

## Features of the Presentation of the Current State of the German Language in the Online Version of the Duden Dictionary

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**Abstract:** The article reveals the features of presenting an online dictionary entry based on one of the largest lexicographic sources. The electronic version of the Duden dictionary includes a wide range of presentation of information from various fields of linguistics. The author of the article analyzes the features of presenting linguistic and extralinguistic information in the dictionary, taking into account the microstructure and macrostructure of the dictionary.

**Keywords:** lexicographical source, online dictionary page, lexicographical information, electronic version of the dictionary, spelling variants, German lexicography.

A modern German dictionary is not only a means of recording information, but also an active dialogue with various groups of people and society as a whole. The correct development of a dictionary becomes the key to success for “activating the audience of users” [Bushuy, Safarov 2007: 27]. Listening to the opinions of users, editorial teams work tirelessly to collect data of not only linguistic but also extralinguistic nature.

Rapid changes in terms of improving lexicography with a practical orientation are noted due to such features as technical breakthroughs in the field of various sciences, an increase in quantitative indicators in establishing contacts in education, the use of individual languages as a lingua franca, etc.

In the careful development of modern dictionaries for lexicographic sources of the explanatory type, a well-honed system of selection principles is used, covering: a large percentage of occurrence of the head word when used in everyday life or specialized situations, the nominative relevance of the lexeme is specified, as well as its communicative usefulness. An important role is given to the concept of the compatibility of a word with others when studying the relationship between lexical units. It is impossible not to take into account the features of the functioning and the multifaceted nature of lexical connections, as well as syntactic characteristics. The derivational productivity of words or expressions in the modern language is noted.

Lexicography is studied from the perspective of such issues as:

- 1) analysis of contrastive dictionaries [Bushuy, Safarov 2007: 27] and consideration of individual levels and units from the perspective of retrospect and prospect when studying contrastive lexicographic sources [Bushuy 2023: 16];
- 2) consideration of theoretical aspects of the study of terminology [Safin 2024: 122], lexicographic notes in dictionary sources [Safin 2024: 91];
- 3) comparative studies from the perspective of printed and online versions of dictionaries [Faleeva 2023: 540];
- 4) development of online dictionary pages taking into account modern trends in linguistics (namely, computational linguistics, linguacultural studies, pragmatics, cognitive science, etc.) [Bushuy 2023: 26];
- 5) study of the formation of lexicographic science in the historical aspect of development [Bushuy 2011: 26];

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- 6) identifying the features of lexicographic sources aimed at studying colloquial, non-standardized language [Faleeva 2019: 72];
- 7) reflecting a structured approach to analyzing the dictionary system [Bushuy 2014: 232];
- 8) demonstrating various patterns in the formation of a lexical base in the German-language lexicographic space [Bushuy 2017: 59];
- 9) studying the concepts of a dictionary entry in various types of modern dictionaries [Bushuy 2023: 10];
- 10) developing classifications of various thematic groups based on glossaries and dictionaries [Faleeva 2021: 192] with decoding the hidden characteristics embedded in the semantics of specific lexemes [Faleeva 2022: 129];
- 11) reflecting individual long and short periods in terms of time in dictionaries [Bushuy, Khayrullaev 2023: 20], etc.

The electronic version of the Duden dictionary is one of the brightest examples of the creation of the best samples of online versions of German lexicographic sources. For the convenience of users of the dictionary, the site has developed various “categories” and “subcategories” necessary for the analysis of lexicographic information and work with the dictionary.

Let us take a closer look at the category “Wissen” (“to know”), which includes mini subcategories based on the material of Duden Dictionary [<https://www.duden.de/woerterbuch>]:

- 1) “Wörterbuch” (“dictionary”);
- 2) Deklination (“declension”);
- 3) Konjugation (“conjugation”);
- 4) Synonyme (“Synonyms”);
- 5) Häufige Fehler (“Common mistakes”);
- 6) Rechtschreibregeln (“Spelling rules”);
- 7) Schwierige Wörter (“Compound words”);
- 8) Sprachwissen (“Language knowledge”);
- 9) Newsletter.

Thus, the first subcategory “Wörterbuch” (“dictionary”) presents a brief description of the structural features of the dictionary source and individual tips on the rules of use.

The compilers of the online dictionary pages Duden note that the lexicographic source contains extensive information on spelling, vocabulary, semantics, grammar. Thus, spelling variants are recorded in full (based on the standardized German language, recognized as standardized).

The category “Wörterbuch” also has a recommended comment for searching for vocabulary in the dictionary. The search is carried out by keywords with a transition to the online dictionary entry. The editorial team recommends using the category (“Info”) when searching for reference information on a specific word.

The dictionary recommends reference materials developed by the authors as additional suggestions:

- a) “Liste mit interessanten Stichwörtern” (list of keywords with interesting characteristics);
- b) “Liste mit häufig durchgeführten Suchen” (list of the most frequent search queries), as well as
- c) “Liste der rechtschreiblich schwierigen Wörter” (list of lexemes with complex spelling).

