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Research on the Semantic Prosody of "Lockdown" based on Coronavirus Corpus

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Corpus linguistics has offered a unique perspective for the study of semantic prosody and the quite controversial practice of lockdown after the COVID-19 has provided researchers with a valuable chance to study the semantic prosody of this word lockdown. Based on the coronavirus corpus, this paper uses a data-driven approach to study the lexical collocation characteristics and semantic prosody of lockdown. The findings are as follows: (1) lockdown tends to collocate with words indicating time, country and region, cause, executive power and influence field. (2) Its semantic prosody as a whole presents a neutral to negative semantic prosody. Semantic prosody is also different in reports from different countries. (3) Based on the diachronic study, the semantic prosody of lockdown changes over time.

Keywords: *coronavirus corpus, lockdown, semantic prosody*

Introduction

Semantic prosody has always been the focus of corpus linguistics. Chinese scholars' research on semantic prosody mainly focuses on exploring the characteristics of semantic prosody from the perspective of vocabulary (Wang and Zou 2019). Wang and Wang (2005) found that there are differences in semantic prosody between Chinese EFL learners and native speakers of English in the process of using the word *cause* through comparative analysis of bilingual corpora. Zhang and Liu (2006) analyzed the collocation and class linking features of *happen* and *occurrence* through bilingual corpora, with the purpose of exploring linguistic differences. Ma (2010) analyzed the semantic prosody of *happen* used by second language learners with native speakers through interlanguage contrastive analysis, so as to provide reference for English teaching. Luo (2011) studied the semantic prosody and pragmatic features of the causative verb get by constructing quasi links. Wang and Jiang (2016) analyzed the semantic prosody of *complete, finish and perform* by studying lexical frequency and collocation nouns. Previous studies have mostly explored the differences in second language learners' vocabulary use based on corpus (Wang 2019), but they have not been duly studied to some extent. Thus, this paper seeks to provide a new perspective for the study of semantic prosody to fill certain gaps.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19, the Chinese government has taken the lead in taking emergency measures to close Wuhan, and this practice has aroused heated discussion both in China and in the world. There are different opinions on the closing of the city. However, the data show that during the COVID-19

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pandemic, the word *lockdown* was used for actions related to large-scale isolation or home orders. The first *lockdown* during the pandemic was implemented in Wuhan on January 23, 2020. By early April 2020, 3.9 billion people in the world will be under some form of *lockdown*, accounting for more than half of the world's population. By late April, about 300million people in European countries were in *lockdown* status, while about 200 million people in Latin America were in *lockdown* status. Nearly 300 million people in the United States, accounting for about 90% of the population, are under some form of *lockdown*. 1.3 billion people in India have experienced *lockdown*. This provides a very good research material for the study of semantic prosody. This situation offers a new perspective to explore the hot words of current affairs from the perspective of semantic prosody. The closure of *lockdown* has had a huge impact on individuals, groups, countries and even the international community. Therefore, this paper assumes that the semantic prosody of the word *lockdown* is negative. In corpus-based studies, the word to be observed is usually used as the node word, or search word, since node words always attract a series of collocations with same or similar semantic features which influence and infiltrate each other (Sinclair 1991;Wei 2002). This study takes "*lockdown*" as a node word, carries out semantic prosody research based on the special corpus of "Coronavirus Corpus". The purposes of this study include finding out the collocational features of the word *lockdown* and further rectify the definitional nature of semantic prosody, that is, whether semantic prosody is formed and revealed through the language user's judgments.

Literature Review

The Definition of Semantic Prosody

The research on semantic prosody has gone through three stages, namely, the evolution from "contagion theory" to "connotative meaning theory" and then to "functional theory".

The contagion theory is represented by Louw (1993), the initiator of semantic prosody. According to this theory, it is believed that node words will habitually attract words with the same semantic characteristics to form collocations. Because these words and node words with the same semantic characteristics co-exist frequently in the text, the latter is infected with the relevant semantic characteristics, and a certain semantic atmosphere pervades the whole context, thus forming semantic prosody. Therefore, semantic prosody emphasizes the flow of meaning in context, and the meaning of adjacent co-occurrence words infect one another.

