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THE LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPT
OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Any change that takes place in public life and has a strong impact on it, always finds direct expression in language. The reality in which we all live is reflected precisely through the lexical composition of the language we speak. The years 2019–2022 have become the most serious test for Belarus and the whole world. The global epidemic caused by COVID-19 has killed many people in the world and dealt a powerful blow to the economies of many countries.

The epidemic was the reason for the creation of a number of original neologisms. In dictionaries, neologism is generally defined as «a new word or a new meaning for an established word». NEOLOGISM in linguistics: a new word or expression, as well as a new meaning of an old word. The English language was enriched with "covid" and "distance", "social distance".

The idea of studying sociolinguistic problems on the basis of the emergence of neologisms appeared as a result of personal experience, communication with peers, observations in the streets and at school, as well as watching television programs, reading mass media.

Thus, **the problem** is that the emergence of a large number of neologisms associated with the COVID 19 pandemic creates difficulties in translation and their application in speech. **The relevance** of this work is due to the need to study new vocabulary that appears in speech, due to the changes taking place in modern society, under the influence of globalization.

The aim of the research is to analyze lexical changes in the English language in the era of the coronavirus pandemic, to identify thematic groups that have been replenished with new units.

Hypothesis is that studying neologisms helps broaden up vocabulary and understand the realities of modern life.

First and foremost to achieve this aim, it was necessary to solve several **objectives:**

✓ to pick out lexical units that appeared during the period of coronavirus

✓ to group them according to thematic blocks, determine the lexical meaning

✓ to conduct a sociolinguistic experiment that allows to reveal the semantic assimilation of the studied neologisms in students' speech

✓ to make up an explanatory vocabulary of coronavirus neologisms

Methods: studying and analysis of the literature, sociolinguistic experiment, collection of data.

The object is the neologisms in English, which appeared during the COVID 19 pandemic.

The subject is features of the formation of neologisms in modern English.

Importance of the research

This work will be useful and interesting that it would allow students to pay attention to the neologisms in English, which appeared during the COVID 19 pandemic.

To my mind, specific features of the formation of neologisms in modern English, their semantic and pragmatic classifications are worth paying attention to and it's the actual theme for investigation.

CHAPTER 1. THE PECULARITIES OF THE FUNCTIONING OF NEOLOGISMS IN SPEECH

Linguistic scientists are still debating the definition of the concept of neologism. In the terminological system we can find various names that would describe this phenomenon: new formation, novation, innovation, new nomination, innovation, neologism, occasionalism. In my opinion, the most common name is "neologism" and this status is assigned to all new words that appear in speech.

I have analyzed lexical changes in the English language in connection with the coronavirus pandemic. The material for study includes media texts, journalistic literature devoted to this problem, as well as Internet texts. I determined the main sources of the replenishment of the lexis of the period under review, and thematic groups identified in accordance with the three most significant topics:

1.1 Features of the new disease, its symptoms, methods of detection, prevention and treatment

The medical topic is represented by a significant number of lexical units that can be classified into the following thematic groups:

1. The names of the diseases and their causative agents: COVID 19, covid, SARS-CoV 2, coronavirus, novel coronavirus, coronavirus pneumonia, pathogen.

2. The names of the sick and those who came into contact with them: infected, covid patient, asymptomatic, contact, contagious, incubation period, **gain-of-function.**

3. The names of medical institutions and their parts: observatory, covid hospital, mobile hospital, covidarium, red zone, green zone, distribution post, WHO (World Health Organisation).

4. The names of the methods for detecting the disease, its treatment and control: test system, test for COVID 19, saturation, computed tomography (CT scan), infusion therapy, plasma transfusion, mechanical ventilation (IVL), supervision, swab test, screening, virus strain, observation, vaccination, Sputnik-V.

5. The names of current professions and specialties: infectious disease doctor, virologist, epidemiologist, immunologist, sanitary doctor, intensivist.

1.2 Administrative measures aimed at limiting the spread of the infection

Solving administrative problems, a variety of lexical means are used, including new or updated ones, which can be combined into the following thematic groups:

1. The names of administrative measures aimed at combating the spread of infection: self-isolation, social distance, lockdown, electronic pass system, vaccination, mask mode, mask and glove mode, high alert mode, remote mode.

2. Personal protective equipment and disinfection: mask (disposable, reusable), respirator, protective suit, antiseptic, sanitizer.

3. The names of devices for monitoring: non-contact thermometer, pyrometer, thermal imager, pulse ox meter, test PCR.

1.3 People's attitude to this situation

The coronavirus pandemic has become a social significant phenomenon that has affected the living conditions and activities of all members of society. Let's try to rank vocabulary by thematic groups:

1. The names of the categories of people during the pandemic: covidiot, covid dissident, coronasceptics, superspreader, maskless.

