



GOMBE SAVANNAH

**JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND
COMMUNICATION STUDIES (GOSAJOLLCOS)**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume 5 Number 1
June, 2024

The Journal

Gombe Savannah Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies (GOSAJOLLCOS) is a peer-reviewed journal of the Department of English, Gombe State University. The journal is committed to the development of communication arts through researches in Language, Linguistics, Literature, Theatre Arts, Cultural Studies, Creative Arts, Media and Communication Studies. It has both print and online versions. The Editorial board hereby calls for thoroughly researched papers and articles on the subject areas already mentioned. Submissions of papers are accepted all year round but publication is expected to be done in May/June annually. All manuscripts should be accompanied with the sum of ten thousand (10,000) naira only. On acceptance of any manuscript, contributors will pay the sum of twenty five thousand (25,000) naira only as publication fee.

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**A MORPHOLOGICAL STUDY OF COMPOUNDS IN TWITTER POSTS ON THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC**

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Abstract

This study aimed at examining morphological processes known as compounding that was found in twitter handle of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) on the COVID-19 pandemic. It specifically analyses compound words that have emerged as a result of corona virus outbreak. The data for the study was generated from online sources and it was sourced from the posts of March, April and June, 2020. The sample size of this study was fifteen (15) compound words using purposive sampling technique. The study employs a descriptive model to carry out its investigation. The model that was used is by Haspelmath and Sims (2010) where a compound is seen as a complex lexeme that can be thought of as consisting of two or more base lexemes, the item and arrangement and item and process are the operative morphological approaches considered in identification of compound words in the NCDC twitter handle. The procedure for data analysis is through the identification of compound words in order to distinguish the morphological processes used in their formation and was analysed based on their classification and patterning. It was found that, the most morphological processes identified in the compound words used by the NCDC twitter handle were acronym, backformation and neologisms. It was also found that through qualitative method and the use of Haspelmath and Sims (2010) opinion concerning item and arrangement and item and process approach, all the compound words used by the NCDC have their semantic head inside the complex structure are described and most of the compound words found are compound nouns; as such they take the greatest percentage of the compound words analysed.

Keywords: Morphological Processes, Compound words, Neologisms, Acronym

Introduction

The present study focuses on morphological study of compounds in twitter post on covid 19 pandemic as a result of that, most of the researches concentrate on other aspects of language such as semantics and neologisms. However, despite the fact that compound words have become popular in twitter posts on the COVID19 pandemic, search from the available literature indicates that, little considerable attention has been paid on the area of compound words found especially in social media posts on COVID19 pandemic. The study, therefore, addresses this gap by providing a critical analysis on the compound words found in social media posts on the COVID19 pandemic. The present study examines

compounding as a morphological process found in twitter posts on coronavirus pandemic, thereby identifying the morphological processes used in the formation of compounds found in social media posts on the coronavirus pandemic which make them deviant from the standard usage and as well analyze the new compound words as used in social media posts on the coronavirus pandemic.

As COVID19 goes on, new linguistic terms continue to emerge even while the world struggles to find new ways of controlling the virus. With the coming of COVID19, the world faces changes in almost all the fields of human endeavour, especially politics, economy, administration, business and sports. The area of language as a means of

communication is also not left behind. Recently, there are new researches on COVID19 pandemic in its relation to English language. The researcher observed that most of the researches concentrate on other aspects of English language such as semantics and neologisms. However, despite the fact that compound words have become popular in twitter posts on the COVID19 pandemic, search from the available literature indicates that not considerable attention has been paid on the area of compound words found in social media posts on the COVID19 pandemic. The study, therefore, addresses this gap by providing a critical analysis on the compound words found in social media posts on the COVID19 pandemic.

