

The comparison of English and German word formation processes in connection with Covid 19

Abstract

I chose the comparison of English and German word formation process in connection with Covid-19 as a research topic because I saw Covid-19 as a foundation for an excellent linguistic research base. The outbreak of Covid 19 in 2019 triggered several changes in our lives. In order to avoid catching the disease, governments made people stay at home to keep their distance from each other. The effects of Covid 19 on society, the economy, education, psychology and on our mental health are inevitable and universal, this can be detected through linguistic innovations, neologisms, and translation processes. With the help of the new vocabulary, it is easy to track the actual state of the language and see the recent linguistic processes in the field of word-building processes, which I find really intriguing. According to Bruckner (2016:18) languages are living organisms, due to the continual use of severe word-building processes. According to Al-Salman and Haider (2021:25), these new terms are associated with material changes which became part of people's everyday use worldwide. According to Lawson (2020: 1), the pandemic forced people to adapt to the new situation by using specific terms which help them "make sense of the changes that have suddenly become part of our everyday lives."

1. Background

Asif et al. (2021) mentioned in their study that during the COVID-19 outbreak, the executive editor of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), Bernadette Paton highlighted that during the pandemic, it was "a rare experience for lexicographers to observe an exponential rise in usage of a single word in a very short period, and for that word to come overwhelmingly to dominate the global discourse, even to the exclusion of most other topics". Oxford English Dictionary lexicographers and many other linguists are analysing the pandemic's contribution to the development of the language, and the changing of vocabulary. Covid 19 is an excellent opportunity for lexicographers to examine the present condition of languages.

In my study, I am focusing on word formation processes and comparing English and German languages to find whether they use the same expressions. The main focus of my study will be on the comparison of English and German word formation processes.

My research questions are the following:

1. What are the most trending word formation processes in English and German which describe the Covid-19 related neologisms?
2. Which words are the same and which words are borrowed in German and in English?

2. Research Methods

The focus of this paper is on the comparison of English and German new word-formation processes. One objective of this study is to analyse the difference between the most dominant word formation methods.

I collected 100 English and 100 German Covid-19-inspired neologisms from several different online sources including social networking websites (like Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and Twitter), articles (from newspapers like *Der Spiegel*, *The Times* or *The Guardian*), search engines, and thematized dictionaries. I checked the compiled list in order to filter out repeated and irrelevant items, furthermore, I also used online dictionaries, like Oxford English Dictionary (2022), Merriam Webster Dictionary (2022) and Duden (2022) for the German words to see whether these phrases are listed in online dictionaries.

I not only listed the neologisms but also separated the word formation processes, the listing of meaning and etymology and the part, where it belongs to the structure of the vocabulary. The tables for the English corpus and the German corpus can be found in the Appendix.

My hypothesis is that the most common word formation process in German is compounding because it is the most active word formation process in the German language nowadays. Furthermore, I predict that borrowing is common in the German language as well. Present-day English is the lingua franca. During their work, journalists usually translate news from English to another language (in this case, to German). These news went viral in English, and due to this, English is the donor of Covid 19 vocabulary to all other languages in the world, and German is no exception to that.

My other hypothesis is that most of the neologisms are anglicisms. Furthermore, I also expected a huge amount of literal translations among words.

The main question of my study is how these words appear in the German language. Are phrases translated? Are most of the words anglicism?

How are the English and German word formation processes different?

We can call new words neologisms. Neologism is a morphological process through which new words are formed in a language. New words are needed because they help us to identify new phenomena in scientific-technical and social innovations. In my study, I am going to examine these words.

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3. English word formation patterns

Crystal (2008: 329) describes neologisms as “‘nonce words’ in that of the many neologisms created, adapted, mutilated, very few survive. A nonce word is a linguistic form which a speaker consciously invents or accidentally does on a single occasion”. When these nonce words become adopted in a certain social group, and people enter these words in their mental lexicon and vocabulary, they become neologisms. According to Durham (2018: 1), “a neologism is a new word or a new way of using a word and is not yet commonly accepted.” (The meaning of neologisms can be understood outside of their situational context, furthermore, they can be found in dictionaries as well. Words like pandemic and keyworkers cannot be qualified as neologisms due to the fact that they had been used before the outbreak of the pandemic; these words were reintroduced.)

Al-Salman and Haider (2021) point out in their study that lexical innovations in connection with pandemics are common, especially, abbreviations or acronyms like HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), and SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome).

For my current study, I decided to use terms that are not exact COVID-19 terms, but they have been reintroduced during Covid 19 and they have developed new communicative and social functions as well, not only neologisms. Lexicographers are racing to register new words in special, and also general-purposed dictionaries as well.

4. Single Word formation Process

Al-Salman et al. (2021:30) differentiated the following single-word formation processes: affixation, conversion, compounding, backformation, blending, borrowing, acronyms, folk-etymology, coinages, clipping, and abbreviation.

4. 1. Coinages

Coinages are recently either accidentally or deliberately created completely new words, usually commercial product names are used as common nouns. The most famous coinage is *COVID 19*. Al-Salman et al. (2021:30) wrote the following in their study on the importance of ‘*COVID 19*’ as a coinage: “Not only that the term has been recognized by lexicographers and was added to English language dictionaries as a new dictionary entry, but it has equally been adopted as an undisputed neologism, a coinage in other world languages.”

4. 2. Compounding

Compounding is a process which combines two free morphemes to create a new word. Al-Salman et al. (2021:31) state that terms like these may be best described as nonce words, due to the fact that it cannot be confirmed that these words will survive the end of the pandemic because these words have an extremely limited and contingent currency and they usually disappear as soon as the social conditions change. A great example of compounding is *corona-shaming*. In this case, two free morphemes are added together and they create a new word. Meaning of *corona-shaming* is when somebody makes somebody else feel guilty for getting the Covid 19 disease.

Contact tracing is also an excellent example of compounding. *Contact tracing* is the act of monitoring and identifying people who might have been infected by Covid 19 in order to control the spread. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary (2022) the first known use of contact tracing was in 1910. This word was reintroduced without change of meaning during the pandemic.

4. 3. Affixation

Affixation is a word formation process which adds bound morphemes to existing roots, and these create new derivatives. The best example of affixation is *masklessness*, in this case,

double affixation happens. The root is *mask*, and an adjective forming suffix (*less*), then a noun forming suffix (*ness*) is added as well.

4. 4. **Abbreviation**

Abbreviation is a shortened form of a written word or phrase. *WFH* (= working from home) is a well-known abbreviation that was used before the pandemic but did not spread worldwide. *PPE* (= Personal Protective Equipment) is another great example of this occurrence.

4. 5. **Acronyms**

Acronyms are abbreviations formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced as words. Great examples of this phenomenon are *WHO* (= World Health Organization) – which also existed before the Coronavirus disease, yet it came up more often in the past two years – and *COVID-19* (= Corona Virus Disease 2019) as well.

4. 6. **Blending**

Blending is a word formation process in which parts of two or more lexemes are combined, and a new word is created. The meaning of the new word is the combination of the original lexemes. A great example of this occurrence is *Coronasplaining*. According to Urban Dictionary, *coronasplaining* is when somebody makes noises in public places which are associated with sickness or catching the disease, however they were choking from food or liquids accidentally. In this, Corona 19 and explaining are blended, the interfix is the ‘s’ between them, which is rare in the English language.

4. 7. **Borrowing**

Borrowing is a word formation process in which from another language a lexeme is adopted for usage. Due to the fact that English is the lingua franca, English is the largest donor language for borrowing.

