

# WORD FORMATION OF TERMS RELATED TO COVID-19 AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS IN INDONESIAN

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## ABSTRACT

*Along with the spread of the Covid-19 disease, various terms that are closely related to the disease have emerged. Some are pre-existing terms, while others are specific to the disease. To find out more about terms related to Covid-19, this research was carried out with the aim of finding the word-formation of each term and how to change them into Indonesian equivalents. The method used is qualitative with descriptive analysis. The data was obtained purposively from the official web page Padanan Istilah (Pasti) provided by Indonesia's Language Development and Fostering Agency. The results of this study indicate that of the 45 terms related to Covid-19, 11 of them were formed by applying affixation, 25 by compounding, 2 by conversion, 3 by borrowing, 2 by a combination of blends and compounding, and 2 others by a combination of compounding and abbreviations. Furthermore, 15 equivalent terms were obtained using the translation technique, 14 others by the absorption technique, 1 by absorption or translation, and the remaining 15 by combining translation and absorption techniques. This research was conducted with the implication that the equivalent terms related to Covid-19 in Indonesian will be more widely used than the English version, as well as to deepen knowledge about word formation and the process of forming equivalent terms in Indonesian.*

**Keywords:** *absorption technique, equivalents, translation technique, word formation, Covid-19 terms*

## INTRODUCTION

According to World Health Organization (2023), Covid-19 is a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It can infect people of various ages, even though the ones that will experience more severe symptoms are older people and those with underlying medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer.

As the name implies, this coronavirus disease began to spread in 2019; however, the first case in Indonesia was only detected on March 2, 2020. At the time this research was carried out, the number of cases had indeed decreased, and some regulations related to preventing the disease had even begun to be relaxed. Even so, Indonesia is still not completely free of Covid-19. As of March 13 2023, the

total population infected with Covid-19 was 6,739,067 (Satuan Tugas Penanganan COVID-19, 2023).

The emergence of this coronavirus disease has greatly impacted many areas of life. The most felt is inarguably in the health sector; however, other fields such as economics, education, social, and even language also undergo some changes. In the language field, relatively new things, such as the coronavirus disease, also bring novelty to terminology. In Indonesia, the Language Development and Fostering Agency, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture, is the institution responsible for the regulation and standardization of the Indonesian language and for maintaining the preservation of regional languages. This institution records 45 (forty-five) data

that are included in terms related to Covid-19. This data is listed publicly on the official web page of *Padanan Istilah (Pasti)* (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, 2023), which aims to disseminate Indonesian equivalents for foreign terms that experts have adjusted.

In this study, the researcher intends to analyze the forty-five terms, especially their word formation in English and the process of their equivalent in Indonesian. There have been several previous studies related to the terms related to Covid-19, one of which is Budihastuti (2020) who conducted the research entitled *Istilah Kesehatan yang Berkenaan dengan Covid-19 yang Dipilih Generasi Milenial*. Even though both Budihastuti and the current researcher discussed terms related to Covid-19, the focus of Budihastuti's research differed from the current research. Budihastuti emphasized her study of terms that the millennial generation prefers, while the current research discusses word formation and their equivalents in Indonesian. The other researcher is Fitria (2021), who also discussed the word formation regarding Covid-19. However, Fitria gathered her data collection from various sources on the internet, while the current researcher collected the data that the Language Development and Fostering Agency had provided on the <https://pasti.kemdikbud.go.id> web page. In addition, this research does not only discuss the word-formation of the terms but also their equivalents in Indonesian. Another study also examined the formation and translation of the terms connected to Covid-19, namely *The Formation of Covid-19 Term Based on Morphology and Terminology in al-Arabiya Daily News* conducted by Lubaba et al. (2022). Nevertheless, the researchers used data in Arabic, while the data for this study are in English.

Thus, although several similar studies have been carried out, this research has its own novelty and uniqueness.

The researcher believes this study needs to be done considering the widespread use of English terms related to Covid-19. Therefore, the researcher hopes this research can disseminate the Indonesian equivalents the Language Development and Fostering Agency has officially provided. In addition, the study and analysis of word formation are helpful and practical, especially for the researcher to broaden her insight. Regarding the process of Indonesian equivalents, the researcher aspires that if in the future there are new foreign terms whose Indonesian equivalents have not yet been formally provided, the researcher and readers will be able to independently determine the most suitable equivalents according to the rules until the government issues the official equivalents. Also, the researcher hopes this research can be beneficial as a reference for future researchers who wish to conduct similar research.

