

A kind of transcript, ZDF Magazin Royal, on Long Covid and ME/CFS

September 6, 2024

Abstract

The recent German broadcast of Jan Böhmermann's "ZDF MAGAZIN ROYAL" on Long Covid and ME/CFS was well received and aroused interest of non-native speakers. However, YouTube's autotranslation into English misses many, if not all nuances.

This document intends to show more easily e.g.:

- content
- structure
- roles, jokes, satire
- sound information

Video, 20min excerpt: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qhFdouWSaE&t=1146s>

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1 00:00 – Intro

Joke 1 (1)

Some Germans hate "gender", i.e. having more than male and female human beings. So he addresses Ladies, Gentlemen and else.

German context 1 (2)

German language likes to indicate: DER Mann (man; male), DIE Frau (woman; female), DAS Kind (kid; like a thing). **Gender** now means undefined sexuality, and complicated language constructs *to be fair to everyone* ...

Situation 1 (3)

My summer vacations was brilliant!
I had sooo much fun.

Joke 2 (4)

I even pooped into the Seine, just for fun, so a little bit of me was also with the olympians during the triathlon ...

Situation 2 (5)

I'm so grateful for this summer 2024 ...

2 00:44 – Do you remember, 4 years ago?

The simple mind 1 (6)

4 years ago we could only dream of such awesome vacation. We had Corona, and – boo – where locked down with Drosten podcast and home-made bread.

German context 2 (7)

Christian Drosten: Virologist, was interviewed frequently and was one of the advisors to government early in the pandemic. Later not all his estimates were good enough. Retreated from public, which became more hostile in parts, focused on research again.

German context 3 (8) Homemade bread: Shortages in the beginning made people buy huge amounts of flour, just to survive the next few lockdown months ...	German context 4 (10) Jens Spahn was minister for health in 2020, and succeeded by Karl Lauterbach in fall 2021.
The simple mind 2 (9) We were doomed to watch press conferences with Jens Spahn. Corona was such a **** and luckily that's now all behind ...	Statement 1 (11) Lauterbach: We have no reliable data, but have to assume half a million people affected by Long Covid and we have to assume this number will increase.
	Joke 3 (12) Hey, what is the drummer from Tokotronic talking about Long Covid? Why does he look so tired?

3 01:30 – Ok, loong covid ... and prejudice

The simple mind 3 (13) Is this the new danger, Long Covid? We had this RKI-files scandal, so I demand a trustworthy second opinion! Independent, really knowledgeable in Long Covid.	Trivializers 1 (15) Some people now say, psychological instability is a risk factor for many diseases. Put carefully, if you didn't feel well before, you now have an official ticket, and they can claim, it must be related to Corona and you all have to pay for my treatment.
German context 5 (14) RKI , Robert-Koch-Institut, does, what the American CDC does. Recently there was public demand to turn over all those secret and censored protocols from the lockdown phase. Having done that, the scandal turned out to be just a storm in a tea cup.	German context 6 (16) Augstein and Blome, frequently on TV news channel ntv ...
	Reflecting (17) So if you are mentally unstable, and want to rip-off society ...

Joke 4 (18) <p>I thought mental instability was a risk factor to catch an embarrassing Nikolaus Blome ...</p>	Satire 1 (19) <p>No real disease Long Covid is, but a psycho stuff like climate change, or gender gaga, or traffic rules ...</p>
	Trivializers 2 (20) <p>Was that a red light?! – No. I decide, it was not red.</p>
Satire 2 (21) <p>Sure it wasn't a red light! The traffic light was psychologically unstable! Just like all these Long Covid-wimps.</p>	CITATION 2 (25) <p>rbb24: Not much research, hardly any therapy. Great perplexity about Long Covid and fatigue</p>
The simple mind 4 (22) <p>Nobody really knows, what Long Covid is, right?</p>	The simple mind 5 (26) <p>Long Covid is perplexing and makes you lazy!</p>
CITATION 1 (23) <p>The puzzle: citing media talking about this puzzle.</p>	Trivializers 3 (27) <p>Long Covid turned into long-f**k-work</p>
German context 7 (24) <p>DIE ZEIT: once a well repected newspaper. Spektrum magazine: science simplified. rbb24: TV-channel.</p>	Joke 5 (28) <p>A confirming wuff wuff heckel heckel</p>
The informed 1 (29) <p>Now, what do we mean by Long Covid?</p>	CITATION 3 (30) <p>Long Covid summarizes all long-term problems, which persist longer than 4 weeks since the infection with the corona virus</p>

