

NEOLOGISMS IN PRESENT-DAY GERMAN: INVESTIGATION INTO PRODUCTIVITY OF WORD FORMATION TYPES

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ABSTRACT

The urgency of this paper is determined by a lack of research into the influence of the English language on modern word-building of the German language in the context of the study of lexical innovations. The purpose of this study is to provide a linguistic analysis and a detailed description of the word-building models using words from the corpus of neologisms *Wortwarte.de*. The principal approach to this research is the semantic-morphemic analysis, on the basis of which the word formation models and types are distinguished and presented in the form of statistical data. This paper highlights the aspects of the influence of the English language on the word formation system of the German language; examples of hybrid word formation are given. The study shows the impact of the English language on the current state of the German language, presents the statistical data on the use of modern word formation types, and reveals the dynamics of the use of hybrid neologisms. Materials of this research can be useful for linguists in studying the word formation processes in the German language, as well as in studies in the field of cognitive and social linguistics. The value of this paper consists in the study of modern word formation patterns in German, which can serve as verification basis in the subsequent research.

Keywords: word-formation, hybrid formation, neologism, word-formation tendency, blending, composition, affixation, corpus.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every year a language is replenished with new words. The word stock in German, as in any other language, is continuously growing due to new words. How new words are formed and what word formation types and word-building ways are dominant in the creation of new lexemes appear to be topical issues among linguists. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine neologisms of present-day German and identify the prevailing types of word formation and the most productive ways of building neologisms in the contemporary German language.

The term ‘neology’ was first coined in France in 1759 and then came to denote ‘creating new words aiming to enrich the vocabulary’. It should be highlighted that the issue of learning the native language, namely, its new layers, has always been acutely discussed in France not only by scientific organizations (for example, Conseil Internationale de la Langue Française), but also on the level of the state government. Gak (1978) fairly notes that what was always inherent to France is linguistic dirigisme, i.e. active participation of state organizations (the Ministry of Education, the France Academy) in normalization and prestige of the French language.

The term ‘neologism’ can be equated with a new word, a new coinage (Plag, 2003, p. 52), a novel lexical item (Leech 1974, p. 35; Lipka, 2004, p. 10) or a new lexeme (Bauer, 1983, p. 48). Despite such amount of terms, there remains a question: what is new. Herberg (1988, p.110) and Plag (2003, p.52) suggest that ‘new’ is né in a given period, but the time dimension is only one of the important aspects of novelty. Fischer (1998, p.3) defines neologism as a word that is not a nonce-formation but still new to most of the speakers, and, therefore, qualifies novelty as a subjective speaker phenomenon rather than an objective temporal phenomenon (Barz, 1998; Schippan, 2001). A neologism is also characterized by a certain degree of continuing frequency and socio-pragmatic diffusion into various text types and semantic domains over a given time span (Fisher, 1998, p. 4).

For the purposes of this study, neologisms are defined as form-meaning pairings or lexical units, that have been manifested in use and thus are no longer nonce-formations, but have not yet occurred frequently and are not widespread enough in a given period to have become part and parcel of the lexicon of the speech community and the majority of its members (Kerremans, 2012, pp. 31-32).

2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

To clarify the prevailing word formation types and dominant word-building models of German neologisms, the quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. Website *Wortwarte.de* served as the main source of neologisms in the chosen language, as it gives a good overview of the new words in German. *Wortwarte.de* searches articles from important German newspapers and journals and finds out which words are new by way of comparison with the biggest corpus of present-day German called *Deutsches Referenzkorpus (DeReKo)*. If a word does not occur in this corpus (mere spelling variants and spelling errors are filtered out), it is listed at *Wortwarte.de* together with the paragraph of the article where it was found. The task was carried out with the help of descriptive, structural method.