### **Word Formation**

Word formation can be interpreted into two meanings. First, word formation as part of morphology which includes affixation and reduplication used in creating word forms. Second, word formation as a new lexeme created in a language (Bauer, 2006b). Aronoff (1985) argued that word classes that can be added to new words are nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. Adding new words generally does not apply to "grammatical" categories such as pronouns, determiners, prepositions, modals, etc.

Word formation can occur in a number of ways. One of the most frequently found processes is *compounding*, for example, the word *girlfriend*, which consists of the words *girl* and *friend*. Ingo Plag (2003), in his book entitled *Word-Formation in*

English, proposed eight types of word formation:

#### 1) *Compounding*

As previously mentioned, when we combine base words, we perform a process called compounding. Bauer (2006a) stated that it is entirely possible that more than two words may be combined to make a compound, but there must be at least two words.

The merging of the base words here does not necessarily take the form of one word (*girlfriend, greenhouse, firefighter, etc.*) because the results of compounding can also be seen in more than a word (*ice cream, truck driver, apartment building, etc.*) or connected by a hyphen (*check-in, mother-in-law, merry-go-round, etc.*).

#### 2) *Affixation*

Affixation adds bound morphemes to free morphemes, changing the word's meaning. Affixation can be categorized into three types, i.e., prefixation, suffixation, and infixation.

**Prefixation** : Adding a prefix in front of a base word, for example, we can add prefix *-un* to the word *clear* which becomes *unclear*.

**Suffixation** : Attaching a suffix at the end of a base word, for example, the suffix *-ness* that is added to the word *happy* which then forms the word *happiness*.

**Infixation** : Inserting an infix right into another morpheme. For example, the word *absolutely* has two morphemes *absolute* and *-ly*. However, we can intervene in these morphemes by inserting another word, such as *bloody*, so it will become *abso-bloody-lutely*. This type of affixation is considered rare in English.

#### 3) *Conversion/ Zero-Suffixation/ Transposition*

This type of word formation changes the part of speech of a word without changing its form or spelling. Valera (2006) stated that conversion is "a word-formation process that changes the word

class of existing words but not their form". For example, we can change the noun *water* as in the sentence *I drank a glass of water* into a verb, as in *She always waters her flowers in the morning*.

In addition to shifting word classes from nouns to verbs, conversions can also occur in other word classes:

Verbs as nouns : to spy → a spy

Phrasal verbs as nouns : to print out → a print out

Verbs as adjectives : to stand up → a stand-up comedian

Adjectives as verbs : empty → to empty

Prepositions to verbs : down → to down

#### 4) *Truncation or Clipping*

This is a word formation by deleting parts of the base word to make it shorter. For example, *laboratory* becomes *lab* or *advertisement* becomes *ad*. Truncation is also frequently found in personal names, such as *Liz* from *Elizabeth* or *Mike* from *Michael*.

#### 5) *Diminutives*

Diminutives are usually found in personal names. This type of word formation is basically a combination of truncation and affixation and is done to express intimacy or smallness. For example, we call someone named *Amanda* as *Mandy*, *Patricia* as *Patty*, or *Andrew* as *Andy*.

#### 6) *Blends*

Sometimes, *blends* are also called *blendings*. Aronoff (1985) defined it as "merging parts of words into a word which meets the phonotactic restrictions of the language". O Bat-El stated that blends could only be applied where the inner edges of the blended words are truncated. For example, *smog* is a blend of *smoke* and *fog*; *brunch* is a blend of *breakfast* and *lunch*; or *infotainment* is a blend of *information* and *entertainment*. Note that, in contrast to compounding, which joins words without truncation, words in blends are shortened before being put together.

#### 6) *Acronyms*

Another way to form a novel word is by making *acronyms*, i.e., combining the initial letters of words or phrases into a new word that can be pronounced, such as *NATO* or *UNESCO*.

#### 7) Abbreviations

Abbreviations are almost similar to acronyms; however, instead of saying it as a word, in abbreviations, we usually pronounce it letter by letter, such as *UK* or *USA*.

In addition to word formation suggested by Plag (2003), Schwarzwald (in Shimron, 2002) divided types of word formation into *borrowing*, *affixation*, *compound*, and *acronyms*. Therefore, the researcher added borrowing as the ninth method to complete the kinds of word formation theories used in this research. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (n.d.) defines borrowing as words or phrases that have been taken from another language.

### Indonesian Term Equivalent Processes

The Language Development and Fostering Agency issued a book on terms whose revised edition was released in 2019. Qodratillah (2019), the author of the book, stated that there are three ways to convert foreign terms into Indonesian: *translation*, *absorption*, and *a combination of translation and absorption*.

