), коронастих (corona verse), коронашансон (corona chanson), коронамарафон (corona marathon), коронасвадьба (corona wedding), коронатур (corona tour), коронатуризм (corona tourism)*

8. social activity: *коронаконкурс (corona contest), коронамитинг (corona meeting), коронаконсультация (corona consultation), коронатурнир (corona tournament),*

9. ways to exercise power: *короназакон (corona law), коронаинструкция/ коронаинструкция (corona instruction), коронаограничение (corona restriction), коронаинспектор (corona inspector), короназаседание (corona session)*

10. new forms of criminal activity: *коронакриминл (corona criminal), коронамошенничество/коронамошенничество (corona fraud), коронаобман (corona swindle), коронажулик (corona fraudster), коронахакер (corona hacker), коронашулерство (corona cheating)*

11. legal regulation: *коронаправо (corona law), коронаштраф (corona fine), коронамошенник (corona fraudster), коронажулик (corona fraudster), короназакон (corona law), короназапрет (corona prohibition), коронаинспектор (corona inspector)*

12. communities: *корона-тим (corona team), корона-фракция (corona fraction)*

13. transport: *коронатака (corona attack), коронатранспорт (corona transport), коронаавто (corona auto), коронавозка (corona cart), коронавоз (corona cart)*

14. militaristic activity: *корона-атака (corona attack), коронавойна (corona war), коронафронт (corona battlefield), коронапобеда (corona victory), коронажертва (corona victim), коронаперемирие (corona ceasefire)*

15. natural phenomena of destructive power and disaster: *коронаайсберг (corona iceberg), коронаураган (corona tornado), коронашторм (corona storm), коронастихия (corona disaster), коронацунами (corona tsunami), коронанапасть (corona disaster), короначума (corona plague), коронаповетрие (corona epidemic), коронаармагеддон (corona armageddon), коронаапокалипсис (corona apocalypse), корона-бедствие (corona disaster), коронакатастрофа (corona катастрофа)*

16. learning activity: *коронасессия (corona exam session), коронаэкзамен (corona exam)*

17. linguistic phenomena: *коронеологизм (coroneologism)*, *короакроним (corona acronym)*, *коронаречь (corona speech)*, *коронасловарь (corona dictionary)*, *короналексика (corona vocabulary)*, *коронаслово (corona word)*, *коронатермин (corona term)*, *короноязык (corona language)*

18. fashion: *коронастрижка (corona hairdo)*, *коронаманикюр (corona manicure)*

19. names of public moods: *коронафобия (corona phobia)*, *коронапаника (corona scare)*, *коронапессимист (corona pessimist)*, *коронаапокалипсис (corona apocalypse)*, *коронафилия (corona philia)*, *короноя (coronoia)*, *коронажутъ (corona dismay)*, *коронабезумие (corona madness)*

20. derogatory name for categories of people during a pandemic: *коронаскептик (corona sceptic)*, *коронанигилист (corona nihilist)*, *коронашовинист (corona chauvinist)*, *коронадиссидент (corona dissident)*, *коронаидиот (corona idiot)*, *коронадурак (corona fool)*

21. positive name for categories of people during a pandemic: *коронамэн (corona man)*, *корона-активист (corona activist)*

22. jargon: *коронашиза (corona schizo)*, *коронашухер (corona alarm)*, *коронастукач (corona informer)*, *короновать (corona steal)*.

We agree with the following opinion of Golovanova and Madzhaeva (2020): “The set of lexical units associated with coronavirus organizes and structures the world in people’s minds during a pandemic by creating a special semiosphere” (p. 48).

Further, we distinguish the following groups classifying coroneologisms according to the manner of derivation:

1. words representing the adhesion of *two content words*: *короназдоровье (corona health)*, *коронабезработица (corona unemployment)*, *коронаперемирие (corona ceasefire)*.

2. words with a *lexeme “корона” shortened to the form “корон-”* and a full stem of the second word, connected by a *service morpheme o-*: *коронофобия (corona phobia)*, *корономошенник (corona fraudster)*, *короноязык (corona language)*;

3. blends with a truncated second lexeme: *коронадемия – корона + пандемия (corona + pandemia, coronademía)*, *коронакоост – корона + холокоост (corona + Holocaust, coronacaust)*, *коронавир – корона + вирус (corona + virus, coronus)*;

4. blends with the application of several letters: *коронаапокалипсис (coronaapocalypse) – корона + апокалипсис (corona + apocalypse)*, *короноя (coronoia) – корона + параноя (corona + paranoia)*, *корономика (coronomics) – корона + экономика (corona + economics)*;

5. suffix derivatives, formed according to productive word-building models: *антикорона (anticorona)*, *коронник (coronnick)*, *короныч (coronich)*, *коронач (coronach)*, *коронка (coronka)*, *коронация (coronation)*.