Haspelmath and Sims (2010, p. 138) note that novel compounds are created all the time but are hardly noticed. The statement may mean that novel compounds are formed every day, consciously or unconsciously. They are formed to fill in social gaps in a language. This means that the existence of compound words is a natural phenomenon in any language, particularly when there is the emergence of new idea. The situation surrounding the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic leads to the formation of brand-new compound lexical elements in the English. Such as; Social distancing, face mask, hand sanitiser, Coronavirus, outbreak, etc. As the virus continues to spread, the world is introduced to some linguistic expressions that are new. Additionally, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic brought about changes in modern policies, economic, and cultural decisions of the world. These changes are also evident in language as a creative entity. The changes, therefore, result in the formation of words which is the central concern of morphology.

According to Spencer & Zwicky (2001:1), morphology is at the conceptual center of linguistics. This is because it studies the structure of words, so, it provides the linguistic data for morphological, syntactic and semantic analysis. Aronoff and Fudeman

(2011) view morphology as the study of forms. The forms referred here are the forms of words. It is a branch of linguistics that studies the structure of word formation and its formation process. However, a language is in constant motion. It is always evolving and improving. This justifies the dynamic nature of language. The lexical system of a language is known to be the most vulnerable to changes caused by external or extra-linguistic factors, whereas the grammatical structure and phonetics are more resistant to changes, (Bolotina, 2020). A language is a social phenomenon because it represents the development of society. The coronavirus therefore, not only brings problems onto our health system, but also influences the linguistic changes and adaptation of new words and phrases across the globe as found in most of the NCDC posting words like Social distancing, face mask and many more. In this stance, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus becomes the topic of discussion and how to contain it with the devastating impact it caused on us.

Nevertheless, the factuality of this study is the emergence of new ideas in language. That is, the virus is not only putting an intense pressure on the international health system, making people change their daily work in businesses, education, sports, governance, tourisms, and all aspects of human life, but also demonstrates linguistic changes through evolvement of new words and phrases in all languages of the world. As a result of these changes, English has been in a state of so-called 'terminological explosion' over the past year (Bolotina, 2020). Therefore, the focus of the study is to examine 'compounding' as a morphological process found in social media posts on coronavirus pandemic. The choice of social media is necessary because it remains the epicenter of coronavirus discussions, particularly during the global lockdown.

In view of the above, Scholars of national and international recognition have written about this sub-field of linguistics. As such, considerable attentions have been received

by the discipline. Etymologically, the discipline was used in biology to refer to the study of form and structure of organisms, and in geology, it refers to the study of the configuration and evaluation of land forms (Anoroff and Fudeman, 2011). Booij (2005) also argues that the term has been taken over from biology where it is used to denote the study of the forms of plants and animals.

However, by the middle of nineteenth century, the term was used to describe that type of investigation which analyses all those basic elements which are used in a language (Yule, 1996). Haspelmath and Sims (2010), Yule (1996), Ndimele (1999), Akmajian, Demers, Farmer and Harnish (2001) view morphology as the study of the internal structure of words. Yule (1996), Matthew (1991), Aronoff and Fudeman (2011) define morphology as the study of forms. The forms referred here are the forms of words. Aronoff and Fudeman (2011) extend their definition to include the mental system involved in word formation, or the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure and how they are formed.

As a branch of linguistics on its own at all; it was regarded as essentially either a part of phonology or a part of syntax. Morphology is at the conceptual centre of linguistics. This is not because it is the dominant sub-discipline, but morphology is the study of word structure, and words are at the interface between phonology, syntax and semantics. Words have phonological properties; they articulate together to form phrases and sentences, their forms often reflect their synthetic functions and their parts are often composed of meaningful smaller pieces. (Spencer and Zwicky, 2001, p.1).

The point these scholars make, if carefully analysed, may entail that morphology is at the heart of linguistic analysis not, because it overtops other sub-disciplines, rather it provides necessary data for phonological, syntactic and semantic analysis. This definition seems to give more prominence to

morphology over other components. The study of the internal structure of words, and the rules by which words are formed, is morphology (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2011:41). However, all the definitions presented by the scholars above, indicate that morphology is the study of morphemes (smallest linguistic pieces that carry meaning in language).