#### 1) Translation

Rendering terms with translation technique can be done either by direct translation or by translation with creation.

- Direct translation is translating foreign terms based on meaning, even though the form is not exactly the same. An example is the phrase *pasar swalayan* which is the equivalent of the English word *supermarket*. When referring to form, the possible equivalent is *pasar super* or *adipasar*. However, both *pasar super* and

*adipasar* do not reflect the concept of a supermarket where customers choose their own groceries or, in other words, "self-serve". Thus, a more appropriate equivalent of meaning is a *pasar swalayan*.

- In spite of that, that does not mean there is no translation process that does not adjust the form. Direct translation can also be done based on form and meaning, for example, *income tax* becomes *pajak penghasilan*.
- Translation by creation is rendering by creating new terms. This is done because sometimes foreign terms are difficult to translate or absorb completely into Indonesian. An example of this type of translation is, instead of translating *dubbing* into *dubing*, we can translate it with the new term *sulih suara*.

#### 2) Absorption

Foreign language absorption techniques can be done in various ways.

- a) Absorption with spelling and pronunciation adjustments, for example:

*camera* /kæməɾə/ → *kamera* /kamera/

- b) Absorption with spelling adjustment but without pronunciation adjustment, for example:

*photocopy* /fotokopi/ → *fotokopi* /fotokopi/.

- c) Absorption without spelling adjustment, but with pronunciation adjustment, for example: *bias* /baīəs/ → *bias* /bias/.

- d) Absorption without adjustments to spelling and pronunciation (intact absorption), for example: *internet* /intənet/ → *internet* /intənet/.

Besides that, there is also the absorption of such terms if the spelling and pronunciation of the foreign term do not change in many modern languages (the term is printed in italics if it is found in the text), for example, *status quo*, *divide et impera*, etc.

### 3) *Combination of Translation and Absorption*

Apart from translation and absorption techniques, the equivalent of foreign terms in Indonesian can also be done by combining the two techniques. For example, the term *dark cell* is equivalent to *sel gelap*. The word *dark* becomes *gelap* uses a translation technique, while *cell* becomes *sel* uses an absorption technique.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative. According to Taylor et al. (2016), qualitative methodology is used for research that produces descriptive data. This aligns with the current research since the data taken were analyzed descriptively in words. Berg (2001) stated that qualitative research has several methods: 1) observation of experimental natural settings, 2) photographic techniques (including videotaping), 3) historical analysis, 4) document and textual analysis, 5) sociometry, 6) socio-drama and similar ethnomethodological experimentation, 7) ethnographic research, and 8) a number of unobtrusive techniques.

Based on the method suggested by Berg, this research used the fourth type, i.e., the document and textual analysis.

The data was purposefully selected in the form of Covid-19-related terms documented on the official web page of *Padanan Istilah (Pasti)* on <https://pasti.kemdikbud.go.id/> (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, 2023). The analyzed data were also purposefully chosen so that each word-formation process and translation technique could be represented.

The procedure that the researcher has done includes: 1) Listed all the terms related to Covid-19 provided on *Padanan Istilah (Pasti)* web page. 2) Categorized the terms based on their word-formation process. 3) Identified the equivalent process for each term. 4) Checked the data to make sure there were no mistakes. 5) Analyzed the data based on the relevant theories.

### Collection of the Data

Below is the list of the data gathered, along with the word formation and equivalent processes.

**Table 1.**  
**List of Data**

No.	English Terms	Word Formations	Indonesian Equivalents	Equivalent Processes
1.	Antiseptic	Affixation	Antiseptik	Absorption
2.	Chloroquine	Affixation	Klorokuin	Absorption
3.	Corona suspect	Compounding	Terduga korona; suspek korona	Combination of translation and absorption
4.	Corona virus	Compounding	Koronavirus; virus korona	Absorption
5.	Coronavirus disease	Compounding	Penyakit koronavirus	Combination of translation and absorption
6.	Cross contamination	Compounding	Kontaminasi silang	Combination of translation and absorption
7.	Decontamination	Affixation	Dekontaminasi	Absorption
8.	Disinfectant	Affixation	Disinfektan	Absorption

