

A Linguistic Analysis of COVID-19 Neologisms in English: Bangladesh Perspective

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted how we use language globally, resulting in an increase in new terms and expressions. Bangladesh, like the rest of the world, has also experienced this linguistic transformation. This study aims to identify and analyze the words, phrases, and acronyms that have gained prominence in English language usage during and after the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. The study focuses on both global and Bangladesh-specific language usage. Through a systematic literature review and quantitative analysis of a corpus spanning from January to June 2020 in Bangladesh, the study compiled and examined COVID-19-related vocabulary. The objective was to pinpoint the specific terms and expressions that gained prominence in English during this period. Additionally, the study analyzed a selection of the newly emerged words to determine the techniques of word formation. This study's findings enhance our knowledge of language change dynamics and offer valuable insights into the direct relationship between societal upheavals, such as the global pandemic, and language evolution. The research illuminates how language adapts and expands in response to significant events, providing valuable insights into the interplay between language and society.

Keywords: pandemic, COVID-19 related vocabulary, systematic literature review, corpus-based analysis

1. Introduction

Language change is the process through which a language's characteristics and usage change over time. Language changes can be systematic or sporadic, and they can appear in the language's lexis, semantics, syntax, and sound patterns. As a result, all-natural languages evolve, impacting all spheres of language usage (Nordquist, 2019; cited in Al-Azzawi & Ali Haleem, 2021).

COVID-19 is not an exception to the fact that languages change and adapt to new realities and situations (Burgos, n.d.). To adapt to new circumstances, the pandemic resulted in an explosion of new terms and phrases that were not necessarily created for the current pandemic. Neologisms — new words and phrases—explode in languages during periods of social catastrophe like the COVID-19 pandemic. These new terminology and expressions are helpful as they enable people to comprehend the adjustments that have abruptly become a part of their daily life. It assisted the people in putting their concerns into words about the worst health catastrophe in centuries. In reality, the shared conversation became the only means to make individuals feel connected in the absence of usual social interaction throughout the pandemic. It was more accessible than ever for people to exchange information with friends and family through Internet connections. According to Paton (2020),

It is a rare experience for lexicographers to observe an exponential rise in usage of a single word in a very short period of time, and for that word to come overwhelmingly to dominate global discourse, even to the exclusion of most other topics. (Cited in Ro, 2020 & Asif et al., 2021, p.1)

1.1 Problem Statement

As mentioned above, similar to other regions, COVID-19 in Bangladesh increased the production of new words, phrases, and expressions. It became the central topic of mass media coverage in Bangladesh. Against this backdrop, this paper has tried to focus on the influence of COVID-19 on English language use worldwide and in Bangladesh by identifying COVID-19-related words and phrases and their frequency of use and analyzing their category classification. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of society, including health, the economy, and socio-cultural

norms. One unexpected outcome has been the emergence of new vocabulary related to the pandemic. With COVID-19 being the talk of the world, many new terms, phrases, and acronyms have entered our everyday language. This linguistic evolution is a typical response to significant societal changes. However, ensuring that these new terms are understandable to the general population, particularly in countries like Bangladesh, poses a unique challenge.

In Bangladesh, like in other parts of the world, people receive information about COVID-19 through various channels, including government briefings, guidelines, brochures, news reports, and social media. While social media provides quick access to information, it has also become a breeding ground for misconceptions about COVID-19. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes that these misconceptions are a significant obstacle in combating the pandemic. Therefore, it has become crucial to dispel these misconceptions and communicate accurate information about COVID-19 clearly and understandably.

1.2 Literature Review

Language is a dynamic entity, constantly transforming to mirror the world and improve our communication ability. As Jatowt and Duh (2014) observed, words evolve continuously to adapt to new contexts, shedding their old meanings and embracing new ones. This remarkable flexibility is not just a linguistic feat but a testament to language's ability to reflect societal changes, ensuring its relevance and efficiency in conveying our thoughts and experiences. In a constantly changing world, language evolves in tandem, bridging our evolving understanding and the ever-shifting external environment. The unceasing evolution of language underscores its adaptability, making it a powerful tool for effective communication.

However, there are various factors and multiple ways language as a living entity evolves over time. Ro (2020) asserts that difficult situations have always sparked new means of communicating such difficulties throughout history. For example, the earliest known usage of the term *frustrating* is attributed to George Eliot, a notably disgruntled writer of the 19th century who struggled with traditional gender and lifestyle ideals. Thus, at times of crisis in the past, new words and phrases were born, especially when people felt that the old terms were too clumsy or they failed to capture the actual intensity of feeling or the essence of their fear and grief.

Languages evolve due to political, technological, and cultural factors. Besides, some linguists think language change is as unpredictable as fashion (Stockwell, 2002). As per the findings of Bybee (2015), language alteration adheres to particular patterns and is not arbitrary. Nevertheless, some contend that the influence of foreign elements also contributes to language change (Millward & Hayes, 2011; cited in Ahmed & Islam, 2020).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aims:

- (1) To explore the words, phrases, and acronyms relating to the COVID-19 pandemic that became prominent in English worldwide;
- (2) To identify COVID-19-related words, phrases, and acronyms that gained prominence in Bangladesh between January-June 2020.
- (3) To analyze word-formation processes of selected English words and phrases that emerged in Bangladesh during COVID-19.