504 new words were extracted during January, February and March 2017 and classified according to the types of word-formation. It was suggested that the composition would be the most productive type, while others, like derivation, conversion, clipping and blending, would occur rather rarely. Also, this study aimed to answer the following question: which languages the word elements come from, whether they are genuinely German or are borrowed from other languages.

To verify this hypothesis, the extracted neologisms were classified according to the types of word formation and analysed to identify the sources of elements of the new words. After the hypothesis that composition was the prevailing type of word formation in German, was confirmed, the neologisms formed by composition were grouped further according to their kinds. As the last step of data analysis, the word structure models were analyzed according to their immediate constituents and complex immediate constituents; as the result, an additive word structure model of German new words was introduced.

3. Literature overview on word building in German

Composition. The composition remains the most productive type of word formation in the German language. The most common kind of composition is the determinative composition, where the first element gives additional information on the second element, which is semantically central and, being the head of the compound, determines the word's class and grammatical properties, such as plural forms and gender for nouns (for example, *Plastictütte*). The group of nouns formed this way is the biggest. Along with this, some scholars discuss the possessive compounds as one of the word formation types; the formation process here is similar, and the first element usually gives the description of the second element or defines its

belonging to someone (*Rotschopf*). Copulative compounds where both elements have the same value and bear an additive meaning occur far less often.

Speaking about composition, the following tendencies in word formation should be also admitted. Hyphenated words are frequently used in newspapers, publications and advertisements. Usually, compounds of two or more stems are formed with the help of a hyphen for stylistic or communicative reasons and serve for special aims (*die Ampel-Etikette, der Noise-Cancelling-Effekt, der Body-Pad-Anzug*). Alongside with this, in neologism writing there are such trends as writing all the stems with the capital letter (*BahnCard, TagesTicket, DaimlerChrysler, RundumSorglos-Reiseschutz*) and separating the compound stems into words, which is unusual for German (*Kunden Service, Opel Händler, Super Nanny*).

Another widespread tendency in the German word formation is the use of a proper name as a basic component of the nonce-formation. Usually, such formations characterize new activities, hobbies, jobs, functions, sport types and are presented as compound nouns with a hyphen. The first element of such formation is often a name of a company, organization, geographic object, popular dance, social network or other (*LED-it-Go, Hip-Hop-Dreads, die LGBTQ-Gemeinschaft, der Twitterschreck*).

Completely artificial words occur as product names, for example, *Kwiggle* — product name for a vehicle created by a German company. It does not contain any existing morphemes, but plays with associations. What comes to mind is the English word ‘quick’, and phonetically, it reminds of an English rather than a German word.

Borrowings. Consider Table 1 below (Bussmann, 2008, p.165).

Table 1. Borrowed word stock

Borrowed word stock				
Borrowed word (lexical borrowing)		Borrowed coinage (semantic borrowing)		
Foreign word (unassimilated)	Borrowed word (assimilated)	Borrowed formation		Borrowed meaning. Morphological similarity and partial identity of content
		Borrowed forming (form- dependent) a) translation (stem by stem) b) transfer (free)	Borrowed creation (non- form-dependent)	

Speaking about the process of accepting borrowings into the German language, there should be noted different variants of spelling (for example, *Selfie-stick* vs. *Selfiestick*). Similarly, the word *casting stick* differs in spelling:

- (1) *Um das TV-Programm auf den Fernseher zu übertragen, wird zudem ein sogenannter **Castingstick** für den HDMI-Eingang benötigt;* or
- (2) *Um das TV-Programm auf den Fernseher zu übertragen, wird zudem ein sogenannter **Casting-Stick** für den HDMI-Eingang benötigt.*

Despite the fact that the meaning is the same, the perception and recognition of this word are different. Consider Figure 1 (Dargiewicz, 2013, p. 96).

Fig.1. Borrowings.