Approaches to Morphological Study

There are two major approaches to morphology. One is by Item-and-Arrangement and the other is Item-and-Process. Booij (2007, 16-17), just as Hockett (1954 cited in Aronoff and Fudeman, 2011: 49) distinguishes between two approaches to morphology; Item-and-Arrangement and Item-and-Process, the approaches view morphology differently. Haspelmath and Sims (2010) view the approaches as concatenative and non-concatenative morphological patterns.

- i. The **Item-and-Arrangement approach** is also called concatenative pattern (Haspelmath and Sims, 2010). This is because it views language as a concatenation of morphemes. It is a set of elements (morphemes) and the patterns in which they occur. The morphemes are seen as ordered patterns. This approach gives no independent status to the items, which arises instead through the construction of patterns. It analyses words by breaking them down into component morphemes which are the items. For example, 'books' results from the concatenation of two morphemes, 'book' and 's'. The central argument of this approach is that morphology is the arrangement of morphemes. However, morphology, apparently, outdoes mere arrangement of morphemes. If it is reduced to morpheme

- (inflection), a number of morphological operations are not captured.
- ii. On the contrary, the **Item-and-Process approach to morphology** sees morphologically complex lexemes as the result of the operation of the processes on simple lexeme. Here, complex words are considered to be the result of the operation of processes on similar words (Chahur, 2020, p. 250). It concerns with the general processes and rule of words formation as against a sequence of morphemes argues in item-and-arrangement: arrangement of morphemes, one after another in a sequence, like breads on a string. For example, 'books' results when the lexeme, 'book', undergoes the function 'make plural'. One of the shortcomings of this approach is that is reduced morphology to affixation; it disregards other essentially relevant issues that are critical in morphological operations, though it is critical and predominant in morphology, there is no valid reason to it so.

The reasons of making preference to these approaches is that; identification, classification, patterning and analysis of compound words as a conceptual phenomenon akin to this research can be described and subjected to the morphological classification and formations in which they occur instead through the construction patterns.

Compound Morphology

Compounds are defined, somewhat, differently by different scholars. Booij argues (2007, p. 75), in many languages, compounding (also called composition) is the most frequently used way of making new lexemes. Its defining priority is that it consists

of the combination of lexemes into large words. He also posits that compounding consists of the combination of two words, in which one modifies the meaning of the other. Booij's definition is supported by Hamawand (2011, p. 201), as he postulates that it is a structure formed by interpreting two substructures, free morphemes. As a productive means of word formation in English, compounding is the process of putting together two free morphemes, be they nouns, adjectives or verbs, to make a compound word, a brand-new word (Hamawand, 2011, p. 201). Matthews (1991, p. 82) argues that compounding is a process by which compound lexeme is derived from two or more simpler lexemes. Compound is a lexical process: it derives lexeme from lexemes, (for example, black+ bird = blackbird).

Additionally, O'Grady, Archibald & Katamba (2011, p. 128) contend that compounding is the combination of two already existent words. Their definition is defective as compounding is much more than a combination of only two words. Akmajian et al, (2001, p. 33) argue that compounding is not limited to two words. They support their argument with compound words with more than two compound members such as *bathroom towel-rack, community finance centre committee, sailboat rigging, sailboat rigging design, sailboat rigging design institute, etc.* From the examples provided above it is evidently clear that the definition put forward by O'Grady, Archibald & Katamba did not hold water. Hacken (2017) views compounding as word formation process based on the combination of lexical elements (words or stems). Just as Hacken, Fabb (2001), Haspelmath and Sims (2010, p. 137) explain that a compound is a complex lexeme that can be thought of as consisting of two or more lexemes. To put it simply, a compound consists of two or more lexemes (called compound members) are joined together. It is important to note that English allows several types of combinations of different word

classes (nouns, verbs or adjectives), but not all such combinations are possible in the formation of compounds. Hamawand (2011) and Haspelmath and Sims (2010) note that the spelling of compounds has caused heated controversy in the literature. There is high degree of inconsistencies in the spelling of compounds. This is because some compounds are often written as single word (eg, lipstick), but in many other cases, especially with N+N compound, the constituents of a compound are separated by space, like the syntactic phrases (for example sugar plantation, English club, and morpheme lexicon). More so, sometimes, the constituent elements of a compound are written in hyphenated form (e. g, bitter-sweet, book-keeper, etc). Fabb (2001) argues that meaning of a compound is usually to some extent compositional, though it is often not predictable. This unpredictable feature of compounds arises, usually, from two characteristics of compound, namely:

- i. Compounds are subject to semantic drift, which can be metonymy. For example, a 'red head' is a person who has red hair.
- ii. There are many possibilities of semantic relations between the constituents of a compound, as between those of a sentence, but unlike sentence, in a compound, case, preposition and structural position are not available to clarify the semantic relation.

Hamawand (2011, p. 203) uses semantic head parameter to identify three types of compounds: noun compounds, adjectives compounds and verb compounds. However, Haspelmath and Sims (2010, p. 137) note that English allows several types of combinations of different word-classes (N: noun, A: adjective and V: verb). The scholars also argue that not all such combinations are possible. Therefore, the compounds identified will be discussed below:

Noun Compounds

A noun compound is a structure that is made up of two free morphemes or lexical substructures. The compound structure is used to express a new idea. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier (M), can belong to any word class, be it a noun, adjective or verb. The right-hand substructure, which is the profile determinant or head (H), is a noun. The resulting structure is a compound noun, describing a class of a time-head entity. The term 'entity' refers to something that has separate and distinct existence and objective conceptual reality. Examples of noun compounds are: gas stove, motor cycle, houseboat, wheat bread, union member, university senate, college staff, pickpocket, makeshift, scarecrow, highchair, strongman, madman, etc.

Adjective Compounds

An adjective compound is a structure that is composed of two or more free morphemes or lexical substructures. The compound structure is used to describe a new situation or change the modification of an entity. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier (M), can belong to any word class. The right-hand substructure, which is the profile determinant or head (H), is an adjective. The resulting structure is an adjective compound, denoting a feature. The term feature refers to a typical quality or an important aspect of something. Examples of adjective compounds are: ash-grey face, coal-black eyes, sky-blue blouse, cost-effective approach, profit-thirsty trader, and so on.

Verb Compounds

A verb compound is a structure that is made up of two free morphemes or lexical substructures. The compound structure is used to describe a new idea. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier (M), can belong to any word class. The right-hand substructure, which is the head (H), is a verb. The resulting structure is a verb compound, describing a class of non-stable temporal

event. The term event refers to the something that happens at a given place and time together with the circumstances in which it takes place. For example, to spoon-feed a baby is to feed a baby with a spoon. More examples include bottle-feed, breastfeed, head-shake, tape-record, babysit, book-review, haircut, brainwash, blow-dry, and so on.

More so, it is fact that a number of studies have been conducted in the area of morphology as one of the major branches of linguistics. Some of the studies previously conducted on the area of focus will be reviewed in this part. Maikiyari (2015) conducted a study on derivational morphology. He studied English and Kanuri morphology in a comparative way within the framework of Matthews (1991). His findings indicate that the two languages use word formation and conversation. According to the findings, the two languages use similar process of word formation. He further argues that the case does not conform to the description of derivational morphology stipulated by Matthews (1991). The study however, relates to the present study because they both focus on morphology, yet they differ because the intended study focuses on compound morphology.

Another relevant study is Doka (2012). He looks into the errors students of tertiary institutions commit in their use of nouns inflection by adapting inter-language descriptive model. The researcher focused on students' competence and performance in L2 learning. Doka's findings show that the tertiary institutions students' use of English noun inflections is deficient, particularly in progressive form. The previous study relates to the present in the sense that they are within the actual realm of morphology. However, the studies differ because Doka (2012) looked into the inflectional morphology while the current study focuses on compound morphology.