Hamsterkaufing is a German lexeme used for panic buying, which is invented in the English vocabulary as well. Panic buying resembles the typical behaviour of hamsters, as they keep stuffing food into their cheek pouches to keep them going even in times of need.

Pandemic is also a borrowing from the Greek word ‘pandemos’.

The word *Corona Waltz* also contains a German element, due to the fact that *Walzer* is a German word which means to roll or to evolve. *Waltz* refers to a certain type of ballroom or

folk dance. The meaning of the word *Corona Waltz* is the act of keeping a distance from other people.

4. 8. Clipping

This word formation process is also known as shortening because it reduces the lexeme to one of its parts. For example, *pandy* is a shortened form of the pandemic.

4. 9. Folk etymology

Folk etymology is a change in the meaning or form of a word over time which is the product of the replacement of an unknown form with a familiar one. According to Merriam-Webster (2022), the first known use of *scarring* happened in 1847. The original meaning is defined as ‘the formation or appearance of a scar or of multiple scars on the skin or other bodily tissue after a wound has healed.’ However, due to Covid 19, this word got a new meaning as well: these are the long-term negative effects of damages caused by social or economic upheaval.

The word *quarantine* is also an excellent example of folk etymology. According to the article in the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2022), it can be traced back to the word *quadraginta*, which comes from Latin. The original meaning of the word was ‘forty’. The word referred to a law, which stated that the widow was permitted by the law to stay in her deceased husband’s home without paying any rent to his heirs. Quarantine also had another religious meaning, which referred to 40 days of fasting before Easter. Nowadays, the word refers to a restraint upon the activity of somebody to prevent a community from a contagious disease.

Self-isolation is also an intriguing example of this occurrence. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2022), the original meaning of isolation is ‘islanded’. The first hospitals in Italy were built on islands to prevent people from catching contagious diseases. The enrolment of the word *isolated* to the English vocabulary can be dated to the late 1700s. A verb was subsequently coined to correspond to this adjective, through the process of back-formation, we got the word *isolate* in English.

Linguists date self-isolation to 1834, the first known use of this term refers to being unaware of the events around us.

5. Dual Word formation processes

In the previous examples, only one word formation process occurred, however building a new lexeme can exhibit two-word formation processes used together as well.

5. 1. Blending and affixation

New lexemes can be created by blending and affixation as well. Here, *quarantine* and *queen* build a new blend, and 's' is a plural-marking suffix in the end.

Quaranqueens, according to Urban Dictionary has two different meanings. The first meaning is 'a person who obsessively sterilizes everything they wear and have purchased'. The other meaning refers to a person who is not infected with Covid but still uses social distancing as an excuse to avoid working.

5. 2. Compounding and affixation

Contactless delivery is an interesting lexeme from a linguistic point of view: in compounding, affixation occurs. In the first part of the compound, *less* is an adjective forming suffix.

5. 3. Clipping and compounding

We can examine clipping and compounding in the example of *coronalit*. *Coronalit* refers to literary works and literature produced during the time of Covid. In this case, the word literature is shortened to 'lit', which is the second part of the compound (*corona+literature*). *Gen C* is another example of clipping and compounding, where two clipping occurs, as the word 'generation' and 'covid' is also shortened. The term *Gen C* has two meanings. According to Schoicet (2021), some experts in sociology use this term to express the effects of the pandemic on children, however, others refer to all the children who were born from 2016 to the mid-2030s.

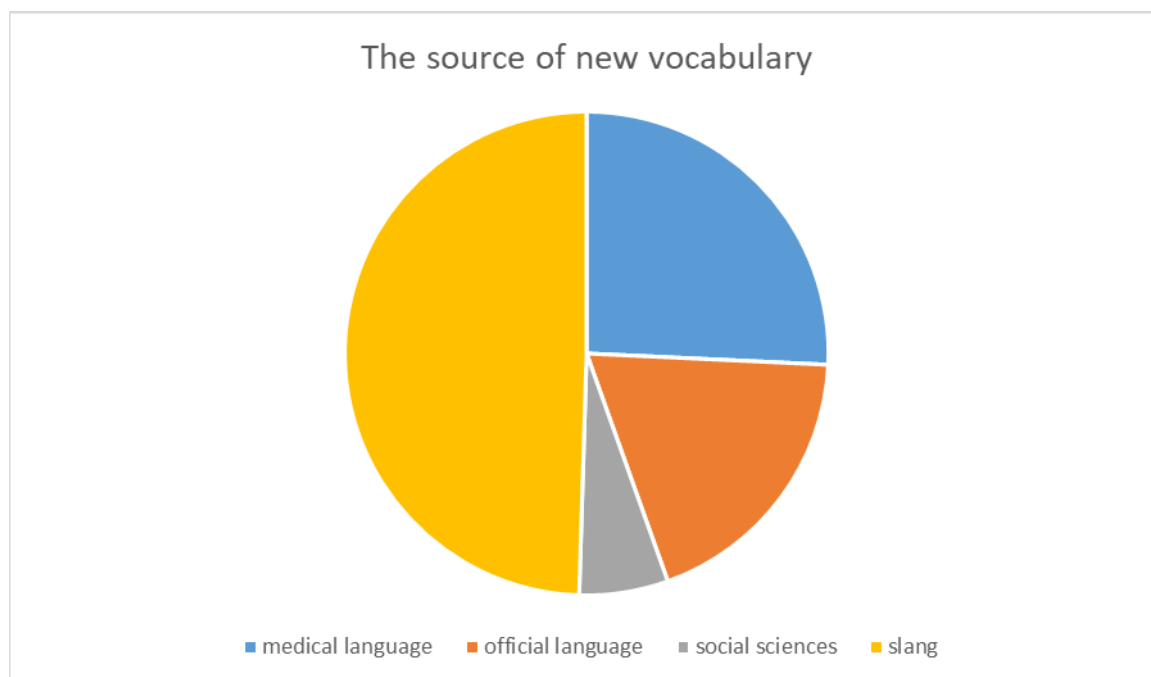
6. Results and discussion

By analysing the words which came into the language with Covid 19, we have a perfect opportunity to track the zeitgeist. Tony Thorne, who is a language consultant at King's College in London, was interviewed by CBC news and said that the upheaval of the virus gave birth to more than 1000 neologisms. The new words come from mainly three directions. The official language spoken by the government also includes medical language. Ordinary

people also react to the new situation by creating slang words, which are usually formed by blending. According to Yamane (2020:63) *pandy* and *pando* are shortened forms of the word pandemic, both coming from the Australian speech community. Australian speech community is prone to create witty slang, which can be detected through Covid 19 as well. Yamane (2020:71) also stated that the many slang words created by Covid 19 involved personification, such as the Australian word Lady Rona (which is not part of my Corpus). In her study, she stated that people personalized and familiarized the virus, for this occurrence calling the virus Miley Cyrus is an outstanding example, not just of personification, but also of the cockney working-class rhyming slang.

Unfortunately, in this study I do not have the opportunity to mention every language variant, however, it would be an interesting topic for supplementary research. A further field of research could be the investigation of queer and African-American communities because I suppose that they are well-spring linguistic innovators.

Furthermore, several new expressions were invented by social scientists, such as sociologists and psychologists, in order to help people express the reality they experience.