2. The names of public sentiments: coronaphobia, coronapanic, coronapsychosis, coronacrisis, coronabesie, coronaapocalypse, quarantine shaming.

3. The names of states and modes: distance (work at home), zoom (work or communicate using the Zoom program), remote control, lockdown.

4. The names of new social items, jokes, anecdotes, proverbs that have appeared during the pandemic: balcony concert, quarantines («Good morning! Have a nice day!! Strong immunity!!!», «The virus is not a sparrow, if it flies out, you won't catch»), infodemy (information epidemic).

The coronavirus pandemic gave rise to many new words and expressions, and changed the meanings of long-existing words. Words and expressions that arose or were updated during the coronavirus pandemic act as socially significant and information-rich units necessary for orienting people, regulating relationships between them and adapting to changed life circumstances.

CHAPTER 2. RESEARCH RESULTS

2.1 Sociolinguistic experiment

I selected three groups of students to participate in the experiment of our school: my classmates (20), the students of 10th and 11th form high level (15), the students of 10th and 11th form basic level (15).

The respondents were asked, without using the Internet, to write down at least 15–20 words that appeared in our speech during the last year and are related to COVID-19. Here are results:

1. COVID 19, covid, coronavirus. 100 %

COVID began as an abbreviation and in a couple of months turned into an independent word. These words were indicated by 100 % of the respondents.

2. Self-isolation, social distance, lockdown. 98 %

The term "social distance" has been rethought. It used to be said when they wanted to emphasize the class differences between the rich and the poor, now we are talking about the distance of one and a half meters between people.

A number of words previously known only to specialists now are known and used by everyone.

3. Vaccination. 95 %

4. Bacteria. 80 %

5. Mask and glove mode. 78 %

6. Red zone. 74 %

7. Antiseptic. 66 %

8. Test PCR. 61 %

9. Zoom. 20 %

In the conditions of distance learning, the online program Zoom has become especially popular. And many students have installed it on their smartphones and laptops to work and study.

10. Computed tomography (CT scan). 15 %

All respondents confirmed my hypothesis: the study of neologisms helps enrich our vocabulary and understand the realities of modern life.

2.2 Questionnaire survey and collection of sociolinguistic data

The respondents were asked to select the following statements for each word:

➢ I know this word, I can explain its meaning;

➢ this word is unfamiliar to me, but its meaning can be guessed;

➢ I do not know this word; there are no ideas about its meaning.

Out of 52 neologisms, the meaning of only 18 lexemes were clear to all respondents, 16 lexical units showed partial assimilation, 18 words (mainly medical terms) caused difficulties for the majority of respondents in terms of determining their lexical meaning.

The survey shows that the students of my school have learned the neologisms of the pandemic, understand their lexical meaning and use them.

All participants of my research received mini-dictionaries of neologisms from the pandemic era, which can be used to learn new words and expressions, to enrich their vocabulary. Also, I have created interactive dictionary, which can be complemented by new lexical units.

CONCLUSION

During the research work, I recorded the neologisms that appeared in our speech during the coronavirus pandemic, divided them into groups, described the lexical meaning, made up an explanatory dictionary of coronavirus neologisms.

Having conducted a sociolinguistic experiment that allowed to reveal the semantic assimilation of the studied neologisms in students' speech I found out that new lexemes are not homogeneous in origin.

I came to the conclusion that the language reflects a global and unprecedented phenomenon, the memory of which is likely to be here to stay. The presence of many thematic series of the vocabulary indicates the multifaceted feature of this phenomenon. It is argued that new names appeared and old updated during the coronavirus pandemic act as socially significant and information-rich nominative units necessary for the orientation of people, regulation of relations between them and adaptation to changed life circumstances. The analysis presented in my work allows us to approach the understanding of the processes occurring in the lexical system of the English language under the influence of external factors and causes.

Taking into consideration the fact that studying neologisms helps broaden up vocabulary and understand the realities of modern life I have found out that my hypothesis is confirmed.

I believe that understanding the origins of new vocabulary allows us to use it more adequately, to perceive and evaluate it, so the materials of my study will be useful to all lovers of the English language. Neologisms can be an interesting area for students to work on. Using different examples of neologisms we can present different word-formation models, promoting students' vocabulary growth, improving analytical skills, ability to analyze and adequately understand modern texts of mass media, which are the main sources of new word-formations. It might be an additional stimulus to mastering the learning material. Mastering a foreign language is not just learning the linguistic material, it is also necessary to reach the level of a native speaker.