In addition, Chahur (2020) uses Item-and-process or lexeme -based model to analyze how syntactic phrases are lexicalized into English compounds. The data was examined to find out specifically, why and how a two-word construction or a multi-word structure is a lexical item, rather than a phrase. The findings show that several definitions provided for compounds and compounding is faulty. The principle held in respect of their meanings and structure is generally defective. The definitions regarding the status of a lexical item as a compound are ambiguous. Chahur analyses compound with a view to find its parallel to syntactic phrase. In contrast, this study is aiming at investigating compound words found in social media posts on the coronavirus pandemic, as such the researches differ, greatly.

On the other hand, a number of researches have been conducted on morphological aspects of the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, Khalfan, Batool and Shezad (2020), conducted a research on "Covid-19 Neologisms and Their Social Use". The study investigates what social need that motivated the creation of neologisms related to COVID-19 and how the neologisms affect the perceptions of their users in social media. The findings show that neologisms related to coronavirus are created to fill in a social void. It also shows that neologisms influence the perception of their users on social media by conveying certain perspectives and pushing certain narratives. The study therefore, has some relation with the current study, as both concern themselves with morphological study of word formation on social media posts on coronavirus. Yet, they differ in the sense that the current study pays attention to compounding whereas the previous study investigates only neologisms.

Again, Bolotina (2020) investigated neologisms related to coronavirus pandemic in social media posts. It describes neologisms in modern English from the lexical-semantic point of view and distributes them by their

structure. The findings indicate that neologisms related to coronavirus pandemic reflect the current state of the social situation created by the pandemic. They also show that the general morphological processes involved in creating these lexical elements include compounding, blending and lexical derivation. However, the previous has relationship with the present study in the sense that they both focus on morphological examination of lexical elements in relation to coronavirus pandemic. Yet, the studies differ in some ways, because the current study intends to look at compound words used in social media posts on the COVID-19 pandemic, the previous work focuses on neologisms created by social situation surrounding the coronavirus pandemic.

In addition, Asif, Zhiyong, Maria and Nisar (2020) did a study titled 'Linguistic Analysis of Neologisms Related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. The researchers utilize word formation, borrowing and lexical deviation as theoretical frameworks. The findings show that majority of the people on social media and state briefings, utilized word formation in the form of nouns, verbs and adjectives. The abbreviations and acronyms which are related to the current situation of COVID-19 are also used. It also finds that neologisms portray various societies and cultures that were previously not in existence. Both the previous and the current studies are related as they deal with morphological processes of word formation in English. They differ because the current study focuses on compounds.

Simatupang and Supri (2020) use morphosemantic approach to study words that are used during the global pandemic. They obtained data from the official website of World Health Organization, (WHO) in the 'Your Questions Answered' section. The study finds two types of compounds: compound nouns (67%) and compound verbs (33 %). It also finds three types of meanings, literal meaning (50%), semi-literal meaning (33%) and idiomatic meaning (17%). The study

relates to the current study as both are aim to investigate compound related to coronavirus pandemic, but they differ in some ways. The current study aims, specifically, at investigating compound words related to coronavirus pandemic in social media posts on the coronavirus pandemic by obtaining data from Nigeria Centre Disease Control. Whereas the previous study uses data from the official website of WHO and also employs a morphosemantic approach.

Theoretical Framework

The study employs a descriptive model to carry out its investigation. The model that was used is by Haspelmath and Sims (2010). It states that a compound is a complex lexeme that can be thought of as consisting of two or more base lexemes. Haspelmath and Sims (2010), argue that English allows several types of combinations from different word-classes in the formation of compound. The attested classification based on the morphological approaches i.e item and arrangement and item and process discussed are Neologism, backformation and acronyms. The scholars categorized morphology in two: inflectional and word formation. The former deals with relationships between word-forms of a lexeme, it is a kind of variation that words exhibit on the basis of grammatical context, (Mc-carthy, 2002, p. 30). In other words, it marks grammatical relations, such as tenses, plurality and degrees of adjectives. In contrast, the latter deals with the formation of new words in a language, (it concerns itself with new lexical elements). Haspelmath and Sims (2010, p. 18) sub-categorise word formation into derivation and compounding. Derivational morphology creates new lexemes which may be of different grammatical categories. It is a process of attaching an affix to create another word. Compounding morphology refers to the relationship between a compound word and two or more simple words that make up the compound word.