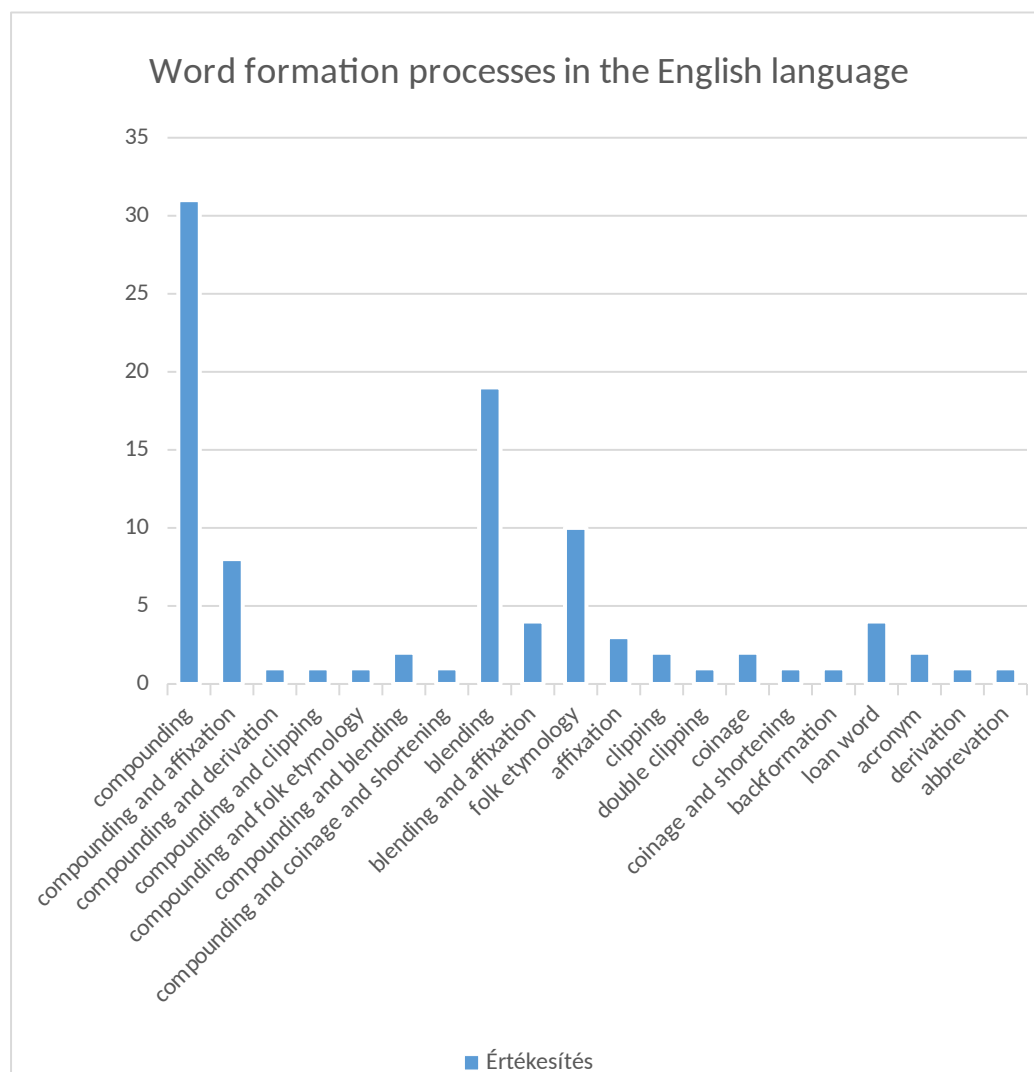
1. Figure: The source of new vocabulary in the English language

With the help of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2022) I differentiated the following sources of new vocabulary by looking at the semantic meaning of the words. I established the following categories:

- medical language
- official language
- social sciences
- slang.

According to my findings, shown in Figure 1, 49% of the words come from slang, 26% come from the medical language, 19% come from the official language spoken by politicians and governors, and 6% are from sociology and psychology.

According to the definition by Elbe (1996:11) " Slang is an ever-changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large".



2. Figure: Word

formation processes in the English language

When it comes to word formation processes, which is the main scope of my study, I observed that the most common word formation process is compounding (31%). Figure 2 shows that

the second most used word formation process is blending (19%). Folk etymology also reached a higher percentage, 10% of the newly formatted words belong to this method. 4% of the new words are loan words from foreign languages. The most frequently used dual word formation processes were compounding and affixation (8%) and blending and affixation (4%).

7. The similarities and differences between German and English languages

According to Bruckner (2016:2) it is a widely accepted fact that English and German languages have many similarities; however, on closer inspection, fundamental differences can be observed. Even though they both belong to the European language family (the Germanian group and the Western subgroup), different evolution patterns can be observed. While the word-building processes of the two languages are mainly the same, their productivity is different, which is one of the main topics of my examination.

In the case of derivation (affixation), several differences can be observed. With the help of affixes, prefixes (which precede the word), and suffixes (which are placed after the stem) new words can be formed. The affixes usually change the meaning of the word, and suffixes have a tendency to change the morphological status of the word as well. For instance: *kind*=> *kindness*, *klug*=> *Klugheit*.

In the English language, prefixation does not influence the word's morphological status, whereas in the German language some linguists consider prefixation a different word-building process from derivation. German linguistics lays a high value on suffix derivation because in the case of derivation, it might determine the gender of the noun. For example, the suffixes *-heit*, *-keit* and *-ung* are always feminine.

Many affixes of Germanic origin were independent words in Old English. For example, the English suffix *-hood* and the corresponding German suffix *-heit* are cognate and go back to a lexeme *hād*, meaning "condition", "rank". Similarly, the adjectival suffix *-ly* (in English), respectively *-lich* (in German) comes from the Old English word *lic*, meaning "body". There are other affixes of Germanic origin taken over by the English language. Such is the case of the verbal suffix *-en*, which is used in Modern English on a limited scale, e.g. *to earthen*, *to ashen*, *to darken*, *to widen*, *to deepen*. In German, this suffix is actually specific to all verbs, except for *sein*="to be" and *tun*="to do", e.g.: *sprechen*="to talk", *machen*="to make". In the case of verbs that are neologisms, the suffix *-en* is widened to *-ieren*, e.g.: *kommunizieren*, *diskutieren*, *orientieren*. (Bruckner 2016:6)

In comparison to other languages, German makes use of word-building processes on a larger scale. A great majority of its vast vocabulary contains complex lexemes.

According to Bruckner (2016:1), in comparison to English word building, German word building has a higher degree of efficiency. For instance, the word *Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaftskapitänswitwenrentenauszahlungsstelle* is the longest German lexeme I could find in the dictionary. If we translated this word to another language, we would need to use two or three complex grammatical structures to express it. The following is the English translation: “the place where subsidy/pension is paid to the widow of the captain of a naval (seafaring) society making transports by steamers on the Danube”, which shows how hard it is linguistically to express these nonce-formations. Out of the context it was used, it is a hardly understandable word and not a part of the everyday German language.

Bruckner (2016:9) also examines the difference between the English and German verbal formatives. In the case of the English language, verbal formatives may fall into two different prototypes: o *Noun Stem + Verbalizer > Verb*, e.g. *earth + -en > earthen*; o *Adjective Stem + Verbalizer > Verb*, e.g. *white + -en > whiten*.

In the case of the German language the formation of verbs happens by prefixation exclusively, because the suffixation of the verbs is not possible. Prefixes may be embedded to nouns or adjectives and in order to form verbs, the further addition of the verbal suffix *-en/-ieren* is always compulsory, for instance: *ver- + Dampf + -en > verdampfen*; *ent- + schuldig + -en > entschuldigen*.

8. German Word formation processes

8. 1. Derivation

When the affixes (prefixes and suffixes) or the derivational morphemes appear, it is called explicit derivation. In the case of implicit derivation, the derivational morphemes are not recognisable.

Affixes can be classified with the help of various categories. German linguistics differentiates native and non-native elements in prefixes and suffixes. The difference between English and German, in this case, is that in English, some affixes are no longer active (*warm+th*).