Work on improving the dictionary continues to this day. Thus, the developers of the dictionary have added new categories related to the development of a) tabular data (tables on declension and



conjugation – “...Grammatiktabellen für die Declination und die Konjugation”) and b) synonymy (“der Synonyme”).

Electronic dictionaries are able to be expanded not only annually, like their printed versions, but also daily, thanks to the speed of adding a word to the lexicographic source. Thus, from the borrowing of *google*, a whole series of words with the root *google* entered German speech: *Ego-Googeln (das)* in the meaning of “targeted search on the Internet for a personal name using the Google search engine”, *googeln* – “Internet analysis using the Google® search engine”, etc.

Borrowings from English into German are becoming a frequent phenomenon at present due to the strengthening of the position of English as a lingua franca. The adaptation of English vocabulary is carried out by superimposing German word-forming morphemes and articles on the English root. As a result, the external structure is modified, giving it the appearance of a German lexeme.

The dictionary also includes a category of words of the year, i.e. the most significant words for a specific annual period, reflecting interests, problems, trends, and some tendencies. The word of the year is inherent not only in German and English dictionaries, but also in many other languages. The word of the year in German linguoculture is selected by special scientific communities from Austria, Germany, and German-speaking Switzerland.

Due to the influx of Anglicisms into the modern German language, a list of words is being created for dictionary users to select the most significant Anglicism as the word of the year.

In Germany, the tradition of choosing the “word of the year” dates back to 1971 and is associated with the German Language Society – GfdS. Systematic selection began only in 1977.

Despite the fact that Austria and German-speaking Switzerland have many common features, the choice of words of the year is ambiguous and often demonstrates different goals, perceptions, etc.

“Wörter des Jahres” (“Word of the Year”) in various German-speaking countries



The tradition of the “word of the year” quickly took hold in the language, and new categories soon emerged, including “bad word of the year” (e.g. *betriebsratsverseucht* meaning “infected by the works council” became “bad word of the year” in 2009), “youth word of the year” (e.g. *Fly sein* meaning “fly away” became “youth word of the year” in 2016), and “anglicism of the year” (e.g. *boostern* meaning “to boost” became “anglicism of the year” in 2021).

“das Unwort des Jahres” (“Bad word of the year”) in various German-speaking countries



Every day, the Duden dictionary selects a “Wort des Tages” (“word of the day”). In 2023, *Krisenmodus* in the meaning of “crisis mode” was considered the winning word of the year. The choice of the word was not made without reason. It is known that the crisis indicator broke a new record in its mark in 2023.

Using the categories of the word of the year provides an opportunity not only to summarize social, economic, cultural and political life, but also to attract the attention of the audience to the linguistic uniqueness of the German language, an attempt to protect the purity of the language, and to prevent false interpretation of the semantics of difficult words, words with a new meaning, etc.



The interest in the analysis lies not only in the uniqueness of the linguistic analysis, the selected vocabulary, but also its possible further use in methodological, pedagogical work when working with young people.

Selecting “Words of the Year” and “Bad Words of the Year” since 2000				
Germany			Switzerland	
Year	“Words of the Year”	“Bad words of the year”	“German Word of the Year”	“German Non-Word of the Year”
2023	Krisenmodus (Crisis mode)	Remigration	Monsterbank (Monster Bench)	–
2022	Zeitenwende (The turning point)	Klimaterroristen (Climate terrorists)	Strommangellage (Electricity shortage situation)	–
2021	Wellenbrecher (Breakwater)	Pushback (Rollback)	Impfdurchbruch (Breakthrough in vaccination)	–
2020	Coronapandemie (Corona pandemic)	Rückführungspatenschaften; Corona-Diktatur (Sponsoring Repatriation; Crown Dictatorship)	systemrelevant (systemically significant)	–
2019	Respektrente (Respect your pension)	Klimahysterie (Climate hysteria)	Klimajugend (Climate Youth)	–
2018	Heißzeit (Hot time)	Anti-Abschiebe-Industrie (Anti-deportation industry)	Doppeladler (Double-headed eagle)	–
2017	Jamaika-Aus (There will be no Jamaica)	Alternative Fakten (Alternative facts)	#metoo	–
2016	Postfaktisch (Post-truth)	Volks-verräter (Traitor of the people)	Filterblase (Filter bubble)	Inländervorrang light (Priority lighting for residents)
2015	Flüchtlinge (refugees)	Gutmensch (benefactor)	Einkaufstourist (shopping tourist)	Asylchaos (Shelter of Chaos)
2014	Lichtgrenze (Light border)	Lügenpresse (Lying press)	#	Dichtestress
2013	GroKo	Sozial-tourismus (Social tourism)	Stellwerkstörung (Signal box malfunction)	systemrelevant (systemically significant)
2012	Rettungs-routine (Rescue program)	Opfer-Abo (Victim's subscription)	Shitstorm (violent reaction)	Bio (Organic)
2011	Stresstest (Stress test)	Döner-Morde (Doner Kebab Murders)	Euro-Rabatt (Discount in euros)	Technologieve rbot (Banning technologies)