If the elements are from different languages, for instance, German and English, the compounds are classified as hybrid formations. Compounds with well-integrated but borrowed elements, mostly from Latin or Greek, are also classified as hybrid compounds (Wikipedia, 2016). It was further checked whether a compound with English elements exists as a whole in the English language, and in this case it is not treated as a German compound, but as a borrowing. Here, the first part of the compounds is of interest, because often it is not a single word (stem), but a syntactic phrase. These phrasal compounds often contain an English phrase as the first element. Since anglicisms are of special interest and even concern, this research may also shed some light on the question how many neologisms are either completely borrowed from the English language or formed with English elements.

Blending. The term ‘blending’ has been used in a number of different ways, usually to denote a word formation process which combines two source lexemes, at least one of which has been shortened in the combination, sometimes with a graphic and/or phonological overlap. Bauer (1983, p. 234) suggests that blends are formed from parts of two other words in such a way that there is no transparent analysis into morphs, but at least one of the elements is transparently recoverable.

More recent definitions emphasize the relationship between blends and compounds. For instance, according to Lehrer (2007, p.116), “blends are underlying compounds which are composed of one word and part of another, or parts of two other words”, while Ronneberger-Sibold (2006, p.157) remarks that they are deliberately created out of existing words “in a way which differs from the rules or patterns of regular compounding”.

The criteria of well-formedness suggested by Mattiello (2013, p.138) are of relevance for this research; they are as follows:

- analogy;
- pronounceability/euphony;
- recoverability;
- semantic blocking;
- prominence;
- salience.

According to Dargiewicz (2013), in the modern German system of word formation the tendencies that prevail are the tendency to abbreviation and the ability to present as much information as possible. That is why the word-formation techniques become rather automatic, for example, the hyphenated compositions.

Another strong tendency, which can be noted in many modern languages, is a large amount of international words in the German word stock. This process appears to become more and more intensive in the modern German language. Foreign words quickly adapt to the language system and introduce themselves into the word formation, for instance, into derivation (derivation of adjectives from borrowed nouns or verbs) and composition.

4. RESULTS

Presented here is the quantitative analysis of the word formation tendencies in German based on the new words that were extracted during three months: January, February and March 2017; in total, 504 neologisms. First, they were grouped according to the type of word formation. For the purpose of this research, the classification was based on the word

formation types suggested by Elsen (2004) —Composition, Derivation, Conversion, and Fusion/Blending; and two more types — Synthetic Compounding and Verbal Word-Building — were suggested by Prof. Dr. Karin Pittner from Ruhr-University Bochum while her seminars in Gumilyev Eurasian National University, Astana, in April 2017.

The outcome of grouping the words according to these word formation types was as follows: 417 Compositions, 64 Derivations, 6 Synthetic Compounds, 6 Blendings 3 Conversions, 2 Verbal Word-Buildings, and 2 Clippings. There were found 2 words (*das Kwiggle, der Kekstresor*) which appeared difficult to refer to any of these groups, and 2 words (*die Hämoptyse, das Neologismenwörterbuch*) which were not neologisms as they were fixed in the Duden dictionary. As it was expected, composition confirmed the leading role in the word formation. The second most productive type of word formation was derivation, followed by synthetic compounding, conversion and verbal word-buildings, and the least productive, clipping. The results are presented in Figure 2.