Antikörper is an example of affixation (prefixation), and ‘anti’ is a non-native, loan-affix.

8. 2. Composition

According to Bruckner (2016:10), the composition is a word-building process by which new lexemes are formed, resulting in the semantical and grammatical combination of two or more lexemes (roots and stems). Compositions are best described as lexemes that include two or more stems. The first stem is usually called determinant, the second stem is determinatum. In her study, Bruckner mentioned that composition is a Germanic word-building process: it is characteristic of the primitive Indo-Germanic language.

Coronaalarm: two stems are put together in this lexeme, which makes it a composition.

Coronahund is also a composition (*Corona+Hund*). By this, we refer to a special kind of dog, which was trained to recognise Covid 19 infection.

8. 3. Conversion

Conversion is a process which affects the morphological and syntactic role of the word as well. The form of the lexeme is the same, however the word class changes.

In English, conversion shows increasing productivity since there is no restricting rule on the forms which can undergo conversion.

8. 4. Clipping (shortening)

This word formation device dates back to the 13th century, and it is the partial reduction of the lexeme.

An example of clipping is *Covid 19-App*. App is the shortened form of Application. The word refers to an application tracking down Covid 19 infected people.

8. 5. Abbreviation

Abbreviation or in other words alphabetism or initialism is a word formation process, where a word or a group of words is reduced to its initial letters. A great example of this is *NMS*, which refers to *Nasen-Mund-Schützende Masken* (in English: nose and mouth protecting mask).

8. 6. Contamination/Portmanteau word

Contamination or Portmanteau word refers to a word in which more words are combined into a new word. In Linguistics, a portmanteau is a single morpheme, which is analysed as a *mask-have* mask+must is coined by blending here into mask-have. This lexeme implies that during

the time of Covid 19, regulations obligated people to cover the lower part of their faces with masks. This lexeme is an anglicism, which also appears in the German language.

Maskne is also a great example of contamination. The word also comes from the English language, *mask+acne* are blended here. The word refers to a skin condition (acné) evoked by constant mask-wearing.

9. Multiple word formation processes in German

9. 1. Derivation+composition (within the composition there is a derivation as well)

An example of this double word formation process is *Antiviren-pille*. By this, we refer to a drug that reduces the symptoms of viral infectious diseases and prevents their spread. Here, ‘anti’ is a non-native derivational morpheme, and the two stems are spliced together with the help of a hyphen.

9. 2. Composition + Clipping + Derivation

An example of this triple word formation process is *Impfträglichkeit*. *Impfträglichkeit* refers to hesitant agreement or little willingness to vaccinate against certain pathogens, reluctance. *Impf* is a shortened form of *Impfung*, which means vaccine. The next constituent is ‘träge’ which is an adjective form of => noun, and ‘heit’ is a derivation morpheme at the end, which forms a noun from a verb.

Impfträglich is a composition, and *-heit*, at the end is a derivation morpheme. Here, affixation occurs, with the help of a native suffix.

9. 3. Initialism + compounding

The compound contains a clipped stem in the first component, for instance, *R-Wert*. This word is used in epidemiology to quantify the number of people that an infected person infects on average. Here *R* is the alphabetism of *Reproduktionszahl* (in English: reproductions number).

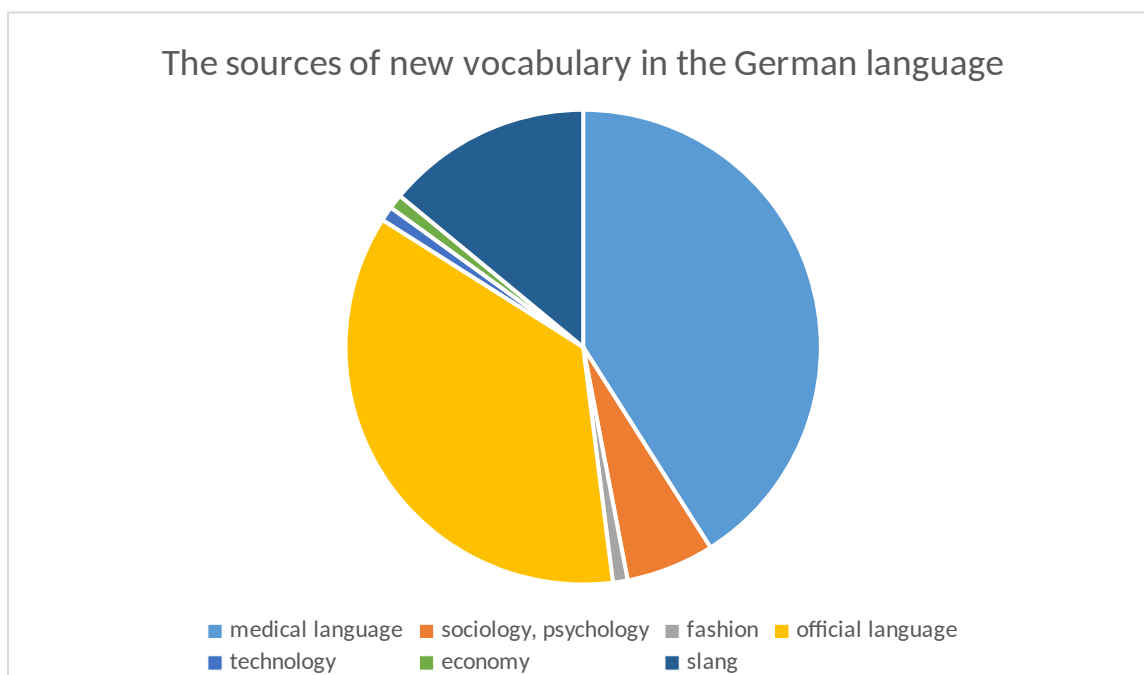
U- Lampe is another example of this occurrence: The compound contains a clipped stem in the first component. *UV* is the initialism for ultraviolet, *Lampe* is the second constituent in the composition.

In his study, Hunt (2019:110) differentiates loan blends and hybrid creations. If there is an English model for the hybrid, we call those hybrids loan blends, but if there is no English version for the word, we call it hybrid creation. The existence of an English model is not easily discernible, due to the similar word-building processes.

10. Discussion

Previously, I have mentioned that about 1,000 new English words came into the language, according to Tony Thorne. However, I find it impossible to count how many new German

words were created, due to occasionalisms, or nonce formations. These words are not part of our mental lexicon, and they cannot be found in dictionaries. The corpus of linguistic studies is not from spoken German, but rather from written, and occasionalisms mostly occur in spoken text. We can directly conclude from this information that occasionalisms or nonce formations are not examined in this study.



3. Figure: The sources of new vocabulary in the German language

Most of the new vocabulary came from the medical language (41%) and from the official language (36%). My explanation for this occurrence is that these are the fields which are the easiest to reach on the internet. 15% of the new words are slang, 1% came from technology, 1% came from fashion, and 6% was added by the social sciences.

Knipf-Komlósi et al. (2006: 35) have written that the reality of the German language is much more complex and complicated than a layman would imagine. The common concept of a country, a nation and a language – as it has historically grown in Central Europe since the 19th century – is not valid in the case of the German language. Furthermore, it extends to several countries in Central Europe, in which different forms of German are spoken. Within Germany, a large-scale breakdown into northern, central and southern Germany can be made.

Every natural language represents a heterogeneous system of several sub-languages, such as dialects, Austrian standard language, media language, medical language, and youth language. There is a variety of appearances and forms of existence in the field of language use.

