

# ACTIVE MODELS IN MODERN PORTUGUESE NEOLOGY: NEW WORDS AND THE PANDEMIC<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract.** In this paper, neology is considered as a heuristic activity that is carried out with the help of language. The article uses materials from modern Portuguese-language media discourse, specifically from the internet versions of the leading media resources in Portugal and Brazil. The combination of structural, psycholinguistic, functional-stylistic, denotative, cognitive-discursive and lexicographic approaches helps to identify the main active models in the field of Portuguese neology. During the coronavirus pandemic, Portuguese neology developed in the classical way, although some new phenomena are observed at the same time. Processes that traditionally occur include word formation (affixation, abbreviation and word composition), semantic reinterpretations of lexical units, and borrowings. There is a large proportion of initial abbreviations in word formation, both alphabetic (sigla) and phonetic (acronyms). Many initial abbreviations are of an international origin. Compound words function alongside scientific symbols. In affixation, prefix word-formation prevails. To enrich the dictionary, borrowings are mostly taken from English. New neological models are associated with the determinologization of medical vocabulary, which migrates into everyday discourse. Proper names are interpreted in a new way. Some anthroponyms, mythonyms and toponyms acquire associative connotations or become part of complex words. Derivation in the field of phraseology, in which the number of fixed combinations increases, has become more common. Paremiology is renewed with antiproverbs. Linguocreative activity is represented by expressive memes and hashtags. In the pandemic period, along with neologisms, potential words with great expressiveness appear. Portuguese neology actively conceptualizes the events of the coronavirus pandemic. In the field of conceptualization, the subdomains of medicine, media and everyday discourse, in the focus of which lies the concept of “disease,” are distinguished. The latter is understood with the help of conventional lexical means and lexical resources from different styles. During the pandemic, the neological field “coronavirus pandemic” appears as part of the constantly expanding neologosphere of the language.

**Keywords:** neologisms, word production, affixation, abbreviation, word composition, paremiological derivation, determinologization

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Neology can be seen as heuristic activity that is carried out through language. Heuristic activity in speech is understood as techniques of creative cognitive work during which new lexical units in the language may arise (new words, new meanings, and new combinations of words). Neology is the sphere of active word creation (linguistic creativity). Lexical innovations show new forms of life, new objects, and new concepts. A large group of lexical innovations is made up of neonyms, or terminological neologisms.

Active processes in Portuguese neology are taking place in numerous areas. The focus of the intensification of neological activity is on word formation, within which abbreviation, compounding and merging (blending) occur. Innovations also take place in the process of the semantic rethinking of existing lexical units, sometimes on the basis of phraseological derivation. The newest layers of vocabulary are rapidly being replenished with borrowings from other languages (foreign neologisms). Active processes that take place in neology include determinologization – the transformation of neonyms into new common words on the basis of the properties acquired by them, such as the spontaneity of their appearance, their form and distribution, the presence of synonyms, and the origin of the words. In variantology, the differentiation of the neological vocabulary of the European and Brazilian varieties of Portuguese is manifested in the field of potential vocabulary exclusively.

The intensification of neological processes that started in 2019 came about as a result of the coronavirus pandemic – a kind of “black swan” of world civilization and culture (Taleb 2009). Signs of the impending global crisis were the anomalous nature of the events, which no one could have seen coming, their immense impact, and the fact that they were open to analysis. The Brazilian linguist Evanildo Bechara notes that language reflects what happens in history, that any event inevitably produces new vocabulary, and the pandemic is a vivid example of this<sup>2</sup>.

O. S. Akhmanova defines a *neologism* as “a word or phrase created (or which has appeared) to designate a new (previously unknown) object or to express a new concept” (Akhmanova 2004: 261–262). A word belongs to the category of neologisms from the moment it first appears in a dictionary of the respective language. Or if it is considered to be new by the generation now using it (Kotelova 1983; Togoëva 2000; Kozlovskaja 2020). Russian neography has latched onto the theory presented by N. Z. Kotelova, who developed a typology of dictionaries of new words – annuals, ten-year dictionaries, and thirty-year dictionaries, with each recording words that appear in the corresponding timeframes (Popova 2005). The composition of neologisms is in constant flux: some replenish the active vocabulary; while those that do not lose their novelty and freshness remain in the passive vocabulary (Bragina 1973). Along

<sup>2</sup> Capobianco M. 2020. Está em carentena? Como surgiram as gírias nascidas durante a pandemia. 17.07.2020. URL: <https://vejario.abril.com.br/cidade/girias-pandemia/> (accessed 30.01.2022).

with the term *neologism*, experts in the field also use similar terms *innovation* and *nonce-formation*. Innovations can arise at different levels of language, while nonce-formations (Vinogradov 1977: 3) are typically word-forming neologisms.