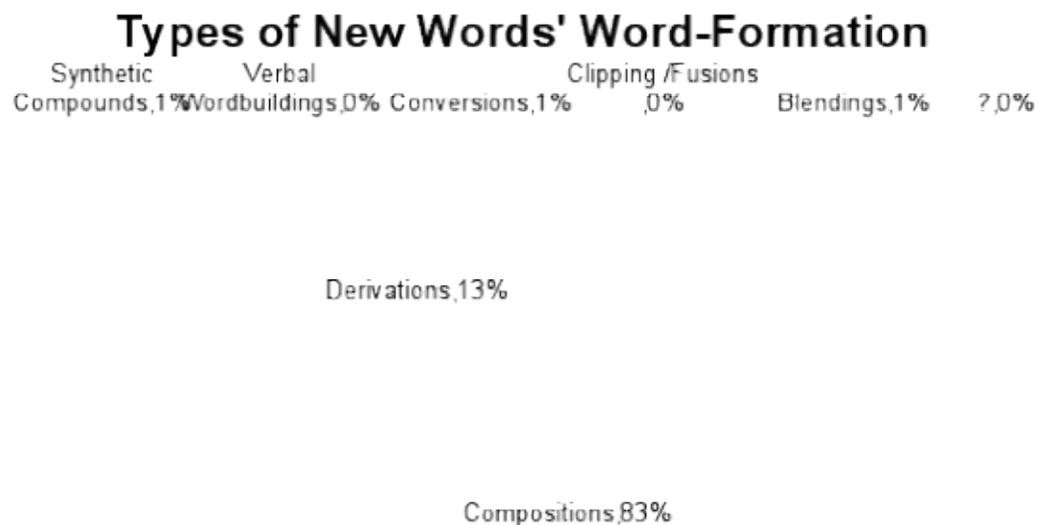


Fig.2. Types of word formation

One more group of new words which is not placed in Figure 2 above but suggested by Prof. Dr. Karin Pittner is Neoclassical words. 72 of 504 new words can be classified as Neoclassical (*aktentaschentauglich, der Amokalarmmelder, die Homonormativität*, etc.).

Second, the new words were analyzed according to the source of elements in the word structure. This classification was based on the kinds suggested by Prof. Dr. Karin Pittner — Artificial words, Borrowings, Real German Words, Hybrids, German Words with Borrowed Elements, Just English words. According to the quantitative analysis carried out at this step of research, the hybrids dominated over other elements (347), followed up by German words (74), Borrowings (48), and German words with Borrowed Elements (30). Just English words were 4, and Artificial word only 1 (*das Kwiggle*). The results are presented in Figure 3.

Sources of Elements of Word-Structure



Fig.3. Sources of the elements of word structure

Third, as the compositions appeared to be the most characteristic feature of the German word formation, we grouped them according to their kind based on the classification of compositions proposed by Elsen (2004) — Determinative Compositions, Copulative Compositions, Possessive Compositions — and Prof. Dr. Karin Pittner — Reduplicative and Verdeutlichende Compositions.

At this step of the research, it was decided to add Synthetic Compounds (for example, *LED-it-Go Eigennamen*) into the total number of compositions; therefore, the total number of compositions became 418. It was predictable that the determinative compositions would be the most numerous (405 of 418 compositions). It is worth noting that some Determinative Compositions could be classified as both Determinative and Possessive (38); Copulative

Compositions were 8 and Pure Possessive Compositions, 5. The results are presented in Figure 4.

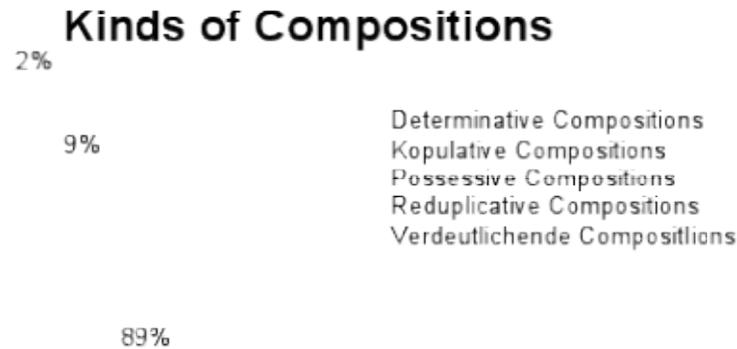


Fig.4. Kinds of composition

To identify the most productive word-structure models in the modern German word formation, the German compounds, extracted during January, February and March 2017, were approached according to their hierarchical word formation model, consisting of the immediate constituents: N+N (255); V+N (15); Adj.+N (28); Prep.+N (2); Pron.+Adj. (1); Adj.+Adj. (3); N+Adj. (5); Part.+N (1); Interj.+ N (0); Syntactic Phrase + N (12) (refer to Figure 5); and consisting of the complex immediate constituents: N+N+N+(N) (57); Adj.+N+N (8); Adv.+N+N+(N) (13); Num.+N (2); Prep.+N+N (2); Pron.+N/Abbr. (3) (refer to Figure 6).

