

USE OF LEXICAL UNITS *CORONAVIRUS* AND *COVID-19* IN NON-TERMINOLOGICAL DISCOURSE

Covid has had a significant impact on our daily lives since 2019. Our study is aimed at examining how the pandemic influences on the English language. We research how the words *coronavirus* and *COVID-19* behave in an unusual non-medical environment.



Image 1. Corona hairstyle [1].

Coronamüde, coronafrisur, corona hairstyle: “From coronamüde (tired of Covid-19) to Coronafrisur (corona hairstyle), a German project is documenting the huge number of new words coined in the last year as the language races to keep up with lives radically changed by the pandemic” [2]. *The newly appeared units in German had a birth because of combining the shortened word coronavirus in English with two everyday German words (müde, frisur). In English, we also deal with the same process of combination of the shortened unit corona and the word hairstyle, resulting in emerging a new collocation Corona hairstyle* [1].

Coronavirus anthem: “*Bored in the House*, the song by Tyga and up-and-coming rapper Curtis Roach, has become Tik Tok’s unofficial coronavirus anthem: more than 2m videos have been created using the song, with more than 923 million views globally” [3]. The word *coronavirus* used in the context next to the lexical unit *anthem*, refers to the song created in the popular video-sharing social network TikTok. This sentence draws our attention because the general word *coronavirus* [4] is characterized here by its uncommon meaning ‘*Bored in the House*’. Besides, the collocation itself like *Corona hairstyle* has not been fixed by a general dictionary yet.

Covid passports: At first, we pay attention to the title of the article saying: “No 10 refuses to rule out Covid passports being needed to enter some shops” [5]. The word ‘*passports*’ next to the shortening of the word *Covid-19* creates a collocation, which is not defined either in medical or general dictionary. However, the article introduces a new meaning for the collocation right in the second sentence “Downing Street has left open the possibility that Covid status certificates could be needed for shoppers to enter clothes stores such as Next and H&M, if they are introduced”, explaining it as ‘*Covid status certificates*’. After a short discussion, the author makes his definition more complete adding: “The documents would show a person had been vaccinated, had a recent negative test result or had antibodies through a confirmed infection within the

previous six months”. The word combination ‘*Covid passports*’ appears as a synonym to already existed new word combination a *vaccination passport* [6].

Covidiocy: Another article goes under the title “Are you a complete covidiot? It's what the government wants of all of us” [7]. Here the author introduces the unit *covidiocy* through the frequently met in general use a new word *covidiot* and further in his next sentence the writer continues his explanation: “Denial of the basic facts of the coronavirus outbreak is not confined to conspiracy theorists but has crept into what passes for government policy. Covidiocy is now mainstream”. At the end of his story he again attracts our attention to this newly created concept of everyday reality and makes his conclusion through the above suggested definition of his for the word *covidiocy*: “One of these is Covid denial, which is why it is so hard to deal with. To argue with it is to challenge not a set of beliefs but the emotional core of someone’s identity. You may well dismiss these people, but they are not going to disappear. Covidiocy is now at the heart of everyday life. We cannot distance ourselves from it, however much we want to” [7]. Besides, the meaning of the word *covidiocy* is widened in the article by beliefs that pandemic was started on purpose. On the one hand, the word *covidiocy* refers to the definition already registered by the common dictionary [8]; on the other hand, the writer provides very detailed definition, which is more complete than the paradigmatic one. The picture below describes the word in satirical sense.



Image 2. *Covidiocy* [9].

Coronavirus (as ‘*a cellular data network disease*’). Considering the illustration “It’s all anyone can talk about and now Keri is having her say on the virus and she’s blaming 5G, claiming that the cellular data network caused coronavirus due to radiation.” [10], we have discovered rather interesting case. The word ‘*coronavirus*’ is used in the context as ‘*the disease, which roots go to the cellular data network 5G*’. So, the author’s meaning ‘*the disease caused by 5G*’ absolutely differs from the registered general one [4].

Coronavirus (as ‘*a street art*’). Below the title “Coronavirus street art – in pictures. Covid-19 is the subject of topical, colourful and attention-grabbing street art, whether it is for artistic, educational or political ends”, we can look through many pictures painted in streets worldwide and showing images of people wearing masks, washing hands and keeping social distance. Both examined words *coronavirus* and *Covid-19* are used here as synonyms and defined as ‘*street art*’ [11], which is also an unordinary meaning for them and has not entered a dictionary yet.