The selection of Haspelmath and Sims' (2010) analytical work as a framework for conducting this research becomes necessary, as it provides a sufficient coverage about the concept of morphology (and in particular, compounding). Also, it provides ample examples, not only on English morphology, but also from the morphology of a number of world's languages. Again, word formation captures, sufficiently, the morphological structure or process of creating new lexemes, and compound is critical to word formation.

Methodology

The data for the study was generated from online sources. Morphologically, compound words are identified from twitter post of NCDC which are examine based on their respective classes, thereby distinguishing the morphological processes involved in their formation. The analysis of the morphological compound words are based on their combinatory relation with other components, forms and pattern of the morphological compounding, classification of the compound words in English language. The researcher scrolled and identified the posts which contained the compound words and screenshot the pages. The researcher, then, identified and underlined the compound words found in those posts. The procedure for data analysis is through the identification of compound words in order to distinguish the morphological processes used in their formation and was analyzed based on their classification, formation and combinatory relation. The rationale behind the selection of this twitter account was the organization frequently posts updates on COVID19 situation. The data was sourced from the posts of March, April and June, 2020. The choice of the period was necessary because it was the period in which the posts on the COVID19 pandemic dominated social media platforms. The numbers of post on COVID19 pandemic on the twitter handle of the Nigeria Centre for Disease control are countless. As such, it was not possible to exhaust or access them all. However, the compound words

found in the twitter handle of the Nigeria Centre for Disease control from March, April and June, 2020 were countless. The researcher identified fifteen (15) compound words from eight (8) twitter posts of the Nigeria Centre for Disease control. The sample size of this study was fifteen compound words using purposive sampling technique. The researcher used his personal twitter account to get access to the twitter handle of the NCDC.

Presentation of Data and Analysis

This section focuses on the presentation of data from the present research, where analyses of such data are presented in a qualitative way (specifically descriptive in nature). The data is described based on classical category in which such compound words belongs and thereby identifying the pattern/formation involved in the morphological processes of each sample data.

Morphological processes	Compound words
Acronym	Covid-19
Backformation	Self-quarantine, Self-isolation
Neologisms	Lockdown, coronavirus, self-isolation, overcrowded, hand sanitisers, social distancing, body temperature, new infection rate, outbreak, super-spreader, preventive protocols, temperature checks, mask mandate, isolation centres, lock down, areas of high infection, zero covid strategy, preventive options, wearing of masks, hand hygiene, physical contact, safety protocols, zero covid, covid-19 protocols, covid-19 fatigue, covid-19 infections, covid-19 pandemic, lockdown-ease, physical distance, facemask, social measures, epidemiological report, emerging evidence, up-to-date information

Noun compounds

1. **Coronavirus** (NCDC March, 2020)

Morphologically, **coronavirus** is a compound word, representing the type of compound noun due to the combination of 'corona' and 'virus' which are in the class of noun + noun. Hamawand (2011) contends that the left-hand substructure is the modifier of the head. In that regard, *corona* is the left-hand substructure which modified the right-hand substructure (*virus*). Haspelmath and Sims (2010) argue that the second compound member narrows the meaning of the first compound member. In view of this, coronavirus is a noun compound lexeme, since the second compound member is in the category of noun.

2. **Self-isolation** (NCDC March, 2020)

Another compound word found is self-isolation. This compound structure is formed by combination of the words *self* and **isolation** and is classified under the category of noun compound. It is formed by the combination of noun + noun. The right-hand sub structure is in the same grammatical class with the left-hand substructure.