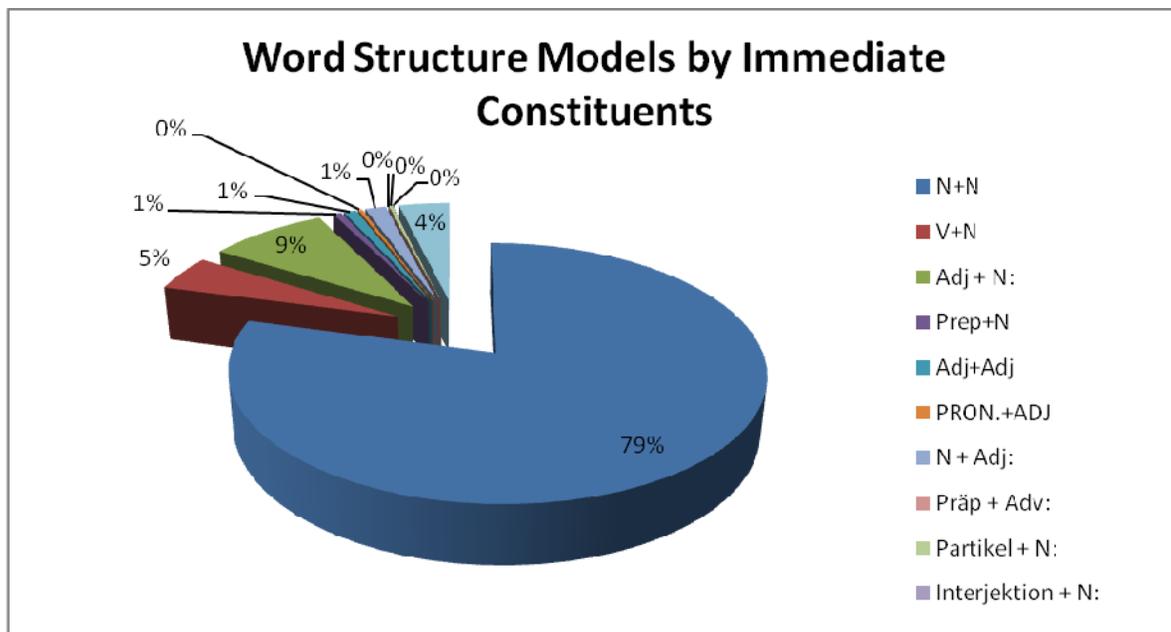


Fig.5. Word structure models by immediate constituents.