The German standard variety is basically a summary of all regional dialects and colloquial languages in the territory of Germany. It is codified, standardized, institutionalized and binding in the educational institutions and in the media of Germany. At the same time, it has the highest prestige among the other varieties. It is generally the normal form of public speeches and written texts. The dialect remains limited to oral language usage in non-public situations and in the private sphere, especially in rural areas.

Words invented by dialect users are not represented in my study.

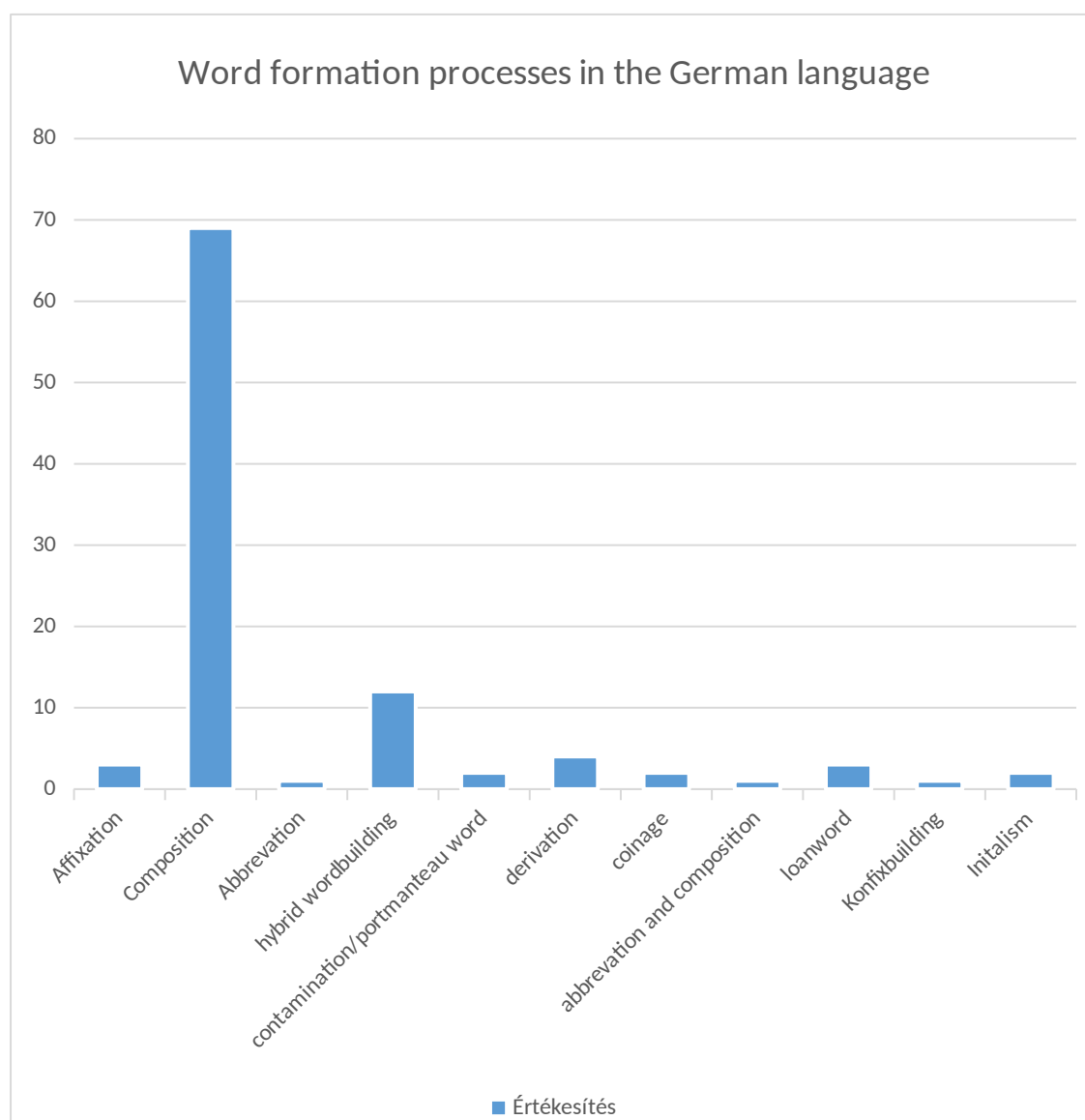
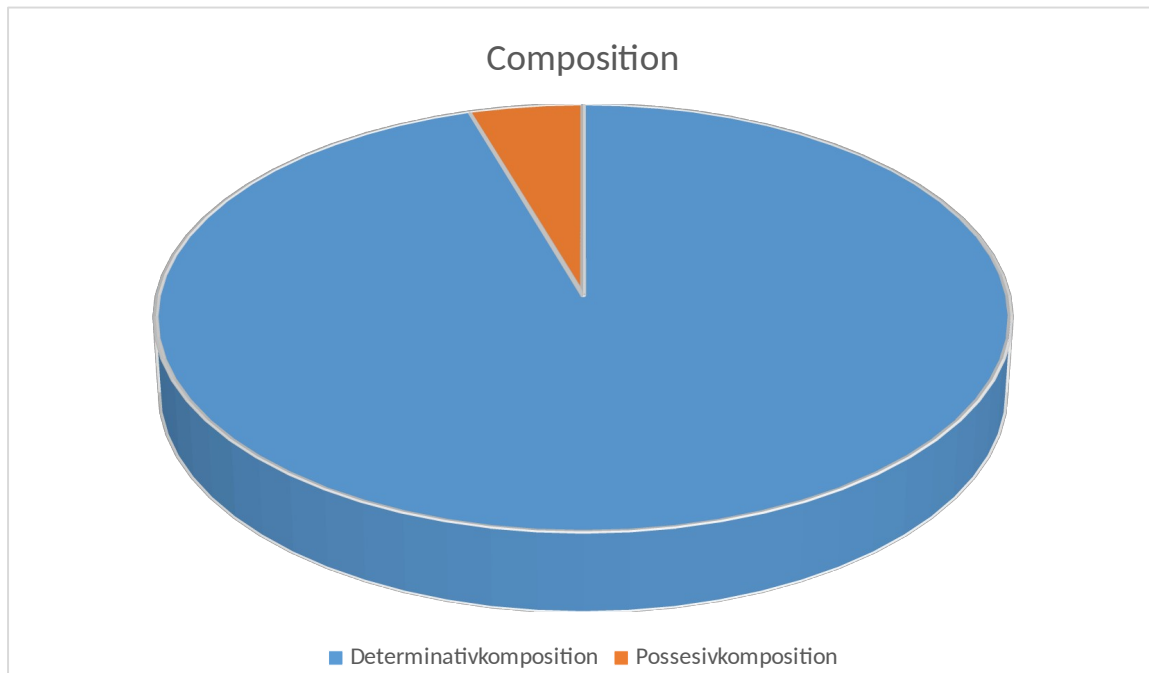


Figure: Word formation processes in the German language

4.

It is interesting to observe that, just as in English the most productive word formation process is also composition. However, the ratio differs, because here the absolute dominance of composition can be detected. 69% of the word formation processes is composition, which

proves my hypothesis, that in German, the most productive word formation process is composition. The second biggest group is the hybrid word formation process (12%). The other word formation processes were not as common, so those are only listed here: affixation (3%), abbreviation (1%), portmanteau word (2%), derivation (4%), coinage (2%), abbreviation and composition (1%), loanword (3%), confix building (1%) and initialism (2%).