Coroneoloisms representing the adhesion of *two content words* make up the largest group of compound words.

It is worth noting that the group words representing the adhesion of *two content words* include foreign words as well. They are as follows: *коронашейминг (coronashaming) – корона + shaming*, *коронашеринг (coronasharing) – корона + sharing*, *коронафейк (coronafake) – корона + fake*, *короначеллендж (coronachallenge) – корона + challenge*, *корона-хайп (coronahype) – корона + hype*, *коронахакер (coronahacker) – корона + hacker*, *коронапати (coronaparty) – корона + party*, *корона-*

тим (coronateam) – корона + team, коронатроллинг (coronatrolling) – корона + trolling, короноквиз (coronaquiz) – короно + quiz.

It is obvious that the presented neologisms entered the Russian language by embodying the sound image of the word in writing (transcription) and replacing the letters of the alphabet (transliteration). The borrowing of neologisms related to coronavirus is explained by the fact that during the pandemic, people all over the world were in the same conditions, experiencing the same events and phenomena, which is reflected in the language.

It is interesting to note that in the above dictionary there are both borrowed and non-borrowed neologisms with the same meaning: *corona party/коронавечеринка, corona break/коронапауза, corona time/коронавремя.*

The presented contaminants are a game with a form and productive compression of information.

The number of neologisms is growing; they are diverse and based on different word-formation models. It is obvious that the Russian language has become involved in the process of intensive language game and language creativity, as a result of which, during the pandemic, a large amount of vocabulary with a pronounced expressive, emotive and evaluative coloring (*коронабесие – corona rage, коронафобия – coronaphobia, коронаалармист – coronaalarmist, короназавр – cornasaur, короназмея – coronadragon, коронаклетка – coronacell, коронаносец – corona bearer*) appeared.

It is obvious that the increased emotional atmosphere in society caused the increased emotional-expressive and evaluative nature of speech during the pandemic, which indicates both the democratization of the modern Russian language and its creativization.

Humor, mockery, irony, sarcasm are felt in emotionally colored vocabulary, which helps people in difficult situations. Such vocabulary becomes a kind of psychological defense against the panic generated by the pandemic.

Shmeleva (2020) notes that the Russian language is responding to the pandemic in its own way: “It is not for nothing that new words appear at these moments, people begin to play with the language, joke, pun, and this helps to defuse tension in society” (p. 45).

Zyryanova (2006) indicates the formation of the evaluative element of connotation in neologisms through explaining this phenomenon based on social perception of the language: “... at present, a person has the opportunity to evaluate the new reality and the events taking place in it, from his/her own positions due to the democratic principles and traditions that have developed in society”. This statement is especially relevant today.

It should also be noted that some coroneologisms expressing the destructive power of the coronavirus contain images of natural phenomena that have destructive power (*коронашторм – coronastorm, коронаураган – corona hurricane, коронаайсберг – corona iceberg*).

The destructive power of the coronavirus and the threat to health are displayed in neologisms expressing militaristic activity (*корона-атака – corona attack, коронавойна – corona war, коронафронт – corona battlefield*) and the end of the world (*коронамагеддон – coronamageddon, коронаапокалипсис – corona apocalypse*).

Metaphorical images of animals also help to comprehend the difficult and dangerous time of the pandemic period (*корназавр* – cornasaurus, *короназмей* – coronadragon, *коронадьявол* – coronadevil, *коронадемон* – coronademon, *коронамонстр* – coronamonster).

These metaphorical images confirm the concept of cognitive metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (2004, p. 22): “We understand the world, think and act in metaphorical terms.”

The same point of view is shared by Gromenko (2020): “Such a creative rethinking of reality is associated with the function of metaphor as a mechanism of cognition, especially relevant when comprehending a new reality” (p. 57).

A hint of a historical and political fact is observed in the following coroneologisms (*короначернобыль* – coronachernobyl, *коронамайдан* – coronamaidan). This allusion identifies certain catastrophic events in our country with the pandemic and effectively creates imagery and expressiveness being a stylistic means, and also affects the mental and sensual spheres of a person.

A high degree of words expressiveness especially in expressing emotional shades is manifested in jargon vocabulary. The reason for the jargon emergence lies in the desire of people to express a special attitude to the reality and to the words denoting this reality during the pandemic.

Thus, the appeal to the language game, the creation of a comic effect, the use of metaphorical and allusive images helps to remove the accumulated social and personal stress, emotional tension.