The study of neology in Portugal and Brazil takes much from the French linguistic tradition, which, back in 1750, raised the issue of creating new words to enrich the language (Kosovitch 2014: 55). Following the Canadian linguist J.-C. Boulanger, the Portuguese-speaking researchers I. Alves, M. Barbosa, M. Botta, J. Ganança, and others<sup>3</sup> see neologisms as “recently created lexical units, new meanings of an existing word, or a word recently borrowed from a foreign language and adopted in another”<sup>4</sup>.

According to the Dicionário eletrônico Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa, the term *neology* carries the following meanings: “the process of creating, describing and using new lexical units”; “the registration of these units”; and “a set of neologisms”<sup>5</sup>. Researchers note that while *neology* is the process of creating new units, *neologism* is the result of this process<sup>6</sup>. Centres for the study of neologisms appeared in various Romance countries – Obneo (the Neology Observatory) in Spain and Onli in Italy – copying the model of the Institute of Neology set up in France by Bernard Quemada (1926–2018). In Portugal, the Observatório de Neologia do Português, do Instituto de Linguística Teórica Computacional, and Iltec appeared in Lisbon, while the Observatório de Neologismos do Português Brasileiro Contemporâneo (Projeto TermNeo) opened at the University of São Paulo in Brazil.

## Object of Study and Research Methods

Lexical innovations created during the pandemic appeared with great frequency in the Portuguese media, in the medical (scientific and practical) discourse and in everyday communication. The coronavirus pandemic became one of the main topics of media speech. COVID-related news has been afforded its very own section in the Portuguese media, alongside politics, culture, and sports<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Alves I. M. 2001. O conceito da neologia da descrição lexical a planificação linguística. *ALFA: Revista de Linguística*, 40. URL: <https://periodicos.fclar.unesp.br/alfa/article/view/3992> (accessed 30.01.2022); Barbosa M. A. 1978. Aspectos da dinâmica do neologismo. URL: <https://www.revistas.usp.br/linguaeliteratura/article/view/138126> (accessed 20.01.2022); Botta M. J. 2020. Os usos do neologismo spoiler no português brasileiro. 20.05.2020. URL: <https://seer.ufu.br/index.php/GTLex/article/view/54463> (accessed 30.01.2022); Dicionário eletrônico Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa. URL: [https://houaiss.uol.com.br/corporativo/apps/uol\\_www/v6-0/html/index.php#0](https://houaiss.uol.com.br/corporativo/apps/uol_www/v6-0/html/index.php#0) (accessed 11.01.2022).

<sup>4</sup> Alves I. M. 2001. O conceito da neologia da descrição lexical a planificação linguística. *ALFA: Revista de Linguística*, 40. URL: <https://periodicos.fclar.unesp.br/alfa/article/view/3992>. (accessed 30.01.2022). P. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Dicionário eletrônico Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa. URL: [https://houaiss.uol.com.br/corporativo/apps/uol\\_www/v6-0/html/index.php#0](https://houaiss.uol.com.br/corporativo/apps/uol_www/v6-0/html/index.php#0) (accessed 11.01.2022).

<sup>6</sup> Fraga Patrícia da Silva. 2020. Provérbios em quarentena. 07.04.2020. URL: <https://coletiva.net/colunas/proverbios-em-quarentena,354579.jhtml> (accessed 27.01.2022). P. 35.

<sup>7</sup> A covid-19 na língua. 2020. URL: <https://ciberduvidas.iscte-iul.pt/artigos/rubricas/idioma/covid-19-na-lingua/4059/> (accessed 25.01.2022); Moreno da Silva F., Sobral da Silva Maia J. 2021. Neologismos na mídia em meio a pandemia da covid-19. URL: <https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/forum/article/view/73727/47286> (accessed 25.01.2022); Mutchnik L. 2021. Coronavirus Pandemia infla entrada de novas palavras no dicionário. 17.10.2021. URL: <https://educacao.uol.com.br/noticias/2021/10/17/pandemia-coronavirus-novas-palavras-dicionario.htm> (accessed 21.10.2021).

The print and electronic versions of the leading publications in Portugal (*Diário de Notícias*, *Público*, and *Expresso*) and Brazil (*Folha de São Paulo* and *Veja*) regularly update the relevant information: *Avanço da Omicron obriga governo a novas restrições* (“Spread of Omicron Forces Government to Take New Restrictive Measures”);<sup>8</sup> *Incidência na Alemanha baixa ligeiramente, governo desaconselha viagens* (“COVID-19 Incidence Shows Slight Decline, Government Advises against Travelling”).<sup>9</sup>

This paper focuses on lexical innovation in the Portuguese media, and in medical and everyday discourse.

Our concern is with the formation of neologisms, which can take place in a number of ways: the use of various models of word formation, including semantic rethinking, transformations of phraseological units, and borrowings from other languages.