5. Figure: Type of compositions in the German language

Determinativkomposition is the most common among the 3 other German compositions. In the case of *Determinativkomposition*, the second element is called the primary word (*Grundwort*), which allocates the larger group to which the compound noun belongs. It also determines the gender and the plural forms as well. The first part is usually the determiner or determinative element (*Bestimmungswort*), which designates the subcategory to which the word belongs. Determinative element can be a verb as well, which is represented by the stem.

When determiners and primary words are equal, we use the term '*Kopulativkomposition*', because the word is parataxis in this case.

Elsen (2011:298) describes *Possessivkomposition* in the following way: *Possessivkomposition* is contrasted like a *Determinativkomposition*, indicates the possession or characteristic of a person, animal, plant, etc. which is not mentioned in the expression and serves as a label for the person, animal, plant.

11. Comparison

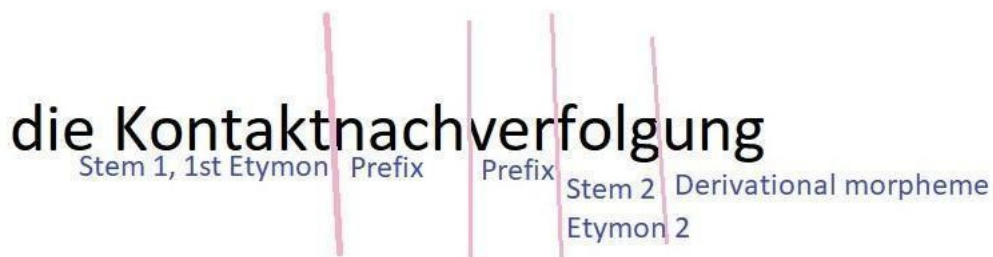
We can observe that the English language uses a wider range of word formation processes than German.

In English and German as well, the most productive word formation is derivation and composition.

Many common affixes are used to enrich these languages.

In English, the composition is the oldest way of word building, whereas, in German, the composition is the most productive: English language users tend to use many occasionalism, which will be discussed later in more detail. This occurrence is called nonce formation in English. These are words that can only be understood in the given context. Without their context, they lose their meaning. Furthermore, these words are not part of our mental lexicon.

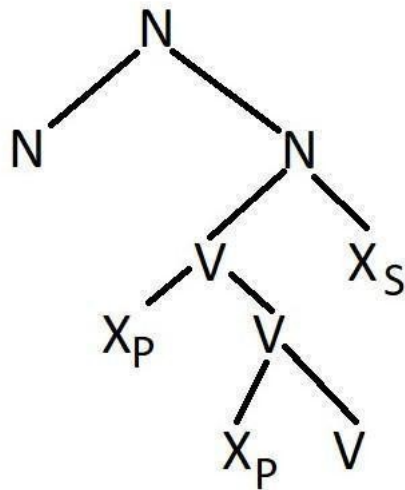
English compounds are made up of two or three structures whereas, in German, compounds are made up of multiple structures. German compounds are always written down as a single word, if there is a need to add a linking word, then we add the *Fugen* 'S', which is a connective element. In English, compounds are sometimes written down as one single word, sometimes as two separate words, there is no rule for that. In German, within compounding, several word formation processes can be observed.



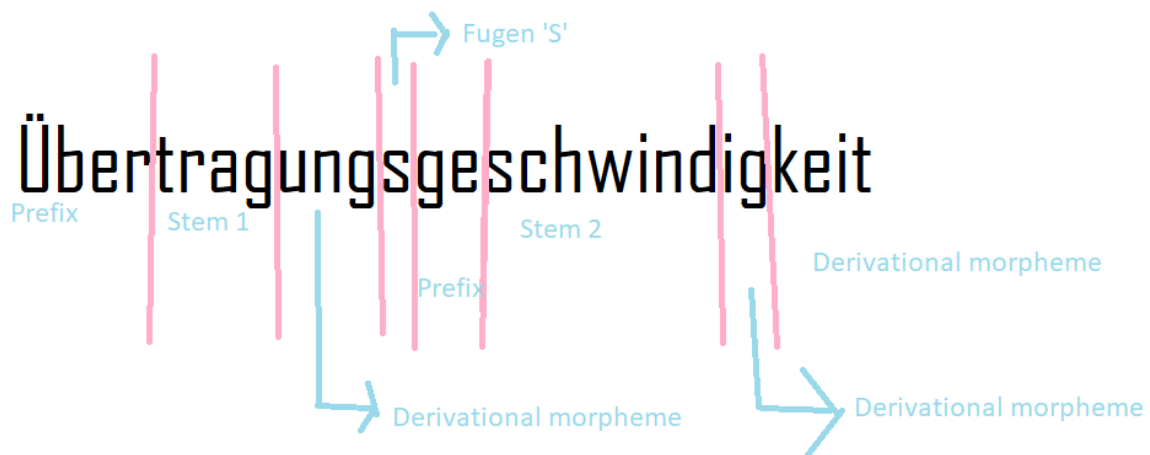
6. Figure

For instance, the word *Kontaktnachverfolgung* is an excellent example of composition. Within the composition, affixation and derivation can be observed. *Kontakt* is the first stem, which is the first etymon. *Nach-* and *ver-* are prefixes, *folg-* is the second etymon, and at the end of the word, a derivation morpheme can be seen (*-ung*).

The word's meaning is contact tracing, contact tracking. In the structure tree, N refers to Noun, V refers to Verb, Xp refers to prefixes, and Xs refers to suffixes.



7. Figure

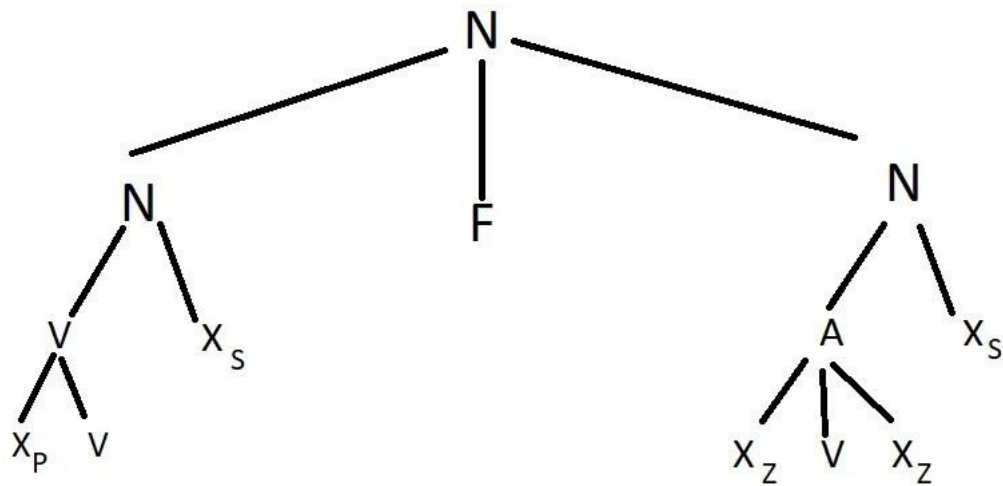


8. Figure

Another great example is *Übertragungsgeschwindigkeit*. In the beginning, *über-* is a prefix, *trag-* is an etymon, *-ung* is also a derivation morpheme here, and then a fugen 's' can be seen. *Ge-* is a prefix, *schwind-* is the second etymon, *-ig* and *-keit* are derivation morphemes.

The meaning of this word refers to the speed of the transmission of Coronavirus Disease, in other words, how fast the Coronavirus spreads, after somebody is infected with it.

In the structure tree, N refers to Noun, F refers to the fugen morpheme, V refers to the verb, A Xs refers to the suffix, while Xp to the prefix, and A is an adverb, as it describes how rapidly the disease spreads.