The theory of connotative meaning is represented by Partington (1998, 2004). According to this theory, connotative meaning and semantic prosody are synonymous or partially equivalent to the connotative meaning of words. This theory has triggered a heated debate among scholars. Partington proposed that connotative meaning refers to a single word, while semantic prosody refers to the collocation mode of word items in a specific context.

The functional theory represented by Sinclair (2000, 2004) holds that semantic prosody is a functional choice that links function and communicative purpose. This functional choice is inseparable from communicative intention.

The Classification of Semantic Prosody

As for the classification of semantic prosody, the Stubbs' trisection is the most recognized in academic circles. Stubbs (1995) classified semantic prosody into three categories: positive, neutral and negative. In the negative semantic prosody, almost all the words attracted by node words have strong or distinct negative semantic characteristics, and they form a strong negative semantic atmosphere. The situation of positive semantic prosody is just the opposite: the node words attract almost all the words with positive semantic characteristics, thus forming a positive semantic atmosphere. Wei (2002), a Chinese scholar, defines neutral semantic prosody as complex semantic prosody. In neutral semantic prosody, node words attract not only some words with negative meanings, but also some words with positive or neutral meanings, thus forming a complex semantic atmosphere.

Semantic Preference

Stubbs claims that "semantic preferences refer to a class of words which share some semantic feature" (2001, p. 88). For example, a frequently cited study is mainly the study of Stubbs. He found that this adverb *largely* often collocated with words belonging to the same semantic set and expressed "quantity and size", such as *number, proportion, part, quantity*.

Research Design

Research Questions

This study takes *lockdown* as a node word, based on the special corpus of "Coronavirus Corpus", it is intended to answer three questions:

1. What are the semantic preferences of the collocations with *lockdown*?
2. What kinds of semantic prosodies do the collocations with *lockdown* have?
3. Is there diachronic change in the collocations with *lockdown*?

The Data Source

This study is based on Coronavirus Corpus, a sub-corpus of English corpus, which was first published by American linguist Mark Davies in May, 2020. It is a special product of the COVID-19 era. The corpus contains all the words related to COVID-19 from January 2020 to the present, with a capacity of 1.4 billion words, and continues to grow at a rate of 3-4 million words per day. The corpus meets the

three standards of scale, speed and vocabulary annotation. The advantage is that it can search according to the time span, which meets the needs of semantic prosody diachronic research. Its distinctive feature is that the source countries of the corpus are clearly marked, including 20 English speaking countries and regions such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. The register focuses on the news field, records the actual remarks made by English speaking countries in Internet newspapers and magazines since the outbreak of the new coronavirus epidemic, and closely reflects the impact of the COVID-19 on the economy, society and culture of various countries.

Research Procedure

Taking *lockdown* as a node word in Coronavirus Corpus, set the index to include all forms of *lockdown*, search for adjectives and verbs matching it, set the span to [-5, +5], the retrieval list method to relevance, and MI (mutual information value) to 3, finally after removing the abnormal data manually, 387 collocations were retrieved, with a total frequency of 319454 time. (If the MI value is greater than 3, the collocation is a significant collocation.)

Data Analysis and Discussion

The English definition of *lockdown* in Cambridge dictionary[1] is "a situation in which people are not allowed to enter or leave a building or area free because of an emergency". The term is used to refer to the state of being deprived of personal freedom. After the outbreak of the COVID-19, it means the closure of the city or the state of blockade.

The Semantic Preference of Lockdown

Different from the data-based method, the data-driven method does not establish colligations of the node word. Instead, the node word is studied according to the significant collocates in context. The significant collocates do not necessarily have a grammatical relationship with the node word, but their semantic characteristics reveal the semantic atmosphere pervading the territory of the node words (Wei 2002). In this way, researchers do not have too many ideas ahead of their research. Instead, they conduct research and description guided by data. There are few human factors, and they mainly rely on automated procedures for retrieval, extraction and statistics. As *lockdown* is a noun part of speech, its collocations are mainly adjectives and verbs.

The Semantic Features of Verb +*Lockdown*

Searching the collocations of *lockdown* in Coronavirus Corpus, and set the MI value to 3, there are 146 Verb +*lockdown* collocations. Through observation

[1]https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english.

and analysis, it is found that these verbs are mainly divided into three categories, namely, verbs representing action and behavior, verbs representing existence and state, and verbs representing evaluation.