3. **Covid-19** (NCDC June, 2020)

Covid-19 is an acronym for coronavirus disease 2019. It is a complex compound structure formed by the combination of four substructures called compound members (i.e. corona, virus disease and 2019). Therefore, it is formed by the combination of four words of the same grammatical category (noun), as such it is a new compound noun which found its way into English during coronavirus.

4. **Lockdown**

What restrictions have been lifted in the phase of the lockdown... (NCDC June, 2020)

The compound word (*lockdown*) is formed by the combination of the words *lock* and *down*. The word *lock* is a noun category. On the contrary, the word *down* is in the lexical category of an adverb. As such, lockdown is a combination of noun and adverb and falls under the category of noun compound. However, Haspelmath and Sims (2010) did not mention N + Adv combination in the formation of a compound structure.

5. **91 new cases of #COVID19 have been reported** NCDC, 2020

From the data above, the compound word found is **new cases**. It is formed by the combination two free morphemes and a bound morpheme ('s' as plural marker). The lexical classes of the substructures are adjective (new) and noun (cases), which is the profile determiner. The compound structure is used to express new idea. More so, the meaning of the compound structure is a function of the meaning of its substructures.

6. **... Up-to-date information on Covid19** NCDC 2020

In the data above, the compound word found is **up-to-date information**. It a compound complex structure because it is formed by compounding four compound lexical elements. The categories of the compound substructures are adverb (up) + preposition (to) + noun (date) + noun (information). The lexical element formed is a noun compound because the right-hand substructure of the compound word is a noun.

7. **...epidemiological report...** NCDC 2020

From the data above, the compound word found is **epidemiological report**. It is a compound noun because the final sub-structural compound member is a noun (report). Morphologically, the compound structure is made up of two free morphemes of different word classes. The lexical classes of the compound lexeme are adjective (epidemiological) + noun (report). The meaning of the complex structure is drivable from the meanings of its composite parts.

8. **... focuses on the implementation of guidelines for the extended lockdown ease in Nigeria** NCDC , August, 2020

Another compound word found in the data above is **extended lockdown ease**. It is a composite structure made up by joining four formally independent roots to produce new compound structure. It consists of different word classes such as adjective (extended) + noun (lock) + adverb (down) + noun (ease). The resulting structure is a noun compound because the final compound member, which

is the profile determiner, is in the grammatical class of noun.

9. ... following **emerging evidence** on #COVID19. NCDC August, 2020

There is also a compound word found in the data above. The complex structure which is **emerging evidence** is formed by combining two composite substructures. It is a noun compound because the final compound member, which is the head of the compound structure, is a noun (evidence). On the other hand, the left-hand compound member is an adjective (emerging), which modified the meaning of the profile determiner. However, the meaning of this compound structure is a subset of the meaning of its head (evidence). This is because, in English language, the second member of a compound structure (in two words compound) is always the second member (Haspelmath & Sims, 210).

10. #TakeResponsibility, adhere to all public health and **social measures** NCDC, 2020

From the data above, the compound word found is **social measures**. The complex structure is a noun compound because it is combination of adjective (social) and noun (measures). It is in the category of noun compound because the semantic head of a compound, which is the right-hand member of the compound structure, is a noun. The first composite member serves as the modifier of the head, type of measures. The meaning of the compound structure is a function of the meanings of its composite substructures.

11. Wear a **facemask** NCDC, April, 2020

From the data above, the compound structure found is **facemask**. It is a compound structure because it is formed by combining two formally independent morphemes to function as one word. In addition, its morphological structure is noun (face) + noun (mask) structure

As a result of this, the compound word is in the class of noun compound. The first compound substructure, which is the face, (semantically, the front part of the head, featuring the eyes, nose, and mouth and the

surrounding area) modified the meaning of the second compound member (mask), a type of mask. Since the meaning of this composite structure is drivable from the meanings of its substructures, then it is an endocentric compound.

12. Observe **physical distance** NCDC April, 2020

A compound is found in the data above. The word **physical distance** is a compound structure. It is a noun compound because it's semantic head which the second constituent element (distance) is a noun. The first constitute member (physical) modified the meaning of the head, a type of distance. Since the compound structure has a head, then it is an endocentric compound structure.