1.4 Research Questions

- (1) What are the words, phrases, and acronyms related to COVID-19 that suddenly achieved new and much broader usage in English worldwide with the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020?
- (2) What are the words, phrases, and acronyms related to COVID-19 that suddenly achieved new and much broader usage in English in Bangladesh, especially from January to June 2020?
- (3) What are the types of the word-formation processes of those English words that appeared in Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. Method

2.1 Systematic Literature Review

The following seven steps proposed by Petticrew and Roberts (2006) were followed for a systematic review of the literature for the present study to collect data:

- a. The review should start by clearly defining the question it aims to answer,

- b. To answer the question, it is crucial to identify the specific types of studies that need to be found and analyzed,
- c. Performing an extensive search through the literature to find the specific studies,
- d. After retrieving the studies, screen them to determine which fully meet the inclusion criteria and require further examination and which do not,
- e. Carefully evaluate the studies that have been included,
- f. Synthesize the studies and evaluate any heterogeneity among the findings of the studies,
- g. Share the findings of the review.

Based on the steps mentioned earlier, the present review aims to address two main issues:

Firstly, (a) the words, phrases, and acronyms that gained significant usage in English, including Bangladesh, after the outbreak of COVID-19 from January 2020 to June 2020, and (b) the types and examples of word-formation processes used for those words and phrases.

Secondly, to determine the types of studies that need to be located in order to obtain information about the issues mentioned above, the present researcher carried out a rigorous evaluation of the sources. The next section includes the process in detail.

2.1.1 Specific Inclusion Criteria

The criteria that were established for the selection of the studies were:

a). Studies conducted to identify coronavirus (COVID-19) related terms, words, phrases, acronyms and abbreviations; b). Studies conducted for linguistic analysis/morphological analysis/ word formation process of neologisms related to coronavirus (COVID-19); c). Studies conducted to explore the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on English language use; d). COVID-19-related articles, monthly updates, official reports, and blog posts of the OED; guidelines or brochures provided by the Bangladesh government; articles and news reports of renowned news magazines and international NGOs. After that, the following rigorous evaluation of the sources was conducted:

- (1) For assessing the quality of each source, factors like research methodology, sample size, relevance, and potential bias of the document were critically reviewed;
- (2) Peer Review Status i.e., whether the selected articles have undergone double blind peer review process were checked to ensure the reliability of the sources;
- (3) Methodological rigor assessment of the selected studies was conducted for particular two reasons: i. To ensure that factors like research methodology is systematic, clear, valid and reliable especially, in terms of sample size, relevance, and potential bias; ii. To justify that the objectives, research design, data collection, and analysis methods align with the current study's objectives and research questions.

2.2 Data Collection and Analysis (Related to Research Question 1)

Table 1. Selected publications, name of journals and justification for selecting these publications

SL	Article Information (Title of the study/ Author/authors/year of publication/DOI)
01	"Influence of COVID-19 on the Lexical Features of English in Pakistan" Ahmed & Islam, (2020) DOI: https://doi.org/10.32350/llr.62
02	"Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) Effects on Language Use: An Analysis of Neologisms" Mweri (2021) DOI: https://doi.org/10.13189/lls.2021.090105
03	"Word formation process of terms in COVID-19 pandemic" Fitria (2021)
04	"Do you speak Corona?": Hashtags and Neologisms since the COVID-19 Pandemic Outbreak - Al-Azzawi and Haleem (2021) DOI: https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2021.4.4.12
05	"Linguistic analysis of neologism related to coronavirus (COVID-19)" Asif et al., (2021) DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2021.100201
06	"Morphological Analysis of the Neologisms during the COVID-19 Pandemic" Akut (2020) This is an open access article under CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

- 07 “Productivity of New Indonesian Vocabulary in the Pandemic Time of Covid-19” Mulyono & Subiyanto (2021)
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202131702029>
- 08 Oxford Languages 2020: Words of an Unprecedented Year (Report; Oxford University Press)
- 09 Oxford Languages Word of the Year 2021 (Report; Oxford University Press)
- 10 “Social Stigma associated with COVID-19” WHO (2020)

Journal Information

1. *Linguistics & Literature Review (LLR)*, 2020; Double-blind peer-reviewed journal
2. *Linguistics and Literature Studies* 9 (1): 36-47, 2021; International peer-reviewed journal
3. *Leksika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra dan Pengajarannya (JBSP)* Vol.15, No.1 (2021)
Double-blind peer-reviewed journal published by Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto (UMP), Indonesia
4. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)* is a double-blind peer-reviewed, monthly, open-access journal
5. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open (SSHO)* is a fully open access Scopus indexed scientific journal Published by Elsevier Ltd.
6. *International Journal of English Language Studies (IJELS)* is a double-blind peer-reviewed, monthly, open-access journal
7. E3S Web of Conferences 317, 02029 (2021), ICENIS 2021
8. Oxford Languages 2020: Words of an Unprecedented Year (Report; Oxford University Press) *Oxford Languages (2020)*, part of Oxford University Press
9. *Oxford Languages (2021)*, part of Oxford University Press
10. Social Stigma associated with COVID-19: A guide to preventing and addressing social stigma (IFRC, UNICEF and WHO)