In Table 1, there are 119 significant collocation verbs indicating action and behavior, such as *affect, went, implement*, etc., accounting for 81.51%, and 14 significant collocation verbs indicating state and existence, such as *relax, still*, etc., accounting for 9.59%. There are 13 significant collocations of verbs indicating evaluation, such as *paralyse, defy*, etc., accounting for 8.90%. It can be seen that the verbs collocated with *lockdown* are mainly verbs that indicate the execution of *lockdown*, and the proportion of evaluative verbs that can reflect attitude is very small. Therefore, the following analysis of semantic prosody should be conducted with the perspectives of specific context.

Table 1. *Statistical Descriptions of Verbal Collocations of Lockdown*

Category	Frequency (Times)	Percentage (%)	Examples
Actions	119	81.51	Impose; went; implement; extend; re-enforce; reinstitute
Behaviors and existences	14	9.59	relax; still; re-emerge; obeying; whiled
Comments	13	8.90	paralyse; devasted; slouched; defy

The Semantic Features of Adjective + *Lockdown*

After analyzing the 387 significant adjective collocations of *lockdown*, it is found that these adjectives are mainly the words of time, country and region, reason, execution and influence, as is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Statistical Descriptions of Adjective Collocations of Lockdown*

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Examples
Time dependent	121	31.27	76-day; post-EID 3-week; August-end 4-months-long;23-hour post-Christmas; Three-down
Country or region related	86	22.22	Leicester-style; Australian England-wide; Italy-style Melbourne-style; Zealand-style India-wide; European-style
Cause related	41	10.59	corona-induced; pandemic-enforced covid-led; pandemic-triggered pandemic-induced; virus-induced pandemic-caused; covid-inspired
Execution manner related	124	32.04	stringent; hardiest unphased; draconian half-baked; five-stage gradual; sufferfest
Influence field	15	3.88	childcare-related; circuit-breaking economically-crippling; store-cupboard; oil-consuming

Through the analysis of adjective collocations of node words, it can be shown that *lockdown*, often collocates with time related words, such as *4-months-long, 23-hour, post-Christmas, three-down,* etc., 121 in total, accounting for 31.27%; Collocations with words related to countries or regions, such as *Leicester style, Australian, England wide, Italy style, etc*., were 86 in total, accounting for 22.22%, and collocations with words indicating causes, such as corona induced, pandemic enforced, etc., were 41 in total, accounting for 10.59%. Words related to executive manner, such as *draconian, half baked, five stage,* and *graduate*, were collocated 124 in total, accounting for 32.04%, and words related to the field of influence, such as *circuit breaking, economically crimping,* and *oil consulting*, were collocated 15 in total, accounting for 3.88%. Therefore, it is not difficult to see that people's attention to the word *lockdown* during the COVID-19 focused on the country, time, implementation process and impact areas.

From the above data, we can see that *lockdown* is variable, and the collocations related to time, country, execution manner account for the most. It reflects that during the pandemic period, many counties and regions have carried different standards of lockdown. As it is a new kind of virus, the response to the pandemic changes over practice and national conditions. The execution force and standards of *lockdown* vary with different objects, for example, *lockdown* in schools, *lockdown* in families, *lockdown* in hospitals, and *lockdown* in different countries and regions. At the same time its influence field has expanded to a wide range of life.

The Semantic Prosody of Lockdown

According to the trisection method of Stubbs, the types of semantic prosody of 146 verb significant collocations are carried out. The statistical results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *The Types of Semantic Prosody of Lockdown Verbal Collocations*

Types of Semantic prosody	Frequency (Times)	Percentage (%)	Examples (MI)
Positive	4	2.74	Ease (6.78), unwind (4.47) Relax (3.75), necessitate (3.79)
Neutral	65	44.52	Go (3.09), contain (3.31) Enter (3.65), place (3.29) Introduce (7.65), act (3.23)
Negative	77	52.74	Impose (5.66), paralyze (3.14) Degenerate (3.72), cripple (3.2) Curb (4.19), loom (3.57)

According to the chart, we can see that among the verbal collocations of *lockdown*, the negative semantic prosody accounts for 52.74%, such as *impose, generate, crisp, curl, loom, paralyze,* etc., with a total of 77; Neutral semantic prosody account for 44.52%, such as go, contain, enter, place, introduce, act, etc.,

a total of 65; Positive semantic prosody accounted for 2.74%, such as ease, unwind, relax, etc. On the whole, the semantic prosody of *lockdown* is negative.