13. Avoiding **gatherings and crowded places** NCDC April 2020

From the data, the compound word found is **crowded places**, which is within the category of noun compound, because the second compound member is a noun. It is formed by joining together two free morphemes of different word classes. The first composite member is an adjective (crowded), which modified the meaning of the second compound member (places), a type of place. The second compound constituent is the profile determiner, the head of the compound structure. The resulting structure is an endocentric, because the meaning of the composite structure is within its compound constituent.

Verb Compound

14. **Self-quarantine**, and then call the NCDC hotline, NCDC, March, 2020

From the data above, the compound word found is **self-quarantine**. The word is in the category of verb compound because it was formed by the combination of noun (self) and verb (quarantine). The left-hand sub structure (self) of the compound lexeme modified then meaning of the right hand substructure (quarantine). It is verb compound structure because the right-hand compound element is a verb lexical item. In addition, the meaning of the compound word

is derivable from the meaning of the substructures which formed the compound structure (self-quarantine, as such it is an endocentric compound element).

15. Who should *self-isolate*... NCDC
March, 2020

"Stay at home, self-isolate and monitor your symptoms".

The compound word found in the data above is *self-isolate*. The compound is verb category. It is due to the combination of a noun (*self*) and verb (*isolate*). Haspelmath & Sims (2010) argue that noun + verb combination are not really productive. They are mostly backformations from nouns, and are not produced directly by noun+ verb compounding rules. In this case, the compound was derived from noun compound, *self-isolation* through backformation process.

Discussion of Findings

After analysing the compound words found in the twitter handle of the organization (NCDC), it was observed that; three morphological processes were used in their formation. The morphological processes identified were acronym, backformation and neologisms. Under normal circumstances, word formation may involve the addition of a morpheme to the base lexeme in order to derive a new lexeme. The new lexeme is longer than the base lexeme. In contrast, 'self-isolate' was morphologically derived from self-isolation through backformation process. In this regard, backformation was not a productive morphological process. This clearly indicated that, compounding may be productive or unproductive. However, **neologism** was found to be the highest frequently used compound words. This is because it is the most dominant word formation rule used in formation of compound words in social media posts on COVID-19 pandemic. This might be due to the decency of the phenomenon under investigation, coronavirus pandemic. It was also found that all the compound words found have their semantic head inside the

complex structure, as a result of this, they are endocentric compounds. In addition, most of the compound words found is noun compounds; as such they take the greatest percentage of the compound words analysed. The study indicates that, the word formation rules used in the formation of compound words found in social media posts on the covid19 pandemic were acronyms, backformation and neologisms which are described by Haspelmath & Sims (2010). The findings indicated that 86.6% of the compound words found in social media posts on the COVID19 pandemic was neologisms. This may be due to the fact that the virus is new, and therefore people attempt to coin new linguistic terms to describe things related to the virus. In addition, the results demonstrated that; there were two types of compounds used, the compound nouns, which got 87% of the compound words analysed, and the compound verbs, which got only 13% of the compound words analysed. The findings also showed that most of the compound words analysed had semantic head. In other words, they were endocentric compounds. From the study, it was found that most of the compound words found in social media posts on the COVID19 pandemic conformed to word formation rules found in Haspelmath & Sims (2010).

Conclusion

Despite the fact COVID19 is still looks eminent in some other area/countries of the world, new linguistics terms continue to emerge as a result of this, where most of this words are compound words in nature. Although, compound words have become popular in social media on COVID19 pandemic, the present study indicates that, the word formation rules used in the formation of compound word found in social media posts on covid19 pandemic were acronyms, backformation and neologisms. The findings indicated that, a reasonable percentage of the compound words found in social media posts on the COVID19 pandemic

especially in twitter post was neologisms. From the study, it was found that most of the compound words found in social media posts on COVID19 pandemic conformed to word formation rules found in Haspelmath & Sims (2010).

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