Reasons for using these publications as the sources of data collection

1. Ahmed and Islams' (2020) article directly aligns with the research question of the current study. It identifies changes in the lexical features of English in Pakistan following the outbreak of COVID-19 and examines new terms that gained prominence due to the pandemic. The study uses a robust methodology and a substantial amount of data from web-based news sources. The findings demonstrate significant changes in the usage of words and phrases related to COVID-19. The article is well-structured and highlights how the pandemic has impacted language use in Pakistan. It is an informative and insightful piece of research.
2. The article by Mweri (2021) provides an in-depth analysis of neologisms and language changes that have emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher uses a descriptive qualitative methodology and relevant data sources, including social media and newspapers, to capture the dynamic nature of language during the pandemic. The theoretical framework proposed by M.A.K. Halliday supports the analysis of how language changes meet the needs of its users. It delves into various aspects of neologisms, including portmanteaus, acronyms, coinages, and shifts in word meaning, providing concrete examples and explanations to enhance the reader's understanding. The article shows the importance of language reflecting societal change through neologisms as "lexical social glue." It aligns with the focus of the present research on language changes responding to significant events. The article's detailed analysis of COVID-19-related neologisms and language changes provides valuable insights into the literature review, reinforcing the research's relevance and credibility.
3. Fitria's (2021) article utilizes a qualitative research methodology that analyzes the linguistic features and word-formation processes related to COVID-19. However, it needs more specific information about the sample size and data sources. However, as the article provides insights into various word-formation processes, the researcher finds it relevant to the current research on COVID-19 neologisms in English from a Bangladeshi perspective. Thus, the study strengthens the present study's literature review's quality and credibility.
4. The study by Al-Azzawi and Haleem (2021) shows that language changed during COVID-19. Neologisms and hashtags reflected societal responses. The robust methodology included a 5-million-tweet dataset, clear criteria, Krishnamurthy's framework, qualitative analysis, and an insightful discussion. Neologisms helped people communicate fears, offer humor, and serve as cultural markers. Social media and hashtags disseminated these

neologisms. Language change adapts to new situations and creates shared cultural references. Overall, the research shows the dynamic nature of language during significant societal challenges like COVID-19.

5. The study by Asif et al., (2021) examined how people are using new words related to COVID-19. They looked at social media and state briefings to see how people create new words. They found that people use *nouns, adjectives, and verbs* to describe the pandemic. The study also found that new diseases and new vocabulary have emerged because of COVID-19. Some words that were used in the 19th century have new meanings now. The study used a model for creating new words developed in 2010.

6. To determine the morphological processes of the neologisms during the COVID-19 pandemic following a descriptive-qualitative study design, Akut (2020) analyses five (5) Internet articles related to COVID-19 terms published in the months of March, April and May 2020, and revealed that most of the neologisms were *nouns*. It also identified *compounding, blending and affixation* as the common morphological processes involved in the formation of new words.

7. The study conducted by Mulyono & Subiyanto (2021) aimed to describe the productivity of new vocabulary in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the study sought to classify the new words, determine their frequency of use, and identify the factors that led to their emergence, all these are consistent with the objectives of the present study. The results showed that the new vocabulary emerged in various forms, including essential, affixed, abbreviations/acronyms, compound words, and phrases. The new words belonged to different categories, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and pronouns. Regarding frequency of use, nominal, verbal, and adjective phrases were the most commonly used. Finally, the study identified three factors that contributed to the emergence of new vocabulary in Indonesia: the outbreak of COVID-19, the influence of foreign languages, and community creativity.

8. Based on 'Oxford Monitor corpus' the official report of Oxford Languages (2020) identified the words assigned to the month (January – October, 2020) in which they reached their peak frequency of usage as follows:

January- Bushfire and Impeachment; Feb- Acquittal; Mar- Coronavirus; Apr-Covid-19, Lockdown; May-Social Distancing and Reopening; Jun -Black Lives Matter; Jul -Cancel Culture, BIPOC (black, indigenous, and other people of color); Aug - Mail-In and Belarusian; Sep – Moonshot; Oct – Superspreader and Net Zero. Based on these findings' Oxford Languages' opined that the language had to adapt rapidly and repeatedly to the rapidly evolving landscape of 2020. The year was marked by a remarkable breadth of language change and development, from introducing new words such as "coronavirus" and "social distancing" to the widespread usage of existing words in new contexts. Given the magnitude of these changes, Oxford Languages concluded that it would only be possible to define 2020 with a single word. Therefore, they coined the term "words of an unprecedented year" to encapsulate the language changes throughout the year. This phrase highlights the significant impact of the events of 2020 on the English language as it struggled to keep pace with the rapidly changing world.

9. The report Oxford Languages (2021), revealed some critical facts as follows: (i) There has been a significant increase in the frequency of vaccine-related vocabulary this year, as the word vaccine itself more than doubled in frequency between September 2020 and September 2021, according to the Oxford Corpus. (ii) For the Oxford lexicographers, it was rare to observe a single topic have such a dramatic impact on language, becoming a critical part of our everyday communication in a short period.; (iii) One of the most remarkable words that gained popularity in 2021 concerning vaccines was 'vax.' It was named the word of the year for 2020; (iv) The language of vaccines also impacted the globe. The report analyzed the pandemic's effects on languages other than English, particularly the language used for vaccines.

10. The report dealt with social stigma, the reasons for causing stigma with COVID-19, and its impact, as well as providing some practical communication tips and messages to address the social stigma.

Besides the ten articles listed above, a good number of related literatures based on the 'inclusion criteria (d) in section 2.1' were also reviewed. This category of literature mainly included: (i) the regular and special updates to the OED (*Oxford English Dictionary*); (ii) related authentic news reports of renowned news magazines and articles written by researchers and academics from different international news agencies, online sources, or news websites such as The Conversation, CBC News Magazine, Dictionary.com, TIME (an American news magazine), Translators without Borders - US, Inc., The Economist and (iii) some other authenticated documents published in home and abroad that revolved around the issue of COVID-19.

The researcher considered the updates and reports published by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) as the most reliable and valid source of information among all the mentioned documents. The OED has been providing an

authentic record of the evolution of the English language since its inception in 1857, making it a living document. It has documented the continuous development of our society as well. The OED editor Kate Wild published a special update in the OED blog analyzing the language of Covid-19 on April 15, 2020. The OED editors have published an update on the English language. They monitored the language's continuous developments and analyzed language corpora to identify recent trends. They used data from their monitor corpus of English, which includes over 8 billion words of web-based news content from 2017 to April 15, 2020 (Wild, 2020). In this article, the OED provided "the top twenty collocates of coronavirus in January to March 2020 (Table 2)," that is, words occurring near coronavirus with a statistically significant frequency have been used (Wild, 2020).