German context 8 (31) BMG = Bundes-Ministerium für Gesundheit (health)	CITATION 4 (33) Known are memory problems, anxiety, shortness of breath, sleep disorder or muscle pain, and above all: fatigue.
	German context 9 (34) DER SPIEGEL: political magazine
The simple mind 6 (32) And what aches and pains do you have allegedly?	The simple mind 7 (35) Ha! That's no new disease, that's whin(e)itis

4 03:34 – Iiii trust in reaal long covid experts

The simple mind 8 (36) In Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz I trust.	German context 10 (39) BILD Zeitung: So called newspaper, feeding the simple minded since 1952. Simplistics + Sex
Trivializers 4 (37) Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz, Neurology University Essen Hospital: There is too much panic about Long Covid.	CITATION 5 (40) Him cited by BILD: School medicine states it's unlikely that symptoms from a virus infection persist for many years.
Joke 6 (38) So you lousy whimps: chill (sound of DJ-ing) and read BILD	Joke 7 (41) So, it's unlikely? If only Freddie Mercury had known that !
	Hint: (42) Freddie Mercury died in 1991 from infection with HIV ...

5 04:23 – About virus diseases

Satire 3

(43)

If Freddy only had listened to Dr. Kleinschnitz, today he'd be headliner at "Rocken am Brocken", but so, well, that's life ...

German context 11

(44)

Rocken am Brocken (Harz) is a music festival, similar to **Wacken** or **Rock am Ring**.

The simple mind 9

(45)

But we learned from this, virus diseases at the end of the day are just mental things, like ...

Joke 8

(46)

a cold, MPOX, herpes, ebola, war against Ukraine ...

The simple mind 10

(47)

... all will disappear all by itself, if we just do wait.

The informed 2

(48)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz is director of Neurology at University Essen Hospital. But: is he a trustworthy source of information?

Joke 9

(49)

(Pascal harasses a young woman) No Pascal, I don't think so. Pascal: Why?

6 04:50 – Let's have a look at ... science

The informed 3

(50)

Hey, Pascal, can't care for you now, 'm just reading the latest science magazine **nature medicine**. They write:

CITATION 6**(51)**

Long Covid is a complex multisystem disorder that affects almost any organ system, including the cardiovascular system, the nervous system, the endocrine system, the immune system, the reproduction system and the gastrointestinal system.

The informed 4**(52)**

Aha! Long Covid is no ticket for *the mentally unstable* but a serious organic disease: Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue.

CITATION 7**(53)**

The most severe form of Long Covid is called ME/CFS.

German context 12**(54)**

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG: newspaper

The simple mind 11**(55)**

Myallilalilala ?? And that's the same as Long Covid, or is it just an extra disease?

7 05:36 – ME/CFS explained for fools**Joke 10****(56)**

Of course this fat pile of fascia won't get complexity!

FACTS 3**(59)**

And, surprise, most frequently affected are ... women!

FACTS 1**(57)**

Listen: ME/CFS is a really crappy chronic illness.

Satire 4**(60)**

Boo! They already are burdened.

FACTS 2**(58)**

Frequently triggered by a virus: flu, Epstein-Barr, or just Covid.

FACTS 4**(61)**

Endometriosis, less salary, ...

