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New vocabulary related to coronavirus: The potential of its use in the Kazakh language and the problem of translation

Abstract

This article aims to collect, group and conduct a linguistic study of coroneologisms – new words and phrases formed during the Covid-19 outbreak, to analyze their translation into Kazakh and determine the potential for their use in the language. The materials for the study were taken from (i) the websites of a national Kazakh newspaper, (ii) an official site of the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its instagram, (iii) English-language newspapers, (iv) materials from online Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Continuous sampling was used to select the tokens for the study. Having analyzed new words and expressions related to coronavirus, their usage in English and translation into Kazakh, we can say that some comparatively new words and expressions that describe a specific situation (lockdown, WFH (working from home), social distancing, etc.) belong to particular professional vocabulary and have already been introduced into the dictionaries in many languages. The discourse potential of such phrases as COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2 and coronavirus-related words and word-combinations remains high expanding the range of terms in the field of medicine. The status of the Kazakh versions of the new terms still remains challenging as far as they are not introduced into Kazakh dictionaries and are not approved by the Terminological commission of the country. Despite these facts, they continue their “illegal” functioning in Kazakh newspapers and on the country’s Ministry of Healthcare website.

Keywords: coronavirus, coroneologism, online dictionaries, usage potential, medical discourse, ways of translation.

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