Idiomatic conceptualisation of crisis in the Polish, German, and British press discourse on COVID-19

Project objectives

This project aims to contrast conventionalised idioms in Polish, German, and English press discourse on the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary focus is on analysing typical patterns of argumentation using idioms and demonstrating how these can be stylistically modified during discourse formation. Furthermore, the contrastive approach to the problem intends, on the one hand, to compare the use of idioms in Polish, British and German texts and their function in discourse, and on the other hand, to show similarities and differences in the image of the pandemic reality that emerges from the idioms.

Description of the research

The study will analyse parallel discourses on the COVID-19 pandemic, a topic that permeated social, economic, and political spheres in 2020-2021. The project intends to select idioms typical of crisis discourses in general and the discourse on COVID-19 in particular. The chosen idioms will undergo a comprehensive analysis of meaning, motivation, origin, metaphor, function in context, and discourse. Data extracted will be compared across the three languages studied.

Reasons for choosing the research topic

Idioms, often metaphorical in nature, serve as instruments of argumentation, manipulation, and persuasion in the press. They might be used as a useful tool for creating ideology. Their conscious and intentional use can significantly influence society's perception of reality. Additionally, the cultural conditioning of idioms provides a linguistic interpretation of reality, allowing for an analysis of societal thinking, perception, and interpretation of reality within Polish, British, and German societies.

Expected effects

The research aims to enhance understanding of the role of idioms in press texts, particularly in their argumentative and persuasive functions. It will contribute to contrastive discourse analysis and the discursive worldview. The developed model for analysing idioms in press articles may find applications in researching the discursive function of other lexical units.