Image 3. Coronavirus street art [11].

The example “Coronavirus – how to wash your hands” introduces the lexical units *coronavirus* as a ‘*teacher for the habit of washing our hands during the pandemic*’ [12].

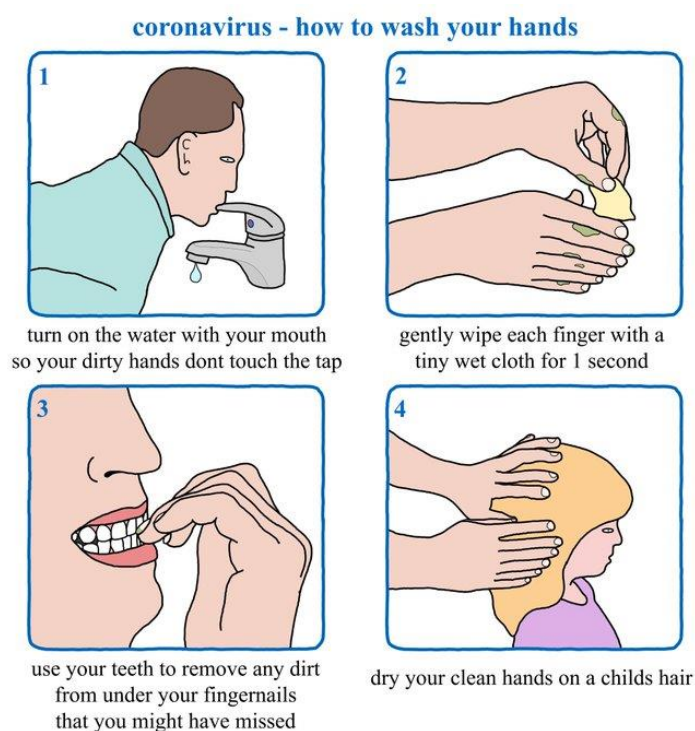


Image 4. Coronavirus – how to wash your hands [12].

Covid-19 tracker app: “A research paper has questioned the benefits of the Covid-19 tracker app in stopping the spread of coronavirus.” The article shows the collocation ‘*Covid-19 tracker app*’ as ‘*the application used for fighting with the disease*’. However, according to our study, the word combination *Covid-19 tracker* refers to the terminological dictionary [13], and due to its combining with the word *application* in the article, we observe the use of the collocation *Covid-19 tracker app*, which, in spite of its everyday use, has not become a part of a general dictionary yet [14].

Our study shows that, at present, many new words come into general use through papers as a result of determinologization of such medical terms as *coronavirus* and *COVID-19*. In addition, the lexical units *coronavirus* and *COVID-19* transform their meanings in new non-terminological environment.

REFERENCES

1. [Электронный ресурс] – Режим доступа: <https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/fashion-beauty/article/3082960/they-want-coronavirus-hairstyle-kenya-salon-thats-all>
2. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/23/from-coronaangst-to-hamsteritis-the-new-german-words-inspired-by-covid>
3. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/apr/26/how-coronavirus-helped-tiktok-find-its-voice>
4. Definition of 'coronavirus': <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/coronavirus>
5. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/06/no-10-refuses-to-rule-out-covid-passports-being-needed-to-enter-some-shops>
6. Collins Dictionary: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/submission/23332/vaccination+passport>
7. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/sep/07/are-you-a-complete-covidiot-its-what-the-government-wants-of-all-of-us-coronavirus>
8. Urban Dictionary: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Covidiot&defid=123456789>
9. <https://blogs.deia.eus/el-paseante/2020/05/03/cronicas-del-coronavirus-35-covidiotas/>
10. Metro: <https://metro.co.uk/2020/03/16/keri-hilson-blaming-5g-coronavirus-pandemic-12407583/>
11. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2020/apr/06/coronavirus-street-art-in-pictures>
12. The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/mar/18/coronaviral-the-best-memes-tweets-and-cartoons-to-get-you-through-open-thread>
13. Biology Dictionary: <https://biologydictionary.net/covid-19-tracker/>
14. The Times: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/coronavirus-in-ireland-covid-19-tracker-app-has-limited-benefits-report-claims-xkmf7nn27>