Table 2. Top 20 collocates of "Coronavirus" in the Oxford Corpus, January to March 2020

Top 20 collocates of "Coronavirus" in the Oxford Corpus	
January	1. Outbreak, 2. Novel, 3. Deadly, 4. Wuhan, 5. Spread, 6. China, 7. 2019-nCoV, 8. Strain, 9. case, 10. Infection, 11. Infect12. Confirm, 13. Epidemic, 14. Originate, 15. Symptom, 16. New, 17. fear, 18. Toll, 19. Spreading, 20. declare
February	1. Outbreak, 2. novel, 3. spread, 4. Case, 5 China, 6. Epidemic, 7. Impact, 8. COVID-19, 9. Fear, 10. Deadly, 11. Confirm, 12. New, 13. Test, 14. Wuhan, 15. Infection, 16. Positive, 17. Infect, 18. Concern, 19. Patient, 20. disease
March	1. Outbreak, 2. pandemic, 3. spread, 4. Case, 5. Novel, 6. Positive, 7. Crisis, 8. Test, 9. COVID-19, 10. Impact, 11. New, 12. Confirm, 13. Fight, 14. Fear, 15. Response, 16. Disease, 17. Patient, 18. Cause, 19. Death, 20. concern

Moreover, to explore the linguistic impact of the current pandemic on the English language, the article also provided another list of "the top 20 keywords for January to March, 2020" (Table 3): that is, words which were significantly more frequent in the corpus as a whole (Wild, 2020).

Table 3. Top 20 keywords in the Oxford Corpus, January to March 2020

Top 20 keywords in the Oxford Corpus	
January	1. Bushfire, 2. Coronavirus, 3. Iranian, 4. SARS, 5. Iraqi, 6. Sign-stealing, 7. Koala, 8. Virus, 9. Impeachment, 10. Airstrike, 11. Human-to-human, 12. Locust, 13. Airliner, 14. Respiratory, 15. Outbreak, 16. Assassination, 17. Flu-like, 18. Fire-affected, 19. Quarantine, 20. militia
February	1. COVID-19 2. coronavirus 3. quarantine 4. pandemic 5. virus 6. outbreak 7. caucus 8. locust 9. infect 10. Epicenter /epicenter 11. self-isolate 12. nCoV 13. epidemic 14. SARS 15. infected 16. sign-stealing 17. acquittal 18. Hereditary 19. stop-and-frisk 20. evacuee
March	1. COVID-19, 2. Pandemic 3. Distancing 4. Coronavirus 5. self-isolate 6. Lockdown 7. self-isolation 8. sanitiser/sanitizer 9. Quarantine 10. Ventilator 11. non-essential 12. self-quarantine 13. Virus 14. Outbreak 15. corona 16. PPE 17. Postpone 18. disinfect 19. Isolation 20. self-isolating

Along with these (40) forty words, another list of top 25 monthly keywords in the Oxford Corpus, April to June 2020 was provided by the OED editor in a second update 'Using corpora to track the language of Covid-19: update 2' on July 15, 2020 (Table 4) in their second update (Wild, 2020).

Table 4. Top 25 keywords in the Oxford Corpus, April to June 2020

Top 25 keywords in the Oxford Corpus	
April	1. PPE, 2. Lockdown, 3. Pandemic, 4. Ventilator, 5. stay-at-home, 6. Covid-19, 7. Furlough, 8. Distancing, 9. Coronavirus, 10. N95, 11. Zoom, 12. Hydroxychloroquine, 13. Quarantine, 14. Asymptomatic, 15. Covid, 16. Frontline, 17. Virus, 18. self-isolation, 19. Disinfectant, 20. shelter-in-place, 21. Mask, 22. SARS-CoV2, 23. non-essential, 24. ICU, 25. corona
May	1. reopen, 2. Lockdown, 3. Covid-19, 4. Pandemic, 5. Covid, 6. Distancing, 7. Hydroxychloroquine, 8. covering, 9. Furlough, 10. stay-at-home, 11. SARS-CoV2, 12. PPE, 13. Phased, 14. Quarantine, 15. reopening, 16. tracer, 17. Easing, 18. Remdesivir, 19. Asymptomatic, 20. mail-in, 21. Hornet, 22. Coronavirus, 23. Antibody, 24. Mask, 25. in-person
June	1. defund, 2. Juneteenth, 3. Brutality, 4. anti-racism, 5. Racism, 6. Covid, 7. Confederate, 8. Looting, 9. Covering, 10. kneel, 11. Chokehold, 12. Statue, 13. Reopen, 14. two-metre, 15. Systematic, 16. Pandemic, 17. Looter, 18. Covid-19, 19. Distancing, 20. Lockdown, 21. Dexamethasone, 22. Racial, 23. Injustice, 24. Asymptomatic, 25. Distanced

2.3 Data Collection and Quantitative Analysis (Related to Research Question 2)

As one the purposes of data collection was to identify the words, phrases and acronyms relating to the COVID-19 pandemic in the usage of English in Bangladesh, the primary data sources were taken from:

- (a) Guidelines and official reports of Bangladeshi government websites from the period of January 2020 to June 2020;
- (b) The newscasts, newspaper reports especially, the COVID-19 related reports published in one of the leading English national dailies of Bangladesh the Daily Star from January 2020 to June 2020.