9. Figure

The abbreviation is a productive word-building device in both languages.

The influence of English on the German language can be observed through borrowing and the many anglicisms, which came into the German language during this short period.

12. Occasionalism or neologism? Are the new words enrolled in dictionaries?

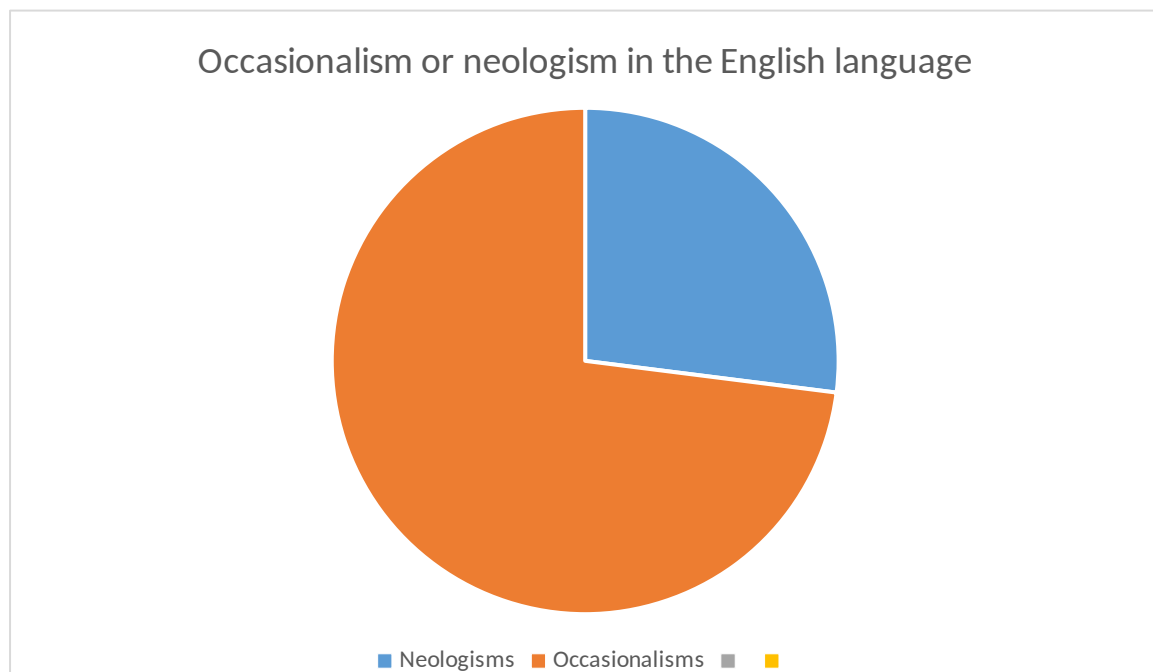


Figure: Occasionalism or neologism in the English language

10.

In lexicology and morphology, linguists differentiate between neologism and occasionalism. According to the definition by Tomášiková (2008:246-256) occasionalisms are newly-formed words that are only understandable in their contexts. These words are not enrolled in our mental lexicon, and they cannot be found in dictionaries as well. Tomášiková (2008:246-256) also differentiated neologisms and occasionalisms. We call those new words neologisms, which have not become part of our everyday language usage yet. However, they are understandable without their context, and without the certain situation, they were used in. Neologisms are already part of our mental lexicons, and they are enrolled in dictionaries as well.

In my study, I also examined the ratio of neologisms and occasionalisms of the new words in the English language. I used the Merriam-Webster online dictionary (2022) to decide, whether these words are occasionalisms or neologisms. In the English language, 73% of the new words were occasionalism and 27% were neologisms.



In the German language, the ratio of occasionalism and neologism was a bit different. 37% of the newly invented words were neologisms, and 63% were occasionalisms. However, as I have already mentioned, spoken German was not represented in this study. During spoken conversations, German language users often make up new words, usually with the help of compounding. Some of these words are only used in one situation. They are only understandable in the given context. If spoken German were analysed in this study, I suppose that the ratio between occasionalism and neologism would be different, and my findings would contain more occasionalisms.

In both cases, the dominance of occasionalism can be observed.

13. Lexical hybridization of English and German elements

In his study ‘Lexical hybridization of English and German elements: a comparison between spoken German and the language of the German newsmagazine Der Spiegel’, Jaime W. Hunt wrote the following:

General findings indicate that the most common form of hybridization is the compounding of English specifiers with German heads and much less the attachment of German morphemes (both derivational affixes and semi-affixes) to English stems in both spoken and written texts. These forms of hybridization demonstrate both the productive word formation processes of German as well as its contact-induced lexical enrichment beyond the mere direct borrowing of loanwords. (Hunt 2019)

This quotation and the whole study perfectly match my findings. A significant amount of the common German neologisms are blended compounds: they contain one element from the English language (source language) and the other from the receptor language (German). Many of the neologisms are made with this word formation process. English words and morphemes are morphologically embedded in the German language. Hunt (2019) described in his study that blended compounds usually include one free morpheme from the source language and another free morpheme from the receptor language.

Hunt (2019:108) also stated that the spontaneously spoken ‘everyday-German’ language (so-called “Alltagssprache”) is underrepresented in linguistic studies about anglicisms.

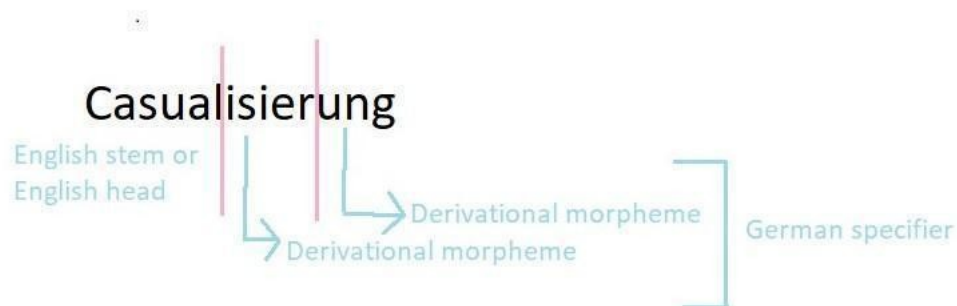


12. Figure

In the case of *präcoronal*, *prä-* is a non-native Latin prefix, which does not necessarily mean past time, it also means spatially "before", but in this context it really is temporal, so it refers to a time before the Coronavirus Disease. The stem is the *corona*, which comes from the Latin language, but it was invented by the English language-users.

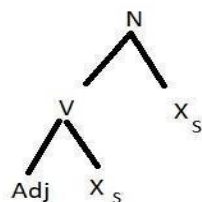
L is an adjective forming suffix in this case, at the end of the word. Here we can observe that the stem is from the English language, however, the modifiers (*prä-* and *-l*) are German.

This word refers to a time period before Covid 19.



13. Figure

Casualisierung is a trend in fashion, less formality, and more comfort-oriented clothes. *Casual* is an anglicism, a loan word, *-isier* a derivational morpheme, from a noun/adjective it makes a verb, *-ung* is also a derivational morpheme, a native derivation suffix, which is always used to create a noun as an end product. This word is an excellent example, due to this, I illustrated it on a structure tree.