2010	Wutbürger (Angry citizen)	alternativlos (there is no alternative)	Ausschaffung (exile)	FIFA-Ethikkommission (FIFA Ethics Committee)
2009	Abwrack-prämie (Bonus for recycling)	betriebsrats-verseucht (contaminated by works councils)	Minarettverbot (Ban on building minarets in Switzerland)	Ventilklausel (valve clause)
2008	Finanzkrise (Financial crisis)	notleidende Banken (problem banks)	Rettungspaket (rescue package)	Europhorie (Europhoria)
2007	Klima-katastrophe (Climate disaster)	Herdprämie (Bonus for the oven)	Sterbetourismus (Death tourism)	Klimakompensation (Climate compensation)
2006	Fanmeile (Fan mile)	freiwillige Ausreise (voluntary departure)	Rauchverbot (Smoking ban)	erweiterter Selbstmord (prolonged suicide)
2005	Bundes-kanzlerin (Chancellor)	Entlassungs-produktivität (Layoff productivity)	Aldisierung (Aldization)	erlebnisorientierte Fans (experience-oriented fans)
2004	Hartz IV	Humankapital (Human capital)	Meh Dräck (Mehr Dreck)	Ökoterror (Ecoterror)
2003	das alte Europa (old Europe)	Tätervolk (criminals)	Konkordanz (coordination)	Scheininvalide (Fake invalid)
2002	Teuro (Expensive)	Ich-AG	–	–
2001	der 11. September (September 11)	Gotteskrieger (God of Warrior)	–	–
2000	Schwarz-geldaffäre (The Black Money Case)	national befreite Zone (national liberation zone)	–	–

**Table 1. Selection of “words of the year” and “bad words of the year” since 2000**

Analyzing the data in Table 1 (Selection of “words of the year” and “bad words of the year” since 2000), we note the importance of lexical units related to the topic of climate (4 words chosen in Germany and 3 in Switzerland), social sphere, finance, politics, health care.

The dictionary, like English-language online dictionaries, develops not only an information base, but also educational material in the form of educational publications, game tasks, puzzles, taking into account the level of language proficiency and age characteristics.

The “Products” section highlights educational material developed in an interactive form for two age groups: a) adults and b) children and young people. An unusual form of learning allows you to enrich your German language skills in an entertaining format. “Products for adult dictionary users” include: “Quiz” (Control survey), “Rätselbücher” (Puzzle books). The “Products for children’s and young adults’ audiences” of the dictionary include “Dein Lesestart: 1. Lesestufe” (Reading Start: Reading Level 1), “Dein Lesestart: 2. Lesestufe” (Reading Start: Reading Level 2), “Rätsel für mutige Kinder” (Puzzles for Brave Children), “Übungshefte für die Grundschule” (Workbooks for Primary School), “Mein großer Lernspaß mit Rabe Linus” (My Great Learning Fun with Rabe Linus), “Mein Lern- und Spaßblock mit Rabe Linus” (My Learning and Fun Block with Rabe Linus), and “Rätselknacker” (Puzzle Cracker).



The section “Sprache entdecken” (Discover the language) presents the maximum diversity of the German language, covering new forms and meanings, dialectical expressions, idioms, a large number of disappearing lexemes, and information on etymology.

In the section “Sprache in Zahlen” (Language in numbers) the information about different statistics is noted. The letter *E* has acquired the status of the most widely used letter in the German-speaking area. The letter’s wide distribution is connected with historical processes in the change of the German language. The so-called pressing accent strengthens the stressed syllable. As a result, other secondary syllables gradually lost their original meaning. Thus, these syllables lost their power in the period from Old High German to Middle High German. This means the change of full vowels to the schwa sound – [ə]. Let us give possible examples of the schwa sound. For example, the infinitive ending -en.

In conclusion, it should be noted such particular findings as:

1. The electronic version of the Duden dictionary covers data on spelling (various types of standardized spelling of German words and expressions), morphology (some features of morphological categories are indicated, etc. – weak/strong verb, conjugation, declension, etc.), phonetics (voice transcription), semantics (distribution of vocabulary by level of complexity - CEFR, meaning of the word or several meanings, in case of polysemy),
2. “Words of the year” in German dictionaries are selected by German-speaking countries based on the lexicographic richness of the German language for a certain year. The chosen “word of the year” reflects the most significant trends of the period.
3. The development of electronic dictionaries of the German language allows for improved study of German due to the improvement of the information base of the lexicographic source, expansion of the search category, analysis and systematization of vocabulary.
4. Modern lexicographic science has developed into an independent interdisciplinary science thanks to the emergence of a number of theoretical and practical works and the development of a system of various types of dictionaries.

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