<p>Joke 11 (62)</p> <p>the end of Killing Eve, men, named Lukas, and just don't understand that Strandmatte doesn't replace personality ...</p>	<p>German context 13 (63)</p> <p>Strandmatte is a fictious product, like hair gel. It can also mean the type of hair cut, which fits a surfers look. Hollow head style</p>
<p>FACTS 5 (64)</p> <p>And now also ME/CFS that kicks like an insane (gottlos) alcoholic hangover ...</p>	<p>Joke 13 (68)</p> <p>Even Elotrans, Rollmops or a huge glass of cucumber water don't help</p>
<p>German context 14 (65)</p> <p>Gottlos is a kind a slang, used by younger people, acting like a kind of contextual placeholder ...</p>	<p>German context 16 (69)</p> <p>Elotrans: electrolytic medication. Rollmops: sour fish, cucumber water ... all <i>secret weapons</i> against alcoholic side effects ... after the fact.</p>
<p>Joke 12 (66)</p> <p>... but without drinking Kornkrümel-tea beforehand (preventive measure).</p>	<p>FACTS 6 (70)</p> <p>Also doesn't help: just take a long nap!</p>
<p>German context 15 (67)</p> <p>Kornkrümel-tea is a fictious tea, making fun of some kind of e.g. esotheric ideas (made from crumbled grains of a veery goood plant) ... In fact, that's how tea is manufactured in Asia by rolling the dried leafes.</p>	<p>FACTS 7 (71)</p> <p>With ME/CFS you feel more like this pitiful white doggy (or bear?). AL-WAYS</p>
	<p>FACTS 8 (72)</p> <p>Getting up, going to work.</p>
	<p>Joke 14 (73)</p> <p>No Pascal, I dont't think so</p>

FACTS 9 (74) About 25 % affected can only lie in bed. But not like lazy-sunday, but less exciting as my-life-is-gone.	FACTS 14 (79) Making breakfast ⇒ crash
FACTS 10 (75) Overload ⇒ crash	FACTS 15 (80) Crash crash crash
FACTS 11 (76) Getting even worse, then. Sometimes: forever.	FACTS 16 (81) Even things, important for survival, can trigger the crash.
FACTS 12 (77) Go for a walk ⇒ crash	Joke 15 (82) Like watching Bares für Rares , or finally separating from Lukas, because he is self-centered, doesn't wash his butt, and makes a strange noise when brushing his teeth ...
FACTS 13 (78) Brushing teeth ⇒ crash	German context 17 (83) Bares für Rares : a German junk-for-cash show
FACTS 17 (84) More ME/CFS-symptoms? Blood-circulation problems, balance disorder, heart palpitations, sleep problems, dizziness	Joke 16 (86) ...head and shoulders knees and toes, ...
FACTS 18 (85) sensitivity to light and sound, severe pain in joints and muscles, nerves ...	FACTS 19 (87) Another symptom? Brain fog.
	Joke 17 (88) No! Not rain frog ... brain fog! Foggy brain!

FACTS 20 (89) But why are you so skewed up, and what can we do about it?	Deduction (92) So it comes as no surprise, the mitochondrial dynamics and glycolytic metabolism are disturbed. Should be clear to everyone ...
Situation 3 (90) We don't know exactly, because for decades no one was interested in research on ME/CFS.	Joke 18 (93) ... even to this windbag.
FACTS 21 (91) What we know nowadays: it looks like an autoimmune disease. Something is wrong with the blood vessels.	

8 07:52 – "That's way over my head" – Got it !

The informed 5 (94) ME/CFS is the most severe form of Long Covid. So Long Covid can appear in very different shapes and forms.
Joke 19 (95) Looks a bit like the search for Jakob Augstein's father ... (shows a wheel of fortune ... with completely unknown guys) Oh, oh, we will be blessed with 10 podcast episodes from Blome about this ...
FACTS 22 (96) Who's infected with Corona, can also develop Long Covid. Long Covid may develop into the serious chronic disease ME/CFS.
CITATION 8 (97) FAZ: Before the pandemic estimates were that about 250.000 had ME/CFS (?), where about 40.000 were children. Now estimates almost doubled.

9 08:40 – And now: about your doctors

Statement 2

(98)

Just in Germany about half a million people have ME/CFS. Please tell your doctor, because:

CITATION 9

(99)

BR: only a few doctors know about ME/CFS, and up to now it has not to be taught in medical curricula, though the WHO already recognized this disease back in the 1960s ...