Among all the collocations of *lockdown*, the verbs prefixed with *re-*, which indicate execution, have the highest frequency. From the perspective of extended context, this paper analyzes the significant collocations of *lockdown* prefixed with re-, as shown in the following example sentences: (* means within the span of -5,5).

> **Example 1**: I am sure you do not want *the government to re-implement the lockdown if COVID-19 cases increase sharply*
> **Example 2**: The premier said he was* relieved to reimpose a full lockdown, which was enforced between march* and may last year.
> **Example 3**: How wrong could we have been? Let's look back at the second half of 2021. * Sydney and Melbourne re-entered lockdown as the Delta strain of *COVID-19 spread rapidly, amid growing calls for the vaccine rollout to be sped up, and for pharmacy #

The above three examples are all collocations prefixed with*'re-'*. All the example sentences are used to describe the context when the State implements *lockdown* of COVID-19. In Example 1, *re-implementation* means to implement it again. Observing its extended context, we can find the expression *'you do not want'*, which shows people's attitude towards the word *lockdown*. In Example 2, the word *reimpose* is composed of affixes *'re-'* and *'affect'*, and *'affect'* means mandatory, imposed, therefore, it means that *lockdown* is enforced by the public power of the government. In this article, we can see the collocation of *relief* and impact. It can be seen that people are forced and unwilling to implement *lockdown*. The overall semantic prosody is negative. In Example 3, re-enter also means to enter the *lockdown* state again. On the surface, there is no obvious semantic prosody in the sentence. However, observing that the previous sentence 'how wrong could we have been' is the beginning of this paragraph, which shows that the paragraph introduces what bad things we have done as a whole, and the subsequent content is of negative intention. It can be seen that *lockdown* still represents a negative semantic prosody here. So the prefix *'re-'* means again, again, in collocation with *lockdown*, it means that *lockdown* caused by COVID-19 occurs repeatedly. The repeatedly implemented COVID-19 *lockdown* presents a negative semantic prosody in the verb collocation. At the same time, we can see that the micro perspective of affix in lexicology can also reflect the changes in social life.

According to the trisection method of Stubbs, the 387 adjectival collocations are grouped by semantic prosody category. The statistical results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *The Types of Semantic Prosody of Lockdown Adjective Collocations*

Types of Semantic prosody	Frequency (Times)	Percentage (%)	Examples (MI)
Positive	4	1.03	well-panned (5.01), cleverer (3.85) crystal-clear (3.74), pollution-free (3.31)
Neutral	319	82.43	76-day (8.99), post-EID (8.82) Leicester-style (7.38), England-wide (6.9) India-wide (6.61), partial (5.7) near-complete (4.93), district-based (4.71) generalized (4.07), regionalized (3.5)
Negative	64	16.54	non-shielding (7.5), coronovirus-triggered (6.46) military-enforced (6.26), pandemic-busting (6.19) economically-crippling (6.29), ill-planned (5.82) ultra-strict (5.56), fear-filled (4.8) harshest (4.55), tightest (3.86)

According to the chart, we can see that among the adjectives collocations of *lockdown*, neutral semantic prosody account for 82.43%, such as *76-day, post Eid, Leicester style, England wide*, etc., a total of 319; Negative semantic prosody accounts for 16.54%, such as *non-shielding, military-enforced, pandemic-busting, ultra-strict*, etc., a total of 64; Positive semantic prosody accounted for 1.03%, such as *well-panned, clever, crystal-clear*. The method of selecting collocations by MI value avoids the chance of selecting words with a single frequency index. The MI measurement method makes the final search results highly related to the node word *lockdown*.

Among the 387 adjectives collocations searched, *76-day* ranked first with an MI value of 8.99, which was highly correlated with *lockdown*. By observing its span within the range of [-5, +5], we can find that this collocation represents the event of 76 *lockdown* in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Wuhan was declared closed on January 23, 2020 and unsealed on April 8, 2020. Therefore, represents the event of 76 *lockdown* in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. In the context of known span, it is difficult to judge the semantic prosody of neutral collocations. However, from its extended context, it is not difficult to see that these apparently neutral collocations are not neutral, and will be used with words with negative semantic prosody, but carry a certain negative semantic prosody in the context.