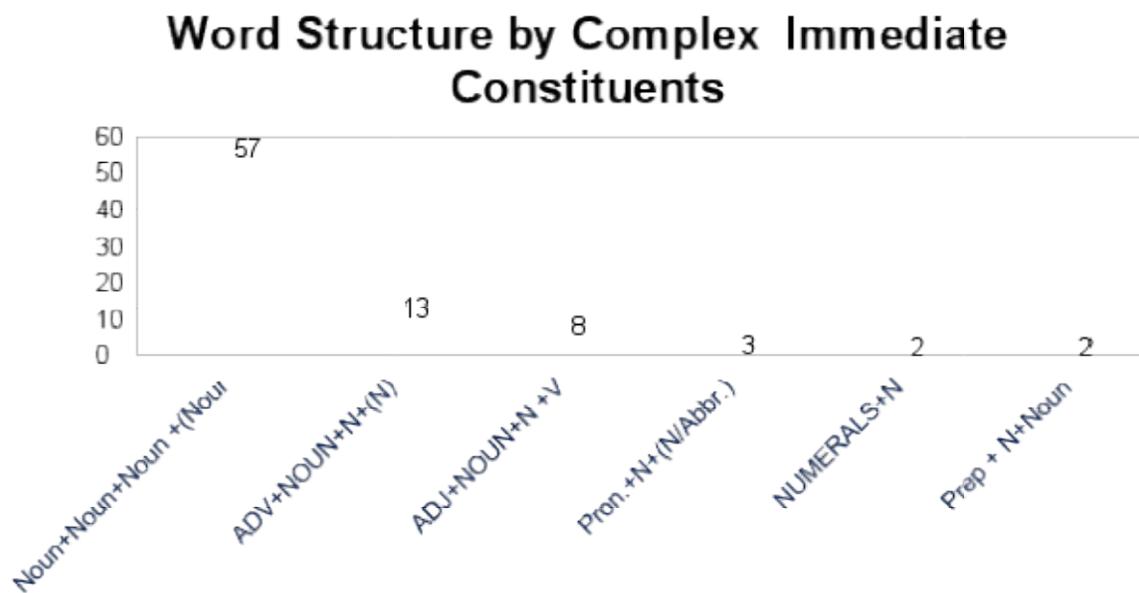


Fig.6. Word structure models by complex immediate constituents.

At this step of the research, it was decided to introduce a new word structure model under the name of *the additive word-structure model*. They are: Abbr.+N/Adj. (4); Blending +Abbr.+N. (2); N+Abbr. (1); N+Num.+N. (1); Particel+Adj.+Abbr. (1); Confix+N (1); Blending+N (1).

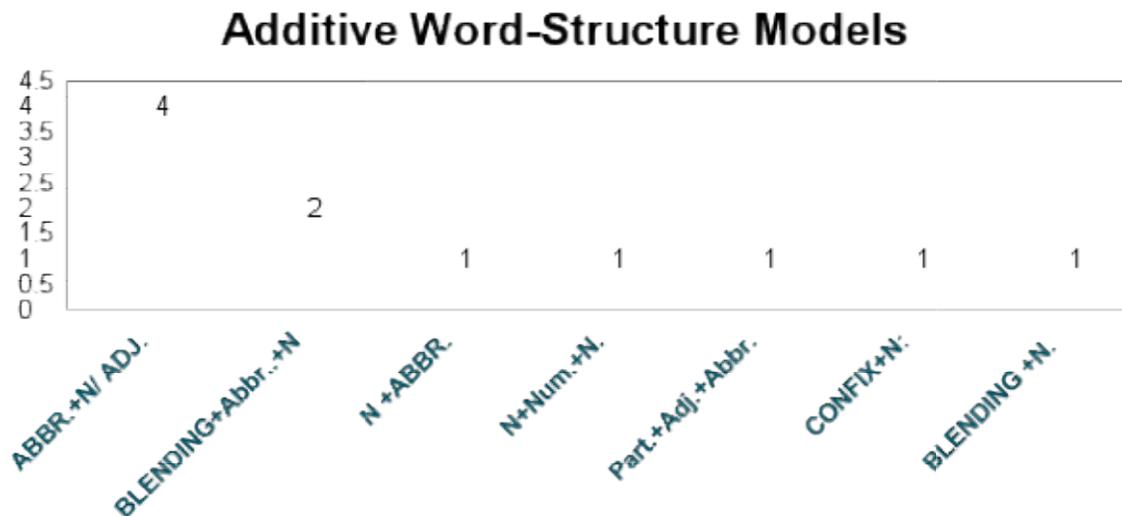


Fig.7. Additive word structure models

Based on the quantitative analysis of the extracted neologisms, conclusions can be drawn that new words are formed predominantly in the form of compositions; a significant majority of new words are hybrids as per the source of word elements; and 89% of compositions belong to the determinative type.