German context 18

(100)

BR: public broadcaster

Satire 5

(101)

ME/CFS is no new disease, but may be, just may be, many doctors and medical personal only now start spending thoughts on it, at friday night, in a googoogaga show of ZDF? // Yes, Pascal, I think that's, what happens.

FACTS 23

(102)

Many doctors don't know what ME/CFS is and how to treat it.

Satire 6

(103)

To put it mildly, that's not sooo good for people affected.

Affected 1

(104)

Woman: Sought help from my family doctor, wrt. post-covid/ME/CFS. They told me, I had just a depression. Other people are much worse off, there are even worse illnesses and I shouldn't act like that ...

10 09:44 – The consequences

The simple mind 12

(105)

Right, don't act like that ...

Joke 20**(106)**

...this is not the bakers shop!

German context 19**(107)**

Sich anstellen has two meanings: to act in an inappropriate way, and to line up.

The simple mind 13**(108)**

For such therapeutical approaches I don't need a doctor: I just listen to Jakob Augstein's podcast.

Statement 3**(109)**

When your own doctor talks so carelessly, it's not only awkward, but also dangerous. People with ME/CFS can turn into serious care cases.

Joke 21**(110)**

(hint: mixes self-centered praise of his georgous skin and some joint activity with a real question)

11 10:17 – Why we know so little about ME/CFS

The informed 6**(111)**

The answers, why we know so little about ME/CFS are simple.

Joke 22**(112)**

(continues joke, thanks for the nice compliment)

The informed 7**(113)**

ME/CFS: we didn't want to know anything about it for decades. Instead we prefered to believe the following:

12 10:41 – Old medical beliefs about ME/CFS: hysterical women

CITATION 10

(114)

Two psychiatrist called ME/CFS in 1970 in the British Medical Journal an epidemic hysteria, because predominantly women and nurses suffer from it ...

The simple mind 14

(115)

Ha! Who is affected by ME/CFS is a hysterical wench!

Statement 4

(116)

Some guys told so in the 1970s and so nobody did research on this subject ever since.

CITATION 11

(117)

Süddeutsche Zeitung: By the end of the 1980s scientific papers mentioned *depressive women in their menopause* who just couldn't handle their ambitious goals and turned ill.

Statement 5

(118)

That's how doctors thought and talked about ME/CFS, and many still do.

13 11:24 – The "expert" Dr. Kleinschnitz again

Trivializers 5

(119)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz: 4 years in a row the same old panic stories all over again. Now via #Frauenticket ...

Satire 7

(120)

Cool tweet! This weeks hashtag: #Frauenticket.

Statement 6

(121)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz, the well trusted director of Neurology at Essen University Hospital, not only is expert for Long Covid and ME/CFS, ...

Joke 23

(122)

...but also very active on the well-trusted free speech platform X.

Trivializers 6

(123)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz: Panic orchestra now hosts so called colleagues, media, politicians, headed by Lauterbach (BGM), was, is huge. Lateron they won't remember: brain-fogging.

German context 20

(124)

Panic Orchestra was the band name of singer Udo Lindenberg in the late 1970s/early 80s, doing nonsense-like lyrics, like: "No panic on Titanic".

Trivializers 7

(125)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz: ...even more frightening is how large parts of society ask for totalitarian measures facing a real or perceived danger ...

Trivializers 8

(126)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz: Hardly any doctor knows patients with real Long Covid (like I do) ...

Trivializers 9

(127)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz: Corona narcissism eats its children.

German context 21

(128)

This seems to be taken and adapted from Georg Büchners book "Dantons Tod", where "the (french) revolution is like god Saturn, who ate his/its children".

Trivializers 10

(129)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz: Just tick the gender box and there you go: your next "scientific" paper ...

Joke 24

(130)

Too many errors for someone named klein-Schnitz ... But hey: no jokes about names!

German context 22

(131)

Klein means small, while a **Schnitzer** is an avoidable mistake ... while he made many big ones cited above ...
BTW, **schnitzen** means to carve, hence the analogy.