Example 5: Five weeks ago, Wuhan was celebrating the *end of a painful 76-day lockdown, after apparently stamping out the *world's first coronavirus outbreak which had affected more (source: www.vice.com)

Example 6: More than 11 million people in Wuhan and its surrounding* area beneath a draconian 76-day lockdown at the start of the pandemics (source: www.sfgate.com)

Example 7: Wuhan was also two weeks into what become a gruelling 76-day lockdown that cut the city off from the rest of China (source: www.netnewsledger.com)

In Example 5, before the 76-day collocation, we can see the adjective "painful", which has an obvious negative semantic prosody. It can be seen that in the news reports of vice, there is a negative attitude towards the closure of Chinese cities. Vice is a popular media among American youth. It has a decisive social influence among the 80, 90 and migrant generation in the United States. Its media reports show a negative semantic prosody for the 76-day closure of China.

In Example 6, the adjective draconian appeared before 76-day, which means draconian. The word "Draco" comes from the famous ancient Greek politician Draco, who wrote the first written law in the 7th century BC and is regarded as the pioneer of the ancient Greek constitution. However, because its law is extremely cruel and inhumane, almost all crimes, even stealing vegetables in petty theft, will also be sentenced to death (Fisher 2021). Therefore, later generations took "Draco" as a synonym for the harsh and severe law. Draco Malfoy, the villain in the famous Harry Potter novel we are familiar with, is also named after Draco. It can be seen that Draco has a very derogatory meaning (Rowling 2007). This report comes from the San Francisco Chronicle. It is the largest circulation newspaper in Northern California and one of the largest circulation newspapers in the United States. As the mainstream media in the United States, there is a negative semantic prosody in the reports on China's *lockdown* measures.

In Example 7, the adjective *gruelling* appears before the 76-day collocation. The English meaning of the word is exhausting, punishing and tormenting. It can be seen that they hold a derogatory attitude towards the closure of Wuhan. The report comes from the Canadian mainstream media net news ledger. As one of the five eye alliance, his report on the closure of China also presents a negative semantic prosody.

Within the span, neutral collocation words are not only influenced by the adjectives around them, but also by some verb collocations with negative semantic prosody, which makes the whole sentence show negative tendency in semantic prosody; as it is shown in Example 8.

> **Example 8**: The city of 11 million where the virus first emerged late * last year ended a 76-day lockdown, accounted for over 80% of * China's more than 4600 deaths from the epic. (Source: auto. hindustan times.com)

In Example 8, we can find that the verb *endure* is used before the collocation of 76 day. The English interpretation of *endure* is to undergo or suffix. It can be seen that the use of this word makes this sentence add a negative meaning on the basis of stating the objective facts of Wuhan's closure. The corpus comes from Hindustan Times, the largest English newspaper in India. As the mainstream media in India, it also presents negative semantic prosody when reporting the closure of Wuhan in China.

Through the above analysis, we have known that *lockdown* is more than places. In the collocation of *lockdown*, there are also many words indicating countries and regions. For example, the MI between England-wide and *lockdown* is 6.91, and the co-occurrence frequency is 79 times, including 46 reports from the UK, 18 reports from the United States, 5 reports from India, 3 reports from

Singapore, 3 reports from Malaysia, 1 report from Canada and 1 report from Australia, One report from Pakistan and one report from the Philippines. Considering the length of the paper, the following 10 concordances are randomly selected from 79 concordances. They present the co-occurrence of England-wide and *lockdown*:

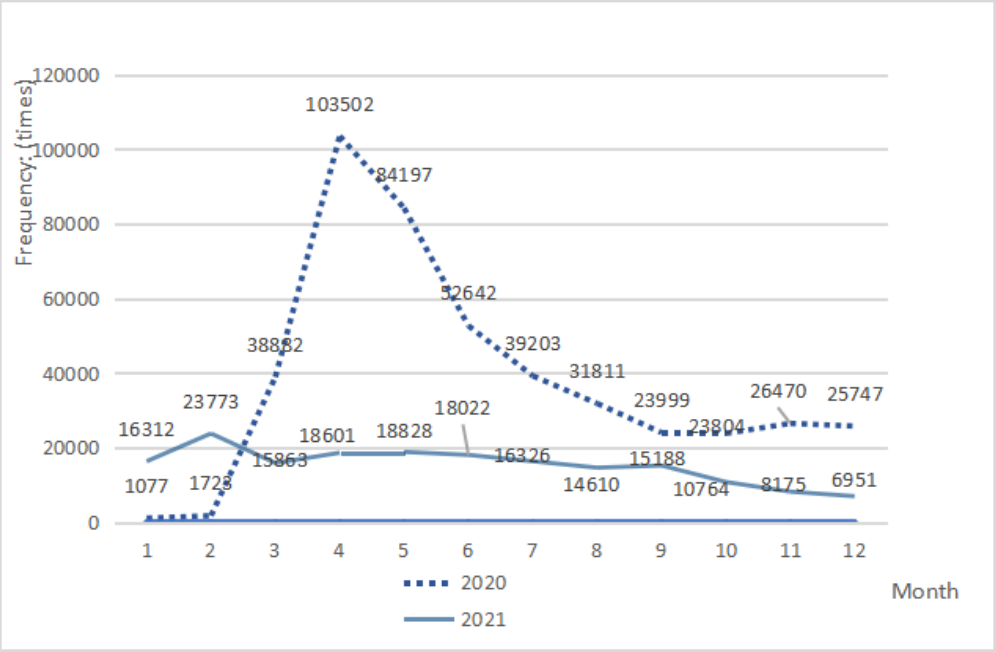
1. Measures, before the new *England-wide* ***lockdown*** came in on Thursday morning.
2. of a second *England-wide* national ***lockdown*** raises the chances of both
3. off during a new *England-wide* ***lockdown*** receive 80% of their pay
4. alternative "to a new *England-wide* ***lockdown*** amid a spike in coronavirus
5. that when the four-week, *England-wide* ***lockdown*** ends, the country will return
6. Christmas under the *England-wide* Nov. ***lockdown*** and the various tier systems
7. also called for an *England-wide* ***lockdown*** on 21 September, but had
8. 4 July England-wide relaxation of ***lockdown*** restrictions including the reopening of
9. favor of an *England-wide* national ***lockdown***, he wrote on the Conservative
10. announcement of a new *England-wide* ***lockdown*** amid rising COVID-19 cases has

In the 79 concordances, observing the semantic prosody of the collocations *England-wide* and *lockdown* within the span, the results show that they are neutral, and there is no semantic prosody in the words near the collocations. It can be seen that the media of various countries have a neutral attitude towards the closure of the whole territory of the UK, but the attitude of the UK towards the COVID-19 has experienced twists and turns. At the initial stage of the epidemic, Britain adopted a passive anti-epidemic approach and a "collective immunization" policy. The epidemic continued to rage and a comprehensive *lockdown* was adopted. Its comprehensive *lockdown* is caused by the policy mistakes in the early stage. Foreign media reports are neutral. Therefore, the functional purpose of semantic prosody is reflected in the use of *lockdown*.

Diachronic Research of the Semantic Prosody of Lockdown

The frequency of this word in the Coronavirus Corpus is 614750 times. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, the discussion of the word has remained hot. The word frequency trend of *lockdown* in 2020 and 2021 is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *The Frequency Tendency of Lockdown in 2020 and 2021*