Moreover, the selection of words/phrases was based on the following three criteria: (a) all the included words/phrases were frequently used to describe the pandemic situation in Bangladesh from January 2020 to June 2020; (b) some these words mainly related to naming and describing the virus; (c) some of these words were related to the social impact of the virus, and issues surrounding the medical response in the context of Bangladesh. And, through this process, to explore the linguistic impact of the current pandemic on the English language, the following list of 47 words, acronyms or phrases related to COVID-19 in Bangladesh were identified as the target terms and tracked their frequency in use from January 2020 through June 2020 (Table 5).

Table 5. Target 47 terms related to COVID-19 in Bangladesh from January 2020 to June 2020

Target 47 terms related to COVID-19 in Bangladesh
Virus, Pandemic, In-person, Lockdown, Social distancing, Isolation, Novel coronavirus, Epidemic, PPE, ICU, Mask, Self-quarantine, Work from home, Use mask properly, Home quarantine, Offline classes, Wearing gloves, Stay-at-home, SARS, Self-isolation, Institute of Epidemiology, Confirmed cases, Face covering, Ventilator, Disease Control, iedcr (institute of epidemiology disease control and research), Frontline, No mask no service, Physical distancing, Warrior, China flu, Moderna, No mask no entry, Zoom, Flatten the curve, Herd immunity, Shutdown, New normal, Incubation period, Hand sanitizer, Covid-19 curbs, Community spread, Community transmission, SARS-CoV-2, Asymptomatic, Complete lockdown, Sinopharm

The dataset consisted of 47 words/phrases and acronyms collected between January and June, 2020, and was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. For corpus-based quantitative analysis the COVID-19 related reports published in one of the leading English national dailies of Bangladesh *the Daily Star* from January 2020 to June 2020 were analyzed. At first, the selected words were entered into the ‘Google search box’ and used ‘Google news search’ with the ‘site’ operator (*The Daily Star*) e.g. “corona site: thedailystar.net”. After that, the time filter’s ‘Customized date range’ was used in two phases i.e. from 01/01/2020 to 03/31/2020 and again from 04/01/2020 to 06/30/2020 range was searched. Through this process, by using the selected 47 words/phrases and acronyms, a total of 1254 articles were found related to COVID-19 pandemic which were published in English newspaper the Daily Star for the above-mentioned period. The quantitative analysis of the selected words was conducted according to the following steps:

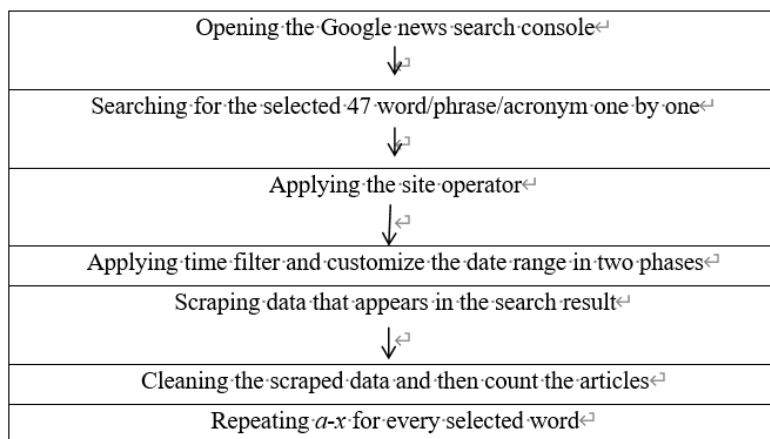


Figure 1. Steps of quantitative data analysis

By searching every selected word from the ‘list of 47 words/phrases and acronyms’ the top twenty words in January-March 2020 were identified. The chart below shows “the top twenty words/phrases or acronyms” in English

language use in Bangladesh in January, February and March 2020 as identified in the newspaper The Daily Star: that is, the words related to coronavirus with a statistically significant frequency:

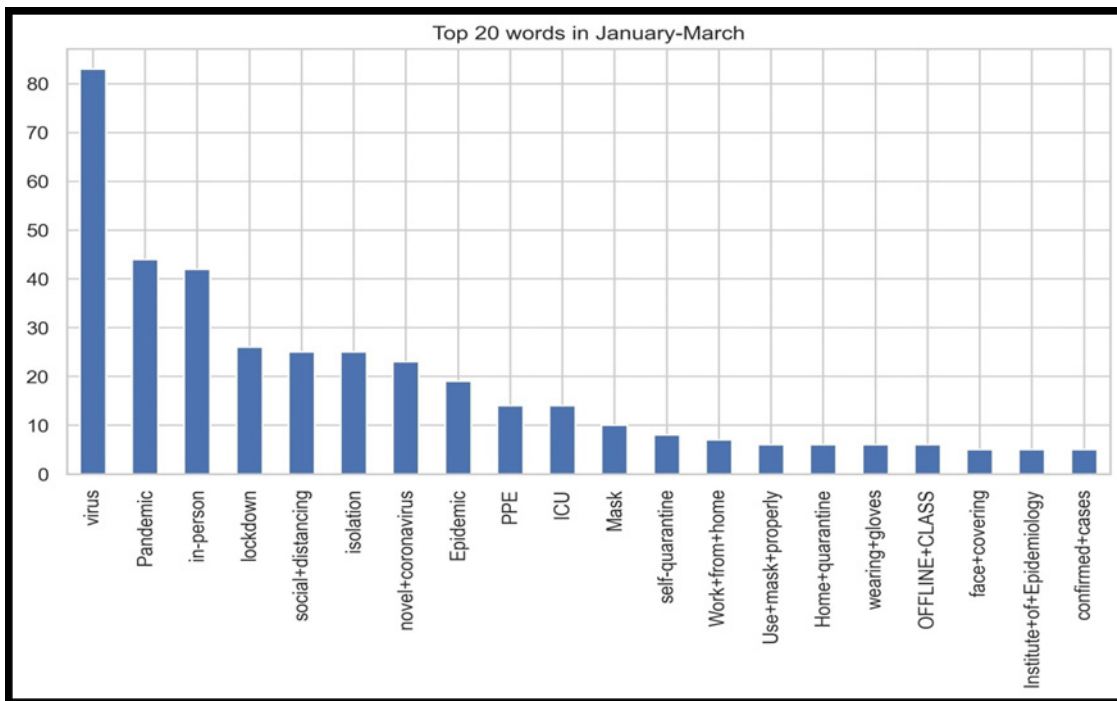


Figure 2. Top Twenty words/phrases/acronyms related to COVID-19 in Bangladesh, from Jan-Mar 2020

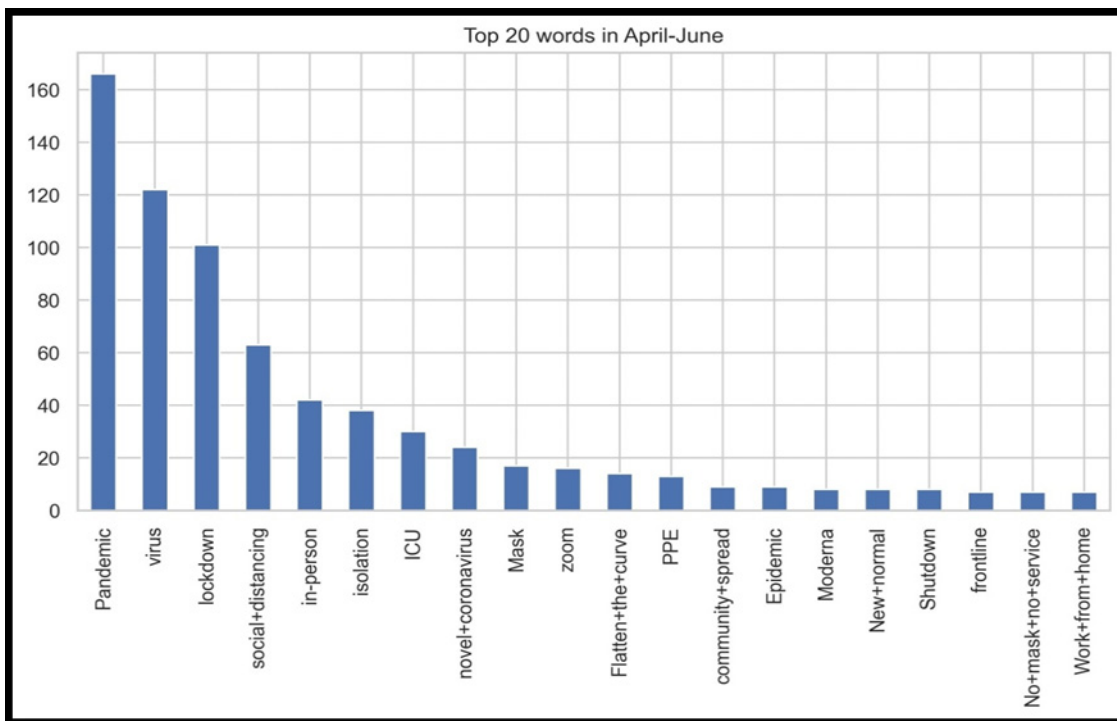


Figure 3. Top twenty words/phrases/acronyms related to COVID-19 in Bangladesh, April-June 2020

2.4 Data Analysis Related to Research Question 3 (Word Formation Processes)

Yule (2010) provides a comprehensive overview of the different processes that are involved in the formation of words, which include coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, clipping, backformation, conversion,

acronym, derivation, prefix and suffix, and multiple processes. To examine the types and examples of word-formation processes that were employed in creating English words and phrases that were used in Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic, the following table presents a detailed analysis of the processes that were involved in forming the included words. This analysis will provide a better understanding of how these words were created and the linguistic mechanisms that were employed to generate them.

Table 6. Word Formation processes of selected words/phrases related to COVID-19

Word/ acronym	phrase/ phrase	Word formation Process (Origin & Etymology)
Pandemic		Forms: 1600s–1700s pandemic, 1700s–pandemic. A borrowing from Greek, combined with an English element Greek <i>πάνδημος</i> , -IC suffix.
Epidemic		A borrowing from French Origin- <i>épidémique</i> (French) Etymology: < French <i>épidémique</i> , < <i>épidémie</i>
Lockdown		Formed within English, by formed compounding. Etymons: LOCK v., DOWN adv. Etymology: < LOCK v. + DOWN adv.
Self-quarantine		Formed within English, by derivation. Etymons: SELF- prefix, QUARANTINE n. SELF- prefix + QUARANTINE n.
PPE		PPE is an abbreviation for 'personal protective equipment'. n. (also personal protection equipment)
WFH n.		Abbreviation of - Working (or work) from home, either as a regular or permanent alternative to office work or on an occasional or temporary basis. Frequently (and in earliest use) as a modifier.
ICU n.		Abbreviation of - intensive care unit. Medicine (originally U.S.)
Offline		Origin: Formed within English, by derivation. Etymons: OFF- prefix, LINE n. Etymology: < OFF- prefix + LINE n.
Social distancing		Origin: Formed within English, by compounding. Etymons: SOCIAL adj., DISTANCE n. Etymology: < SOCIAL adj. + DISTANCE n.
New normal		Formed by Compounding Adjective + Adjective, the idiom (or cliché) is used in the sense of the new standard of baseline expectation or experience – has occurred fairly frequently in the past ten to fifteen years, including in book titles

Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary (2009; incorporated into OED Online, Oxford University Press)

3. Results

3.1 Words, Phrases, and Acronyms Related to COVID-19 that Suddenly Achieved New and Much Broader Usage in English Worldwide

After conducting a systematic review, the COVID-19-related words, phrases, and acronyms that gained widespread usage worldwide in English with the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020 were identified, and the recognized words, phrases, and acronyms are as follows:

COVID-19, Covid, corona, pandemic, rona, coronavirus, Novel coronavirus, Wuhan, quarantine, distancing, lockdown, SOPs, epidemic, infected, outbreak, virus, conformed cases, shortness of breath, social gatherings, infectious disease, non-essential, the World Health Organization (WHO), symptomatic, asymptomatic, contact tracing, intubation, incubation period, screening, ventilators, respirator, isolation, flattening the curve, voluntary quarantine, voluntary isolation, Plateau, new normal, frontline soldiers, herd immunity, relaxing the restrictions, devastation, syndromic surveillance, home schooling, distancing, self-isolate, outbreak, self-isolation, sanitiser/sanitizer nCoV, self-quarantine, PPE, disinfect, covidiot, super-spreader, covexit, doomscrolling, zoombombing, social distancing, vaccine, mask, in-person, shelter-in-place, spreading, stay-at-home, N95, SARS-CoV2, frontline, antibody, ICU, SARS, confirmed cases, ventilator, Zoom, herd immunity, hand sanitizer, Covid-19 curbs, community spread, community transmission. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these words, phrases, and acronyms gained new meanings and increased English usage worldwide in 2020.

3.2 Words, Phrases, and Acronyms Related to COVID-19 that Suddenly Achieved New and Much Broader Usage in English in Bangladesh from January 2020- June 2020

Table 7. Prominent COVID-19 related words in Bangladesh from Jan-June 2020

Prominent COVID-19 related words	
Top twenty words/phrases/acronyms in Bangladesh (Jan 2020- March 2020)	1.Virus, 2. Pandemic, 3. In-person, 4. Lockdown, 5. Social distancing, 6. Isolation, 7. Novel coronavirus, 8. Epidemic, 9.PPE, 10.ICU, 11. Mask, 12. Self-quarantine, 13. Work from home (WFH), 14. Use mask properly, 15. Home-quarantine, 16. Wearing gloves, 17. Offline classes, 18. Face- covering, 19. Institute of Epidemiology, 20. Confirmed cases
Top twenty words/phrases/acronyms in Bangladesh (April 2020- June 2020)	1. Pandemic, 2. Virus, 3. Lockdown, 4. Social distancing, 5. In-person, 6. Isolation, 7. ICU, 8. Novel coronavirus, 9. Mask, 10. Zoom, 11. Flatten the curve, 12. PPE, 13. Community spread, 14. Epidemic, 15. Moderna, 16. New normal, 17. Shutdown, 18. Frontline, 19. No mask no service, 20. Work from home (WFH)

3.3 The Standard Morphological Processes for Creating New Words in Bangladesh during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh has created new English vocabulary as the country faces the challenges posed by the virus. The formation of these new words follows various morphological processes, including borrowing, compounding, blending, affixation, and abbreviations/acronyms, which are widely adopted in the local language to communicate the new terminologies associated with the pandemic.

4. Discussion

As indicated in Table 7, the top twenty words in Bangladesh that were related to coronavirus, with a statistically significant frequency from January 2020 through March 2020, are virus, pandemic, in-person, lockdown, social distancing, isolation, novel coronavirus, epidemic, PPE, ICU, mask, self-quarantine, work from home (WFH), use mask properly, home-quarantine, wearing gloves, offline classes, face-covering, Institute of Epidemiology, and confirmed cases. Similarly, the top twenty words, i.e., the words related to coronavirus with a statistically significant frequency from April 2020 through June 2020, were pandemic, virus, lockdown, social distancing, in-person, isolation, ICU, novel coronavirus, mask, zoom, flatten the curve, PPE, community spread, epidemic, Moderna, new normal, shutdown, frontline, no mask no service, and work from home (WFH).

From these two lists of forty words, two main categories emerged: (a) words related to naming and describing the coronavirus as a disease, such as virus, pandemic, novel coronavirus, or epidemic, and (b) words used to address the social impact of the virus and issues surrounding the medical response, such as in-person, lockdown, social distancing, isolation, PPE, ICU, mask, self-quarantine, work from home (WFH), using masks properly, home quarantine, wearing gloves, offline classes, face-covering, Institute of Epidemiology, Zoom, flattening the curve, confirmed cases, community spread, Moderna, new normal, shutdown, frontline, and no mask no service.

By measuring the frequency of the terms, some of the following trends were discovered: (i) among the top twenty words from January to March 2020, eight (08) were replaced from April to June 2020. For example, some of the words related to the social impact of the virus and issues surrounding the medical response from January to March 2020: self-quarantine, use mask properly, home-quarantine, wearing gloves, offline classes, face- covering, Institute of Epidemiology and confirmed cases were replaced by entirely new words or phrases such as zoom, flatten the curve, community spread, Moderna, new normal, shutdown, frontline, no mask no service; (ii) In April - June 2020, although twelve words, phrases, or acronyms remained the same, their frequency changed. The words were created by borrowing, compounding, derivation, and abbreviation processes. (iii) Upon further analysis, it was observed that many of the words used during the current crisis are familiar but were uncommon in Bangladesh before this year. For example, the most striking change has been the massive increase in the frequency of the words *coronavirus* and *COVID-19* themselves. Before 2020, the term "coronavirus" was not commonly used outside medical and scientific communities. However, the emergence of COVID-19 in February has become a prominent worldwide discussion topic (Wild, 2020).