14 12:20 – We interviewed many people affected by long covid

The informed 8

(132)

Many people are not only affected by Long Covid, but also by ME/CFS. And almost all of them experienced this during their treatment:

Affected 2

(133)

Woman: I visited a general practitioner about my Long Covid. He told me I didn't look sick at all, but healthy. He found it strange that post-covid or Long Covid is a purely European problem: you don't have it in Africa or Asia ...

The simple mind 15

(134)

Right, it only exists with these effeminate woke millennials in Europe ...

Joke 25

(135)

...so be real and use normal heterosexual milk for your vegan matcha latte (tea)

The informed 9

(136)

Hey, what's wrong with doctors when it comes to Long Covid?

Statement 7

(137)

Stigma researcher: First of all we have to acknowledge, it's challenging to learn with care about such a complex disease, when you run out of time. Especially, when it isn't fully understood, yet.
It is a sign of medical competence, being able to tell what we know and what we don't.
However, it's not a good idea to assign anything to mental aspects, we can't explain right no. That's a bit too easy.

15 13:32 – What too many doctors still don't know: tell them

Statement 8

(138)

Perhaps that's not so good, to make it a little easy, when it's a severe disease. Just imagine, you have Long Covid, are in urgent need for medical treatment, and s/he tells you:

Joke 26

(139)

(Pretty boy, driving in his car, philosophing) It's never been so easy living a great life, with a gorgeous body, piles of money, best relationship ... all those morons.

FACTS 24

(140)

BTW, this moronic-Long Covid didn't happen for the first time in history. Multiple Sclerosis, MS, which everybody knows, predominantly occurs in women.

CITATION 12

(141)

For a long time it wasn't known, less diagnosed, that many so called nervous breakdowns can be severe diseases, like Multiple Sclerosis (MS) or Epilepsy

Statement 9

(142)

This weeks hashtag #Frauenticket ! Women with MS were questioned for decades, whether or not they just weren't hysterical or just insane.

The simple mind 16

(143)

MS? No, you are so healthy as can be ...

Joke 27

(144)

...as healthy as Robert Geiss' relationship with his daughter (?molester?)

German context 23

(145)

Having become a rich businessman the **Geissens Family** went on TV for promotion, showing off, earning more ...

16 14:58 – Multiple Sclerosis (as an example)

The informed 10

(146)

MS ... was dismissed as nervous breakdown or hysteria for a long time.
Also MS is a super complex disease.
Diagnosis was difficult for a long time, until something relevant changed:

CITATION 13

(147)

MS could be diagnosed after researchers had identified corresponding markers in the cerebrospinal fluid of patients.
Meanwhile MRT was invented in parallel.

German context 24

(148)

Frankfurter Allgemeine: newspaper

The informed 11

(149)

Science HAS an effect. Only with ME/CFS and Long Covid science still needs to make progress. There is no simple diagnosis available, yet.

17 15:38 – Back to public trivializers

Statement 10

(150)

That's why Twitter-professors and sons of journalists can successfully proliferate their remote diagnosis ... while those affected still aren't taken serious ...

Affected 3

(151)

Woman: Went to a pain doctor, as my joints and muscles hurt from chronic fatigue. She said, my pain wasn't there BECAUSE I'm silent when she moves my limbs. RECOMMENDED: competitive sports ...

The simple mind 17 (152)

Who doesn't scream or groan,
has no pain ...
So simple!
Hurry up, do sports!

Joke 28

(153)

...and who doesn't walk sideways,
has no cancer, simple as that!

German context 25**(154)**

The german word **Krebs** means both the animal (*crab*), which walks sideways, and *cancer*, the disease.

The informed 12**(155)**

Science already knows something about ME/CFS, though not enough, yet. E.g. ME/CFS-patients have to avoid physical overload under all circumstances.

Joke 29**(156)**

Unfortunately not all doctors received this memo so far. Neither did some rehab clinics ...