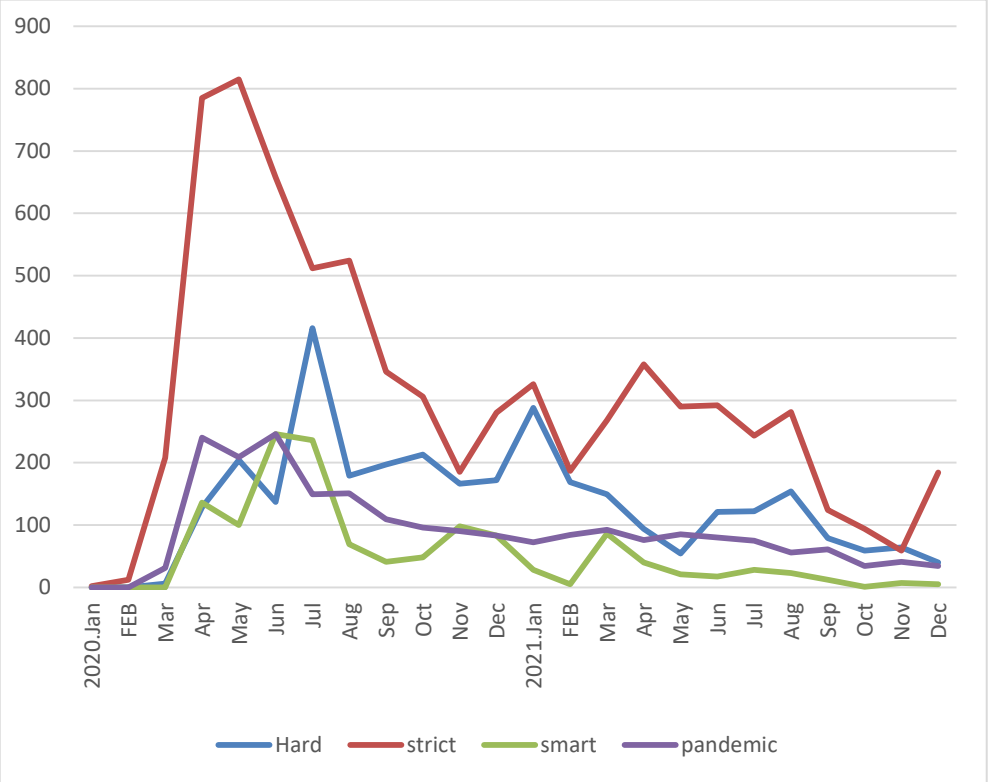


According to the statistics of word frequency, the observation frequency of *lockdown* in 2020 was 453057 times, which continued to rise from the first half of 2020 to the peak of 103502 times in April 2020, and then showed a downward trend as a whole. In 2021, the frequency of *lockdown* was 183413, showing a downward trend as a whole. It rebounded slightly in February, April and September of 2021, but the overall discussion was still very hot. As of December 2021, there were still 6951 times. It can be seen from the table that the epidemic situation in 2021 has eased compared with that in 2020, but it is still widely discussed in public life.

As Coronavirus Corpus is a specific corpus, it provides rich materials for the diachronic study of semantic prosody based on the background of the epidemic era. Because the semantic prosody of adjectives is easier to be discovered than that of verbs, this chapter mainly discusses the semantic prosody of *lockdown* adjective collocations. Because these four words have a very high degree of discussion in the corpus, thus *hard, strict, pandemic and smarter* are selected for this study. Based on the discussion in the previous section, *lockdown* presents a negative semantic prosody in the collocation with hard; in collocation with smart, *lockdown* presents a positive semantic prosody.

In order to visually reflect the diachronic change of *lockdown*'s semantic prosody, the time range is from January 2020 to December 2022, showing that the collocation frequency of hard is 3211 times in total. As shown in Figure 2, there are obvious fluctuations in April, July, January 2021 and August 2021, so one case will be randomly selected for analysis.

Figure 2. *The Diachronic Figure of Lockdown Adjective Collocations*



Hard

> **Example 9**: He stool by his choice of a hard lockdown as "absolutely necessary" While the nationwide lockdown is having a devastating effect on our economy, it is nothing compared to the catastrophic human, social and economic cost if the coronavirus could spread among our people unchecked. (April 21st, 2020)
> **Example 10**: The South African government introduced a "hard lockdown" to protect the indirectly and other vulnerable groups. (June 15th, 2021)
> **Example 11**: This shows us the hard lockdown is working, and caring for close contacts in quarantine is working. (November 30th, 2021)

In Example 9, *absolutely necessary* appears after *hard lockdown*, indicating that it is absolutely necessary. It can be seen that *lockdown* presents a positive semantic prosody in this scenario. In the context, the following article states that although the nationwide blockade has a devastating impact on the economy, if the coronavirus spreads unchecked, it will bring disastrous costs to human beings, society and economy. In Example 10, after hard *lockdown*, it is stated that this measure is conducive to protecting vulnerable groups, showing a positive semantic prosody as a whole. In Example 11, working is used after hard *lockdown*, indicating that this epidemic prevention method is effective. *Lockdown* presents a positive semantic prosody here. It can be seen that the semantic prosody is not invariable with the passage of time.