Tabel 1 lanjutan

9.	Droplet	Affixation	Percikan	Translation
10.	Face shield	Compounding	Pelindung wajah	Translation
11.	Flattening the curve	Compounding	Pelandaian kurva	Combination of translation and absorption
12.	Hand sanitizer	Compounding	Penyanitasi tangan	Translation
13.	Hazmat mask	Blends and Compounding	Alat pelindung wajah	Translation
14.	Hazmat suit	Blends and compounding	Alat pelindung diri (APD)	Translation
15.	Herd immunity	Compounding	Kekebalan kelompok	Translation
16.	Imported case	Compounding	Kasus impor	Absorption
17.	Incubation	Affixation	Inkubasi	Absorption
18.	Isolation	Affixation	Isolasi	Absorption
19.	Local transmission	Compounding	Penularan lokal	Combination of translation and absorption
20.	Lockdown	Compounding	Karantina wilayah	Translation
21.	Mask	Borrowing	Masker	Absorption
22.	Massive test	Compounding	Tes serentak	Combination of translation and absorption
23.	New normal	Compounding	Kenormalan baru	Translation
24.	Pandemic	Affixation	Pandemik	Absorption
25.	Physical distancing	Compounding	Penjarakan fisik	Combination of translation and absorption
26.	Protocol	Borrowing	Protokol	Absorption
27.	Rapid strep test	Compounding	Uji strep cepat	Combination of translation and absorption
28.	Rapid test	Compounding	Uji cepat	Translation
29.	Respirator	Affixation	Respirator	Absorption
30.	Screening	Conversion	Penyaringan	Translation
31.	Self isolation	Compounding	Isolasi mandiri	Combination of translation and absorption
32.	Self-quarantine	Compounding	Swakarantina; karantina mandiri	Combination of translation and absorption
33.	Social distancing	Compounding	Penjarakan sosial	Combination of translation and absorption
34.	Social media distancing	Compounding	Penjarakan media sosial	Combination of translation and absorption

Tabel 1 lanjutan

35.	Social restriction	Compounding	Pembatasan sosial	Combination of translation and absorption
36.	Specimen	Borrowing	Spesimen; contoh	Absorption; translation
37.	Survivor	Affixation	Penyintas	Translation
38.	Swab test	Compounding	Uji usap	Translation
39.	Thermo gun	Compounding	Pistol termo	Combination of translation and absorption
40.	Throat swab test	Compounding	Tes usap tenggorokan	Combination of translation and absorption
41.	Tracing	Conversion	Pelacakan	Translation
42.	Ventilator	Affixation	Ventilator	Absorption
43.	Work from home	Compounding and abbreviation	Kerja dari rumah (KDR)	Translation
44.	Work from office	Compounding and abbreviation	Kerja dari kantor (KDK)	Translation
45.	Zoonosis	Compounding	Zoonosis	Absorption

Source: Covid-19 Terms Field on *Padanan Istilah (Pasti)* web page  
[https://pasti.kemdikbud.go.id/ranah\\_list.php?id=27&page=1](https://pasti.kemdikbud.go.id/ranah_list.php?id=27&page=1)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After categorizing the data based on their word formation and translation process, the result showed that, in terms of word formation, out of the 45 data, 25 terms are classified as compounding, 11 affixations, 2 conversions, 2 blends combined with compounding, 2 abbreviations combined with compounding, and 3 borrowings. On the other hand, the equivalent process categorization showed that there are 15 terms rendered using the translation technique, 14 used absorption, 1 used absorption or translation, and 15 others used the combination of translation and absorption.

Below is the data analysis using the theories of word formation proposed by Plag (2003) and Schwarzwald (2002) and the equivalent process theories suggested by Qodratillah (2019).

### Datum 1

English term : antiseptic  
 Indonesian equivalent : antiseptik

The term *antiseptic* is formed by using affixation, namely prefixation. The base word in this term is *septic*, and it is added with the prefix *anti-* to form *antiseptic*.

The Indonesian equivalent of the term is *antiseptik*. This term is rendered using the absorption technique type *b*, i.e., absorption with spelling adjustment and without pronunciation adjustment.

### Datum 5

English term : coronavirus disease  
 Indonesian equivalent : penyakit koronavirus

*Coronavirus disease* is formed by using the compounding technique. The two base words are *coronavirus* and *disease*. The term used the second type of compounding, i.e., compounding into

more than one word or separated with a space. The term *coronavirus* (Datum 4) itself is actually a compounding of the base words *corona* and *virus*, and is formed into a word.

The Indonesian equivalent of the term is *penyakit coronavirus* which uses the technique of the combination of translation and absorption. The word *coronavirus* is rendered into *koronavirus* using absorption type *b* (absorption with spelling adjustment and no pronunciation adjustment). In contrast, the word *disease* is rendered into *penyakit* using the translation technique.

#### **Datum 7**

English term :  
decontamination

Indonesian equivalent : dekontaminasi

The base form of the word *decontamination* is *contaminate*. The word formation of *decontamination* uses two affixation processes, namely prefixation and suffixation. The prefix added to the word is *de-*, while the suffix is *-ion*.