According to the findings of this study, the coronavirus outbreak has significantly impacted the use of the English language in Bangladesh. The study's results indicate that the language is constantly evolving and adapting to new realities and circumstances, and the emergence of new vocabulary in Bangladesh is a testament to this. It is believed that the unprecedented phenomena brought about by the pandemic have led to the creation of new English words and phrases in the country, which reflects the unique situation that Bangladeshis have faced.

Due to the extensive language changes and developments in 2020, Oxford Languages concluded that a single word cannot encapsulate the year adequately (Oxford Languages, 2020). As per Oxford Languages (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has created new words and expressions that have become a part of spoken language across the globe. This applies to most English-speaking countries, including North America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. However, there are some geographical areas where exciting variations in language change have been observed. This can be seen in how governments worldwide have referred to enforced quarantine measures. For example, most English-speaking countries use 'lockdown' while 'shelter-in-place' is common in the United States (Oxford Languages, 2020; p. 15). Similarly, it was identified that in case of Bangladesh, the terms like 'shelter-in-place', or 'circuit breaker' were relatively uncommon to the people of Bangladesh whereas these were very popular or widely used terms in other parts of the world. The term "circuit breaker" initially referred to a safety device that stops current flow in an electric circuit. However, Singaporeans adopted this term for their government's "stay-at-home" regulations in April 2020. In September and October, "circuit breaker" became a frequently used term in British English to describe a short, fixed-term set of restrictions scientists recommended the government implement to stem another incoming tide of coronavirus infections.

Again, in other countries, lockdown measures are referred to by their official government designations, shortened to initialisms as follows:

Lockdown - UK, Canada, and Australia

Shelter-in-place- US

Circuit breaker- Singapore and UK

MCO (movement control order) - Malaysia

ECQ (enhanced community quarantine) – Philippines (Oxford Languages, 2020; p. 17)

5. Conclusion

It is worth mentioning that the words commonly accompanying "Lockdown" in Bangladesh during the COVID-19 pandemic may not be as familiar to those in other parts of the world. This variation in linguistic development highlights the distinct regional and cultural differences that have an impact on language usage. For instance, to fight the spread of COVID-19 in Bangladesh, the government implemented a "nationwide strict shutdown." This phrase was used in combination with 'Lockdown' to emphasize the severity of the restrictions. It conveyed that everything would stop except for essential services. The use of 'Shutdown' and 'Lockdown' together highlights the situation's gravity and the restrictions' comprehensive nature. Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the term 'Complete lockdown' became widely used to describe a state where strict lockdown measures were implemented across the entire country for an extended period. This was a significant change from previous announcements, highlighting the severity of the measures taken to control the surge in COVID-19 cases (Lockdown: Govt. announces nationwide strict lockdown, 2021).

Another noteworthy linguistic variation is in the language used to describe essential workers. In the UK, they are called 'key workers,' while in the US, they are called 'essential workers.' However, in Bangladesh, they are often called 'Front liners.' This difference in terminology shows how language is adapted to fit the cultural and contextual needs of different regions. It is fascinating to see how language usage varies based on regional factors, environmental concerns, and cultural nuances. As Wild (2020) pointed out, corpora are essential in highlighting the contextual nuances of word usage. Hence, it is unsurprising that the lists of top keywords identified by the Oxford Corpus for January to June 2020 differ from those found in our present study. Thus, the linguistic differences observed in how Bangladeshis use the term 'Lockdown' and related words during the COVID-19 pandemic reflect the region's unique cultural context and how language evolves. These variations serve as a reminder that language is dynamic and adaptable, responding to its speakers' specific needs and experiences.

6. Implications of the Study

Investigating the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the English language in Bangladesh is the primary objective of this study. While several research efforts have been focused on the pandemic's various aspects in the country, this study is the first of its kind. This research explores how the pandemic has affected English as a crucial tool for effective communication and dissemination of information. It explores if the new COVID-19 vocabulary has created language barriers and hindered effective communication. The research aims to enable more transparent and effective communication in a global crisis by understanding language changes and societal impacts.

7. Limitations of the Study

It is crucial to highlight that the study has some limitations. These stem from the relatively narrow data collection period, covering only January to June 2020. Nevertheless, the researchers applied a diligent and rigorous quality assessment to the chosen research studies, meticulously evaluating aspects such as research methodologies, sample sizes, data collection techniques, and possible biases. However, the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria were confined to this specific time frame, which presents a fundamental limitation. This constraint prevented the study from maintaining a more comprehensive quality assessment beyond the mentioned period. Consequently, the study may not encompass the full spectrum of relevant research or consider potential advancements and variations in research methodologies that emerged after June 2020. As a result, it is essential to interpret the findings and conclusions within this temporal limitation, recognizing that the research landscape on the topic may have evolved beyond the study's specified timeframe, and vital insights might have been missed.

8. Potential Areas for Further Research

Future studies need to expand their scope beyond the limited timeframe of January to June 2020 to gain a more complete understanding of the coronavirus pandemic. These studies should also use advanced collocation and keyword analyses using tools such as Sketch Engine, LancsBox, AntConc, WordSmith Tools or the Prime Machine, foster interdisciplinary collaborations, consider longitudinal studies, and engage in comparative and cross-cultural investigations. Such approaches will give us a more comprehensive and up-to-date perspective on the evolving language, research methodologies, and societal responses to the pandemic. By doing so, we can better prepare for future crises while also improving our understanding of the current one.

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