

Anna V. Lenets, Iuliia A. Lagazhan
Southern Federal University
Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation
annalenets@sfedu.ru, lagazhan@sfedu.ru

Language representation of COVID-19 vaccination in the German-speaking media space

Abstract

The article aims to examine the language means exploited by the leaders of the German-speaking media space that are aimed at influencing and manipulating public consciousness during the COVID-19 pandemic. Journal articles about vaccination published in leading online newspapers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland were used as research material. 206 examples were selected using continuous sampling. The methods of semantic and stylistic analysis were applied for the obtained data processing. As a result, the language means used by the authors in the news articles to express the attitude to vaccination were classified into 3 groups: (i) with positive semantics showing confidence in vaccines, (ii) with negative semantics indicating a complete rejection of vaccination, (iii) neutral. It was found that in the German-language media discourse, vaccination is viewed positively as a necessity, salvation and duty. However, the percentage of lexico-semantic groups expressing positive semantics was relatively small (28%). The negative attitude towards vaccination is expressed in skepticism and distrust of it. The percentage of lexico-semantic groups expressing negative semantics was as high as 68%. The study noted a significant variability in the distribution of groups depending on the country of the German-speaking area. Neutral attitude was rare (4%).

Keywords: COVID vocabulary, media discourse, speech impact, mass media, the German language

© Lenets A. V., Lagazhan I. A. 2023

For citation: Lenets, A. V., Lagazhan, I. A. (2023). Yazykovaya reprezentatsiya vaktsinatsii ot COVID-19 v nemetskoyazychnom mediaprostranstve [Language representation of COVID-19 vaccination in the German-speaking media space]. *Teoreticheskaya i prikladnaya lingvistika* [Theoretical and Applied Linguistics], 9 (4), 68–83. https://doi.org/10.22250/24107190_2023_9_4_68