Several approaches are used in the theory of neologisms – functional-stylistic, psycholinguistic, denotative, structural, and lexicographical (Popova 2005: 4–16). The combination of these approaches gives a more or less complete “neological field” in the language, a fragment of the *neologosphere*. The period of the spread of COVID-19 gave rise to the “coronavirus pandemic” neological field, which contains nonce-formations of various types.

As a heuristic activity, neology is active in the field of conceptualization and categorization, that is, in the design of classes of words and concepts. An approach to the study of such units is being developed in cognitive neology (Zabotkina 1990). Communication during the coronavirus pandemic brought such concepts (including mythological concepts) as “disease,” “catastrophe,” “apocalypse” into the focus of verbal communication. The words and expressions used most commonly to denote these concepts were *pandemia* – pandemic; *doença (contagiosa, severa)* – disease (contagious, serious); and *4pocalypse* – apocalypse.

## Analysis and Results

In Portuguese neology, intensive processes were set in motion during the pandemic in the field of word formation, new phenomena emerged in phraseology and paremiology, and the lexical migration of words from different languages and different functional styles took place.

<sup>8</sup> *Avanço da Omicron obriga governo a novas restrições* [Spread of Omicron Forces Government to Take New Restrictive Measures]. 23.12.2021. URL: <https://www.dn.pt/sociedade/avanco-da-variante-omicron-obriga-governos-europeus-a-novas-restricoes-14434638.html> (accessed 11.12.2023).

<sup>9</sup> *Incidência na Alemanha baixa ligeiramente, governo desaconselha viagens* [COVID-19 Incidence Shows Slight Decline, Government Advises against Travelling]. 05.12.2021. URL: <https://www.dn.pt/internacional/covid-19-incidencia-na-alemanha-baixa-ligeiramente-governo-desaconselha-viagens-14381200.html> (accessed 11.12.2023).

### *Derivational Neologisms*

The most productive way to form neologisms in Portuguese is to shorten words. The Portuguese words *truncção* or *abreviação* refer to the process of word-formation by eliminating part of the original word. Words can be contracted by means of *truncation*, *contraction*, or a *combined method* (*contamination*).

The class of contracted words in Portuguese includes initialisms and compound words. In Portuguese linguistics, the class of initialisms covers *sigla* (sigla), *acrônimos* (acronyms), *abreviaturas* (abbreviations), and *símbolos* (symbols).

The majority of initialisms used during the pandemic were international in nature. Sigla differ in that you need to pronounce each initial letter in accordance with the rules of the alphabet. The sigla OMS (o-emi-esi) was widely used during the pandemic. It refers to the Organização Mundial da Saude (the World Health Organization, WHO), as the international organization that plays the leading role in the UN system in tackling health problems that arise in emergency situations. Determinologized sigla such as ADN (a-de-eni) for ácido desoxirribonucleico (DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid), IG (i- gue) for imunoglobulina (immunoglobins), and Ac for anticorpos (antibodies) were used to explain the mechanisms of the disease, and Teste RT-PCR (erre-te, pece-erre) was used for reação em cadeia de polimerase (polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, test). These sigla, which existed before the pandemic, were a part of medical terminology, but were almost never used in everyday speech.

Acronyms also consist of initial letters, but they are read as a single word. Popular acronyms popular during the pandemic include covid (coronavirus disease) and Sars-CoV-2 coronavirus da síndrome respiratória aguda grave-2 (Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2). Strictly speaking, these two lexical units in Portuguese are formed by a threefold process of borrowing, acronym-creation, and compounding. Another example of a borrowed acronym is ECMO Oxigenação por Membrana Extracorpórea (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, which is an invasive method of saturating the blood with oxygen): *O doente foi posto em ecmo*. The widespread use of masks and other protective equipment during the pandemic brought the acronym EPI equipamento de proteção (PPE, personal protective equipment) into regular usage. The severe cases required intensive medical care, which, in Portuguese saw the word UNI unidade de cuidados (ICU, intensive care unit) appear with increasing frequency.

Abbreviations are typically made up of shortened initial elements of a phrase. Abbreviations (blends) such as *covidiota* (covid + idiota, a “covidiot”) – a person who reacts in a less-than-adequate manner to the pandemic or neglects precautionary prescriptions; *imunodeprimido* – a person with reduced immunity; *imunodepressão* – decreased immunity; and *infectocontagioso* – a contagious infected (patient) appeared during the pandemic,

Generally accepted graphic abbreviations that received widespread use during the coronavirus pandemic can be considered symbols: *Molécula de imunoglobulina tipicamente com a sua forma em Y. Em azul observam-se as cadeias pesadas com quatro domínios Ig, enquanto que em verde mostram-se as cadeias leves. Entre o pé do Y (fracção constante, Fc) e os braços (Fab) existe uma parte mais fina conhecida como a “região de dobradiça.”*<sup>10</sup> The Portuguese researcher Maria de Sousa, who died from coronavirus, was one of the first in medical science to identify the T cell area – *the zone of the lymph node in which lymphocytes accumulate*. **B.1.1.7** is the alpha strain of coronavirus, and **B.1.526** is its lota variant.

