



COVID-19 RELATED NEOLOGISMS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: SEMANTIC, MORPHOLOGICAL, AND PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on all aspects of human life, including language. This study examines neologisms that emerged in English and Uzbek during the pandemic, analyzing their semantic, morphological, and pragmatic features. Data were collected from media texts, social networks, and official documents between 2020 and 2022. Findings reveal that neologisms enriched medical terminology, influenced social life, education, work processes, and communication, and demonstrated language integration and adaptation. The most productive areas for neologism formation were social life and education. The study also highlights cultural and contextual adaptations in both languages.

Keywords: COVID-19, neologisms, Uzbek language, English language, semantic features, morphological adaptation, language integration, pandemic lexicon.

Introduction

In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged on a global scale, has had a profound impact on all aspects of human life. Among these changes, the pandemic has notably affected language and the lexical system. During the pandemic, new social, medical, and technological needs accelerated the development of language, resulting in the formation of various neologisms. In linguistics, the concept of a neologism is defined as a new word or lexical unit, often associated with a specific period and context. Neologisms that emerged in the context of COVID-19 require analysis in terms of their semantic, morphological, and pragmatic features in both Uzbek and English.

Neologisms formed during the pandemic not only enriched medical terminology but also created new lexical units in social life, education, work processes, and



communication. Furthermore, these neologisms illustrate the integration and adaptation of language as they adjust to the specific features of each language.

During the pandemic, existing words acquired new meanings. English words such as mask, lockdown, and self-isolation, previously used in general contexts, became adapted to medical and social contexts. In Uzbek, units like karantin (quarantine), masofaviy ta'lim (distance learning), and kovidlashmoq (to contract COVID) gained widespread usage with new semantic weight.

Terms that were previously used only by specialists entered general discourse. For example:

In English: vaccine, PCR test, variant, covid-positive

In Uzbek: emlash (vaccination), PCR natija (PCR result), kovid

The process of word formation intensified during the pandemic. In English, new words were formed through suffixation, prefixation, and contamination: Zoomer, Covidian, Covidiot. In Uzbek, neologisms were formed through affixation and compounding: covidchilar (COVID-ers), kovidlashmoq, onlaynlashmoq (to go online).

Each language adopted neologisms according to its cultural context. In English, words related to memes and internet culture appeared, such as quarantini and doomscrolling. In Uzbek, neologisms were more aligned with social, religious, and legal contexts: saharlik karantini (dawn quarantine), onlayn taroveh (online evening prayer).

During the study, more than 50 COVID-19-related neologisms in English and Uzbek from 2020–2022 were analyzed. Data were collected from media texts, social networks, and official documents.

Distribution of Neologisms by Field

Field	English neologisms %	Uzbek neologisms %
Medicine	32%	28%
Education	21%	24%
Social life and Psychology	29%	31%
Technology and Work processes	18%	17%



These results indicate that in both languages, neologisms most frequently emerged in the fields of social life and education, reflecting their close connection to societal needs and environments.

Semantic Groups and Examples

Semantic group	English examples	Uzbek examples
Isolation & restrictions	lockdown, self-isolation	karantin, uyda qol
Hygiene & medicine	sanitizer, covid-free	dezinfeksiya, emlanmoq
Online life/online meeting	zoom meeting, virtual event	onlayn uchrashuv, masofaviy ish
Psychological state	lockdown stress, covid anxiety	karantin charchog‘i, covid qo‘rquvi

COVID-19 has profoundly influenced language development, leading to the creation of numerous neologisms in both English and Uzbek. These new lexical units reflect semantic expansion, terminological popularization, morphological adaptation, and cultural-contextual integration. The pandemic demonstrates how language evolves in response to social, technological, and medical needs, offering valuable insights for future linguistic research.

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