5. DISCUSSIONS

First, the research revealed several tendencies in the contemporary German word formation. The most productive trend is hybridization (integration of English stems into the German word stock).

The most frequently appearing types of hybrid word formation are (Dargiewicz, 2013, p. 99): composition:

- (1) external lexeme + internal lexeme: *der Preisspion, die Drive-in-Bestattung, das Drive-through-Fenster, das Lowrider-Auto,*
- (2) internal lexeme + external lexeme: *das Ausweisdesign,*
- (3) Konfix + internal lexeme: *der Neobellizismus;*

derivation:

- (1) Prefix-derivation:
 - a) internal prefix + external lexeme: *geblimpt,*
 - b) external prefix + internal lexeme: *das Emo-Ambiente, hyperverletzlich, der Hyperstammtisch, die Deodusche, cyberethisch,*
- (2) Suffix-derivation:
 - a) external lexeme + internal suffix: *narrationsfähig, der Antibrexiteer,*

- b) internal lexeme + external suffix: *der Vegetabilismus*,
- (3) Prefix-Suffix Derivation: *durchbloggen*,
- (4) Konfix-derivation.

The controversial problem here is differentiation between the English stems and affixes in the German word formation. Elsen (2004) suggests affixoids as the elements on the borderline between the parts of compound words and affixes. Consider these examples: *die Digitalfrau*, *der Digitalraum*, *der Digitalkurier*; the frequent use of the stem *digital*, showing the connection to the field of IT, appears to become a word formation trend in German. It should be admitted that this English word, appearing as the determinative part in the German compounds, is gradually turning into a prefixoid. In this case, the element *digital* keeps features of both a stem in the compound and a prefix.

The abbreviated form of the word *electronic* ('E-' or 'e-') seems to have the same function, for example, in the words *der E-Beifahrer*, *die E-Sports-Bar*, *der E-Bann*. Although originally it is an adjective, but in an abbreviated form it can be treated as a stem in the compound or a prefix.

Second, when analyzing the word formation models, certain unusual combinations were discovered. Although not widely used, they are of interest for the scientific review:

- (1) Most of them are formed on the basis of the English word formation models, for example *die On-Demand-Ökonomie*, *der High-Concept-Blockbuster*, *der Dünn-sein-Wettbewerb*, *die America-First-Strategie*, *die Wet-foot-dry-foot-Regelung*, *der All-in-Einsatz*. Among these words, there are hybrid formations and original German buildings, but the structure is alike. Syntactic phrase in the form of a compound noun is an untraditional model for the German word stock.
- (2) One of the strong tendencies is the abbreviation combination model, for example *das DVB-T2-System*, *das CAR-T-Zellen-Verfahren*, *die LGBTQ-Gemeinschaft*, *die EU-Roaming-Regel*. Mattiello (2013, pp. 64-65) notices that proliferation of abbreviations in modern times has two reasons. The first is a need for a more efficient vocabulary in technical sectors, and the second is that abbreviation in itself is a marker of communicative style, which represents familiarity or even intimacy.
- (3) A notable example is the word *das Cosplaykostüm*. This combination, coined from borrowed English blending *Cosplay* ('costume play') and German noun *Kostüm*, is an instance of semantic deposition.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper presents the analysis of the modern word formation tendencies using corpora on the new German vocabulary *Wortwarte.de* for three months in 2017. It can be stated that hybrid formation is the most productive trend, and nevertheless, the traditional system of word-building in German retains its key features, such as composition and affixation models. International word stems are integrated into the composition and affixation models, and this tendency seems to be strengthening. It is suggested to further investigate the frequency of use of the hybrid formations and their peculiarities, and the research will be continued by an attempt to make an algorithm of hybridization and a forecast of new word-formation trends in the German language.

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