Affected 4**(157)**

Man: My rehab workload was way to high, more than I could do. When I said that, REHAB replied: If you don't cooperate, we can end this measure, with far reaching consequences for future measures. So I followed, as best as I could, and it was way too much: Total crash.

The informed 13**(158)**

That's why people affected by ME/CFS or Long Covid may find themselves in a hopeless situation ...

18 16:58 – Long covid, ME/CFS and suicidal situations

CITATION 14**(159)**

Berliner Zeitung: Long Covid and ME/CFS: increased risk of suicide in sick people ...

German context 26**(160)**

Berliner Zeitung: newspaper

Statement 11**(161)**

Suicide? Being a medical layman on TV, my first thought is advertising a phone number for help. But: what do I really know about suicide?

Satire 8**(162)**

I am a medical layman and no Professor Dr. at the University Hospital in Essen.

Trivializers 11**(163)**

Kleinschnitz minimizes: What a drama! They only have depression. The real scandal: doctors treating Long Covid and ME/CFS wrong (i.e. not as an alleged depression).

Satire 9**(164)**

Ah, THAT's the scandal ... The real scandal with Long Covid is NOT that sick people commit suicide, but that they take their own lives WITHOUT consulting this twitter troll beforehand ...

19 17:39 – Request for statements from Dr. Kleinschnitz

Statement 12**(165)**

We asked Dr. Kleinschnitz for his current statement wrt Long Covid and ME/CFS. He replied:

CITATION 15**(166)**

Other working groups and him have indication that functional psychosomatic processes play an important role for development of symptoms.

Statement 13**(167)**

So he no longer says: Long Covid equals depression, but you'll acquire Long Covid when you were already mentally ill beforehand.

Satire 10**(168)**

Nice try, Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz, that's still different from the state of science, but complex explanations distract when you want to be expert for BILD, and FAZ expert, ZEIT expert, SPIEGEL expert, WDR expert, ZDF expert (!)

German context 27

(169)

BILD: so called newspaper; feeds simple minds since 1952. FAZ: newspaper. ZEIT: newspaper. SPIEGEL: political magazine. WDR, ZDF: public broadcaster.

Satire 11

(170)

Prof. Dr. Kleinschnitz always appears, to present simple solutions to complicated situations.

FACTS 25

(171)

Even serious media accept that gratefully.

Satire 12

(172)

Because that's the medias journalistic rule: contrast each thorough scientific analysis with an under-complex opposing opinion, even if it's nonsense! Otherwise we'll strengthen the AfD, and that's something, none of us do really want to, do we?

German context 28

(173)

AfD (Alternative für Deutschland) is a populist, fascistoid party which, unfortunately, becomes increasingly popular, especially in parts of former Eastern Germany (GDR).

20 18:52 – Scientific consensus: complex disease needs complex solutions

FACTS 26

(174)

Scientific consensus is already: Long Covid and ME/CFS are **complex diseases**, for which **complex solutions** are needed ... And that, unfortunately, **takes time**.

Hint: (175)

W. Ross Ashby pioneered cybernetics. From studying life-forms and regulators he came up with his **Law of Requisite Variety**. To cope with environmental changes the variability of the regulator needs to at least as large as the variability from the environment (absorb variety/complexity). Or as **Einstein** put it: Everything should be as simple as possible, but not simpler.

CITATION 16 (176)

Since the pandemic started, more than 400 million people worldwide were affected by Long Covid, according to a new study.

Statement 14 (177)

New ones are added every day!
It doesn't help these people, when ...

Satire 13 (178)

...obese dudes spread their suspicious hot-takes originating from Elon Musks backside, and spreading these from the passenger seat.

21 19:20 – Public trivializers again**Trivializers 12** (179)

Corona is completely normal. No crazy mutations, growing us horns. Deal with it! Drink some tea!

22 19:36 – Outro**The simple mind 18** (180)

Sure: drink tea (and wait)!

The informed 14 (181)

...and stop believing such a**holes, who behave, as if they knew everything.
It's sometimes a good idea, but not always

Satire 14 (182)

Believe me: I know, what I'm talking about ... (grinning)

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