It is important to note that most of the coroneoloisms analyzed in this study, include words already existing in the language, but rethought in some way, describing absolutely new realities of our time, in connection with which we can name these neologisms semantic or “neosemes” (Popova, 2005).

Following Moskaleva (2008) we note that the peculiarity of semantic neologisms lies in the fact that “as lexemes they have long been known in the language, but, having updated their meaning, they move from the previous thematic groups to completely new ones, while changing lexical compatibility, stylistic fixation, expressive coloring” (p. 249).

7. Conclusion

Thus, we note that the coronavirus pandemic has greatly enriched the language. The neologisms of the pandemic era reflect, on the one hand, the actual realities of this period, and, on the other hand, the linguo-creativity of a linguistic personality subjected to long and severe restrictions.

The collection, study, classification of new words and their meanings play an important role both in socio-historical, cultural-cognitive, and linguistic relations.

The results of our study enable to give the following definition of the new term: Coroneologisms are new or borrowed words both previously known to a limited group of specialists, and well-known ones, which have acquired a new meaning in new realities.

In the course of continuous sampling and analysis of coroneologisms, it has been revealed that the lexeme *корона* (corona) has an active semantic potential and high productivity. In compound words, lexeme *корона* (corona) acts as a defining element in cases of both continuous and hyphenated writing.

As a result of the analysis, 22 thematic groups of coroneologisms with the noun *корона*-/*корон*- were identified, which, according to the method of their formation, were divided into five groups:

1. words representing the adhesion of *two content words*;

2. words with a *lexeme* “корона” shortened to the form “корон-” and a full stem of the second word, connected by a *service morpheme* o-;

3. blends with a truncated second lexeme;

4. blends with the application of several letters;

5. suffix derivatives formed according to productive word-building models.

Since the semantic field of a word has the ability to acquire a new meaning at a certain stage, semantic neologisms that arose on the basis of the semantic rethinking of well-known words have significantly replenished the active composition of Russian and other languages.

Due to the fact that global events always leave their mark on the language, there is an assumption that many of the neologisms presented in the Dictionary of the Russian Language of the Coronavirus Era will remain in our speech or move into the category of historicisms, as people will remember that they experienced world epidemic.

Since this article has an applicable nature, the results of this study can be used in seminars on lexicology, language theory, as well as in classes on language practice and translation practice.

References

- Budagov, R. A. (2002). Language and culture, in 3 parts. Part 3. Sociolinguistics and stylistics. Dobrosvet.
- Crystal, D. A. (1963). Language must change to keep pace with society. *Duty Liverpool Daily Post*.
- Golovanova, E. I., & Madzhaeva, S. I. (2020). About the dictionary of the era of the coronavirus pandemic. *Bulletin of the Chelyabinsk State University*, 7(441). *Philological Sciences*, 121, 48–57.
- Gromenko, E. S. (2020). The “crown” potential of the Russian language at the beginning of 2020. New words and dictionaries of new words. In: *Collection of scientific articles*. Institute for Linguistic Research RAS (pp. 45–62). OR RAN.
- Kotelova, N. Z. (2015). *Selected works*. Nestor-History.
- Lakoff, D., & Johnson, M. (2004). *Metaphors we live by*. The University of Chicago Press. https://ceullearning.ceu.edu/pluginfile.php/100337/mod_forum/attachment/9319/Metaphors%20We%20Live%20By.pdf
- McDonald, L. J. (2005). The Meaning of “E-”: Neologisms as Markers of Culture and Technology, 82–90. <https://www.yorku.ca/etopia/docs/conference/McDonald.pdf>
- Moskaleva, M. V. (2008). *Neologisms and the problem of their study in the modern Russian language*. *Izvestiya of the Russian State Pedagogical University A.I. Herzen*, 80, 246–249.
- Popova, T. V. (2005). *Russian Neology and Neography*. GOU VPO USTU-UPI.
- Semerdzhidi, V. N. (2016). Features of neologisms of the 21st century (on the material of English and Russian languages). In: *Interdisciplinary Aspects of Linguistic Research: Sat. scientific works*. Book 10. (pp. 144–150). Enlightenment-South.
- Shemchuk, Yu. M. (2010). Renaming as a special linguistic phenomenon of neology. *Rhema. Rema*, 1, 76–82.
- Shmeleva, E. Ya. (2020). Contagious neologisms. *Journal Kommersant Science*, 10, 44–45.
- Zyryanova, A. V. (2006). *The functioning of neologisms-lexemes in the modern Russian language in the semantic-communicative and pragmatic aspects: on the material of the mass media (Cand. Dissertation thesis)*. <https://www.dissercat.com/content/funktsionirovanie-neologizmov-leksem-v-sovremennom-russkom-yazyke-v-semantiko-kommunikativno>