The Indonesian equivalent absorbed the term into *dekontaminasi* with spelling adjustment.

#### **Datum 12**

English term : hand sanitizer  
Indonesian equivalent :  
penyanyitasi tangan

The term *hand sanitizer* applied compounding by combining the words *hand* and *sanitizer* into a phrase. In the Indonesian language, the term is rendered using the translation technique into *penyanyitasi tangan*.

#### **Datum 14**

English term : hazmat suit  
Indonesian equivalent : alat pelindung diri (APD)

*Hazmat suit* uses two word-formation processes, namely blends and compounding. The word *hazmat* is a

blending of base words *hazardous* and *materials*. Then, the blending is compounded with the word *suit* to make the term *hazmat suit*.

The Indonesian equivalent of *hazmat suit* is *alat pelindung diri* which uses the translation technique. The term is not translated literally but is translated based on its meaning. If the term is translated literally, it will become *pakaian bahan berbahaya* which makes no sense in Indonesian. Therefore, it is best to translate it into *alat pelindung diri*. Indonesian also often uses its abbreviation form, i.e., APD.

#### **Datum 26**

English term : protocol  
Indonesian equivalent : protokol

The word-formation of this word is borrowing since the term originated from the Old French *prothocolle*. The meaning has evolved in Medieval Latin and French from “rough draft” to “official record of a transaction”, then to “diplomatic document” (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.-a).

In Indonesian, the word is absorbed into *protokol* with spelling adjustment.

#### **Datum 30**

English term : screening  
Indonesian equivalent : penyaringan

Here, the word *screening* experiences a shift in parts of speech without a change in its form, from a verb to a noun. Therefore, *screening* is a conversion. The Indonesian equivalent of *screening* is *penyaringan* which is rendered using the translation technique.

#### **Datum 36**

English term : specimen  
Indonesian equivalent : spesimen;  
contoh

The term *specimen* is originally from the Latin word which means “indication, mark, example, sign, evidence” (Online Etymology



Dictionary, n.d.-b). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* also states that the word originated from the Latin *specere* which means 'to look' (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.-b). Thus, from this information, we can conclude that the term *specimen* is a borrowed word from Latin.

There are two possible equivalents in Indonesian. The first is *spesimen*, which is rendered using the absorption type *b* technique. The second one is *contoh* which uses the translation technique.

#### **Datum 40**

English term : throat swab test  
Indonesian equivalent : tes usap tenggorokan

*Throat swab test* is a term formed through a compounding process that includes three base words *throat*, *swab*, and *test*. In the Indonesian language, the term is rendered using the combination of translation and absorption techniques. *Throat* and *swab* are translated into *tenggorokan* and *usap*, while *test* is absorbed into *tes*.

#### **Datum 41**

English term : tracing  
Indonesian equivalent : pelacakan

The word *tracing* here experiences a shift in parts of speech from a verb to a noun. Therefore, the word formation applied is conversion. The Indonesian equivalent uses the translation technique into *pelacakan*.

#### **Datum 43**

English term : work from home  
Indonesian equivalent : kerja dari rumah (KDR)

The phrase *work from home* became familiar since the outbreak of Covid-19 since almost all offices, companies, and organizations implementing the work-from-home (often abbreviated as WFH) system to prevent the further spread of the disease.

Looking at the form, we can see that the word-formation of this term applied the compounding process and abbreviation. In Indonesian, the term is translated literally into *kerja dari rumah*, along with its abbreviation *KDR*.

## **CONCLUSION**

The outbreak of coronavirus disease has impacted various fields, including language. Even though some terms have already lingered long before the Covid-19 era, such as *antiseptic*, *chloroquine*, *decontamination*, etc., those words have become strongly related to the disease these days. Some terms are relatively new, such as *corona suspect*, *work from home*, *new normal*, etc.

This research focused on the word formation process of the Covid-19 related terms and how they are translated into Indonesian. Based on the list of data gathered from the official web page of *Padanan Istilah (Pasti)*, it is shown that out of 45 terms, 11 of them use affixation, 25 use compounding, 2 use conversion, 3 use borrowing, 2 use the combination of blends and compounding, and the other 2 use the combination of compounding and abbreviation. The Indonesian equivalents show that 15 use the translation technique, the other 14 use the absorption technique, 1 uses absorption or translation, and the last 15 use the combination of translation and absorption. This research also found a little inconsistency in the Indonesian equivalent of the word *test*. In Data 27, 28, and 38, the word is translated into *uji*. Meanwhile, in Data 22 and 40, the word *test* is absorbed into *tes*.

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