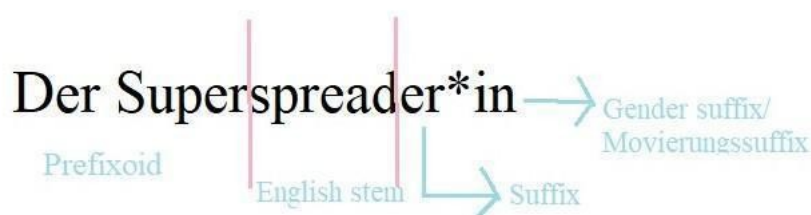


14. Figure



15. Figure

The word *Selbsttest* comes from the English self-test. This is also an excellent example for hybrid word building. *Selbst* is the German modifier in the beginning of the word. *Test* is the English stem. *Test* is considered to be a perfectly normal German word for German language users today, since it is wide-spread, however, etymologically it comes from the English language, this is why I included this example in my study.

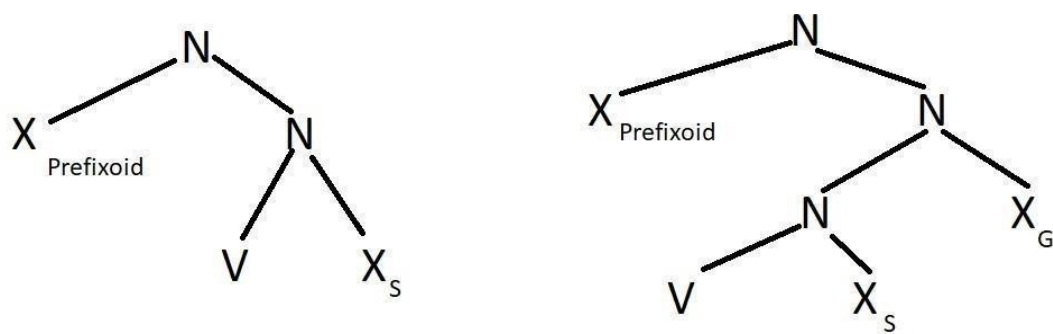


16. Figure

The word *Superspreader*in* is one of the most complex examples which can be found in my corpus. In the beginning, I would call *Super* a Prefixoid. According to Knipf-Komlósi (2007:86) affixoids (prefixoids and suffixoids) have a special position in German word-forming morphemes since they are neither clearly free nor clearly bound morphemes, furthermore, they have generalized meanings. They appear both free and bound in linguistics.

Spread is the English head, which is a noun in this case. (The word formation process in the case of spread was conversion: the original word, spread a verb, which has the exact same form – became a noun.)

The *-er* ending is a suffix. With an asterisk, I marked the feminine form of the word. The *-in* ending is a gender suffix (in German linguistics, it is called *Movierungssuffix*), which builds a feminine form from the masculine.

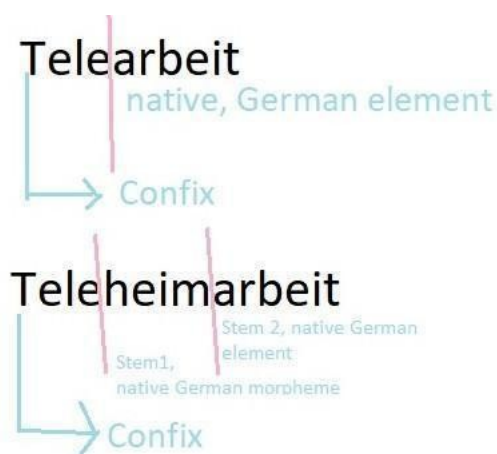


17. Figure

The German word, *coronieren* is also an excellent example: *coron* is an anglicism, which refers to Corona Virus disease, and *-ieren* is a German derivational morpheme, which verbalizes a noun.

It is important to differentiate hybrid word building and the so-called *Konfixbildung*. According to IDS (= Leibniz Institut für Deutsche Sprache), in German Linguistics, Konfixe (lat. configure, to connect with each other) are word formation-specific units, which cannot occur alone (not bounded) in texts. Confixes cannot be used syntactically with inflexional affixes. Confixes are primary units of loan word formation as well, they are borrowed morphemes.

Just as words, confixes are the direct or indirect morphological basis of explicit derivatives. Confixes can be derived with word formation affixes.



18. Figure

In my study, *Telearbeit* and *Teleheimarbeit* are the only examples of this occurrence. Here, *Tele-* is the confix, and *arbeit* is the native, German element.

14. Anglicisms in German language



19. Figure

The purity of the German language can be examined through the observation of the ratio of anglicisms. My hypothesis was that 20% of my German corpus will be anglicism, however, to my surprise, only 4% of the word list was anglicism, and 2% was internationalism. I did not count hybrid word building as anglicism, however, they clearly have an English origin.

Anglicisms are loan words and phrases, which are borrowed from the English language into another language, in this case, German. Examples of this occurrence are *das Shutdown*, *das Social distancing*, *das Homeschooling* and *die PCR*.

In this study, the example of internationalism is *Coronakabinett* and *Coronadiktatur*. Internationalisms are loanwords, which occur in more languages. During the Covid 19, people had similar experiences, and countries and politicians treated the virus similarly. Due to this, it is not a surprise that internationalisms like *Coronakabinett* or *Coronadiktatur* spread.

15. Summary

In the English language, a wider range of word formation processes are available, by this, I mean that the productivity of each word formation process is smaller, however, the variety of the active word formation processes is bigger, which can be seen on Figure 2. In both languages, compounding was the most productive word formation process, however, in the German language, the absolute dominance of compounding can be observed. English and

German compounds have a few major differences. English compounds are usually written separately from each other, on the contrary, German compounds are written together, often connected with a connecting element (*Fugen 'S'*). Within the German compounds, more word formation processes occur. For instance, I have taken a closer look at the word *die Antiviren-pille*. In this case, *anti-* is a non-native prefix, and the two parts are connected with a hyphen. *Variantengebiet* is also a great example of this occurrence. Between *Übertragung* and *Geschwindigkeit*, there is a connecting element, the *Fugen 'S'*.



I had a hypothesis, that there will be an outstanding number of anglicisms and borrowing among the German corpus. However, anglicisms occurred in negligible numbers. It was also an interesting observation that more German neologisms were entered into dictionaries. In connection with this information, I must note that more slangs were available in the English written record. For this, I have an explanation: as I have mentioned previously, German dialects are not frequently used in written language, so slangs invented by the speakers of a certain dialect are not as widespread as in English. While these dialects are mostly used in spoken German, it is harder to find slang words in the online, written German record.

I differentiated confixes and hybrid word building. Hybrid word buildings contain one element from the source language (English) and the other element is from the receptor language (which is German). English words are morphologically incorporated into the German language. Confixes are word formation-specific units, which cannot occur alone in texts. Confixes are borrowed morphemes, they are the direct or indirect morphological basis of explicit derivatives. Confixes can be derived with word formation affixes.

16. Where could this study lead?

To continue this study in the future, it would be interesting to highlight the etymological origins of each word as well, due to the fact that many words and phrases were reinvented and revised during this time in order to express a new reality.

For instance, *elbow bump* used to be an informal greeting before, it meant something like a high-five during the early 2000s. Now, *elbow bumping* is referred to as the Wuhan handshake or the new handshake, due to the fact that it got popular even among politicians. With elbow bumps, they can avoid unnecessary touch.

Many speech communities, for instance, the Australian speech community, the African-American Vernacular speech community, the Cockney or the queer speech community are prone to create new, witty slang words. This can be detected through Covid 19 as well. Analysing these neologisms from an etymological-sociolinguistic perspective would be an interesting topic for further investigation.

Furthermore, it would be quite intriguing to expand the corpus with more words and examine whether my findings are accurate in a wider corpus as well. The collection of additional corpora is in progress.

A huge question about these new words is the following: will we use them after the end of Covid 19? For how long will they be in our mental lexicons? However, these questions can only be answered after the end of Covid 19-era. At the present, linguists can only make predictions and hypotheses.

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