Strict

Example 12: Thousands of protesters took to the streets across Argentina to demonstrate against the country's strict lockdown. (August 17th, 2020)
Example 13: On March 21, 2020, closed to the public as a strict lockdown comes into in effect in France to stop the spread of COVID-19. (March 29th, 2020)
Example14: Researchers have warned that achieving this goal requires a strict lockdown, contact tracing, quarantines and travel restrictions. (March 28th, 2021)
Example 15: New Zealand has been praised for imposing a strict lockdown in the early days of the pandemic. (August 31st, 2021)

As is discussed in the previous section, when strict and *lockdown* coexist, *lockdown* presents a negative semantic prosody. In Example 12, in the report in August 2020, many protesters protested in the streets against the implementation of strict *lockdown*. At this time, *lockdown* presents a negative semantic prosody. However, in Example 13, in the report in March 2021, France decided to effectively control the epidemic, which requires strict prevention and control; In Example 14, the researchers showed that in order to achieve effective prevention and control, strict prevention and control, contact tracking, and some restrictions should be implemented. In example 15, New Zealand was praised for its strict closure. In the above three examples, *lockdown* shows a positive semantic prosody, and the negative semantic prosody of strict and *lockdown* has changed over time.

Smart

Example 16: Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid said the number of COVID-19 cases has significantly decreased after the smart lockdown policy was implemented in the province. (July 14th, 2020)
Example 17: Pakistan has dealt with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic successfully and secured the economy protecting the poor segment of the Country through smart lockdown Policy and Ehsaas Emergency. (November 30th, 2020)
Example 18: He said that the government had adopted a balanced strategy of smart lockdown with its focus on the poor and the working class. (August 9th, 2021)
Example 19: Last time, we got good response of smart lockdown and coronavirus cases came down in the areas where smart lockdown was imposed. (March 15th, 2021)

It is found in the research that smart *lockdown* is the name of a new scientific isolation policy. It means selective lockdown, shut down small regions in response to new outbreaks. When smart and lockdown coexist, the positive semantic prosody presented by lockdown does not change.

Pandemic

Example 20: Women admitted to being more stressed during the pandemic lockdown as compared to only 34 percent men. (April 4th, 2020)
Example 21: Australian home and led away in pajamas for allegedly inciting activists to demonstrate against pandemic lockdown. (September 3rd, 2020)
Example 22: A contractor who works in construction, blames the stress of the pandemic lockdown that confined many to their homes, sometimes in difficult situations. (July 25th, 2021)

In previous section, pandemic *lockdown* presents neutral semantic prosody. Pandemic *lockdown* presents negative semantic prosody as a whole in diachronic research. In Example 20, it was reported in April 2020 that women were under greater pressure than men in the lockdown of COVID-19. In Example 21, some social contradictions have occurred in Australia because of lockdown. In Example 22, it was reported in July 2021 that there was a problem with his income in lockdown.

Based on above analysis on the diachronic study of semantic prosody of *lockdown*, the positive semantic prosody does not change, the negative semantic prosody changes over time, and the neutral semantic prosody shows a trend of negative change. The semantic prosody of *lockdown* changes over time. This time span has changed rapidly with the development of the epidemic situation. There are multiple factors for the change of *lockdown* semantic prosody over time. It involves country, gender, age, nationality, occupation and so on. It is a complex and dynamic question, which is worth exploring in depth and testing through history.

Conclusion

Taking *lockdown* as the node word, based on the Coronavirus Corpus, this paper uses a data-driven approach to study the lexical collocation characteristics and semantic prosody of *lockdown*. It is found that *lockdown* is often collocated with verbs indicating execution and implementation, and adjectives indicating time, country and region, cause, execution and influence field; its semantic prosody as a whole shows a neutral to negative semantic prosody. At the same time, the semantic prosody of the word is also different in the reports of different countries. The overall reports of China show negative semantic prosody, and the reports of Britain show neutral semantic prosody, which also provides an example for the saying that semantic prosody is a functional choice.

It is a new perspective to study the hot words of current news from the perspective of semantic prosody, hoping to open up new territory for the study of semantic prosody. This paper focuses on the semantic prosody of *lockdown* during the COVID-19 period. The Coronavirus Corpus selected in this paper only includes 20 countries. At the same time, the register only focuses on the field of news reporting, the follow-up research can be expanded to a richer scope and register,

which will bring richer examples for the embodiment of ideology in the study of semantic prosody.

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