Among the most significant word-building patterns are affixal structural formations, which are based on suffixation, prefixation or compounding.

With suffixation, traditional suffixed are used with the meanings of “theory,” “concept,” “location,” or “quality.” For instance, in neological vocabulary, the words *negacionismo*, *covidário*, and *covidico* became popular during the pandemic. *Negacionismo* < *negações* + *ismo* – negationism as a revision of established concepts in the medical (or another) field, ignoring accepted facts: *Luciano Huck diz que negacionismo no combate a coronavirus é inaceitável*<sup>11</sup>. *Covidário* – covidarium, a place set aside for the treatment of covid patients (originally a medical term). *Covidico* – covid (as an adjective), used to refer to the period of the covid pandemic. A person in quarantine is called a *quarentener*, while *chloroquiner* is used to describe a person who takes hydroxychloroquine, an antimalarial drug, to treat coronavirus.

The universal prefixes *pós-*, *anti-*, *tele-*, *sub-*, *super-*, and *co-* were used with great frequency in neologisms: *pós-covid 19*, *o mundo pós-covid* (“post-covid world”); *pós-coronavirus* (post-coronavirus): *é possível imaginar um legado pós-coronavirus* (“is it possible to imagine a post-coronavirus will?”); *pós-pandemia* (post-pandemic): *o mundo pós-pandemia exigirá novo papel do estado* (“the post-pandemic world will require the state to play a new role”); *anticoronavirus* (“anti-coronavirus”); *vacina anticoronavirus* (“anti-coronavirus vaccine”); *anticorpos* (“antibodies”); *presença de anticorpos em pessoas já infetadas* (“the presence of antibodies in infected people”); *antivírico* (“antiviral”); *teleescola* (remote learning), *teletrabalho* (remote working, professional activity carried out away from the workplace using special communication tools for data transfer). The word *notificação* (“data”) is used to assess coronavirus cases. Understating the increase in cases is known as *subnotificação*, while the deliberate exaggeration is called *supernotificação*: *Doria rebate suposta supernotificação de mortes em SP5* (“Doria [the mayor of São Paulo] disputes alleged increase in covid fatalities in São Paulo”).<sup>12</sup> The word *comorbidade* has become common to denote concomitant diseases that complicate the illness.

<sup>10</sup> Imunoglobulina. URL: <https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imunoglobulina>

<sup>11</sup> Luciano Huck diz que negacionismo no combate ao coronavirus é ‘inaceitável’. 22.04.2020. URL: <https://jovempan.com.br/programas/panico/luciano-huck-negacionismo-coronavirus.html> (accessed 11.12.2023).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



New lexical units have emerged in the practice of compounding: *cobre-sapatos* (“shoe covers”); *coronabonds* – bonds issued during the coronavirus crisis; *coronavirus* (“coronavirus” or *coronaviridae* in Latin) as the general name of the viruses in the family.

### ***Potential Words in Media Discourse***

Not all words created in speech are immediately adopted into the general vocabulary. Neologisms enter into circulation and are reproduced in speech, both oral and written. Potential words belong to the category of non-common nonce-formations. During the pandemic, expressive potential words appeared in Portuguese media speech, particularly in Brazil. Lexical units such as *bolsonaristão* and *bolsonique* to refer to President of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro, who was vehemently opposed to implementing tough restriction measures in response to the coronavirus pandemic, have become common. Brazil received the nickname *Bolsonoristan*, a reference to Turkmenistan, whose president was also against prohibitive restrictive measures. *Bolsonique* is a supporter of Bolsonaro, someone’s whose views align with those of the president. A common sight in Brazil during the pandemic, especially in the early stages of the spread of the diseases, were protests on cars in support of restrictive measures, which became known as *carreata* (*passeata* means “demonstration” in Portuguese).

Potential words that emerged during the pandemic also include compound words *carentena*.

### ***Borrowed Neologisms***

Many nonce-formations consisted of borrowings from foreign languages, primarily English. On the whole, these words have not gone through assimilation into modern Portuguese usage and remain barbarisms: *shutdown*; *lockdown*; *burnout*; *live* (as in face-to face); *home office* (as in working from home); contact tracing, and so on.

International words adopted into the language include the names of coronavirus strains borrowed from Greek, as well as accepted medical terminology as corresponding *nomen*: *delta*, *ómicron*, *flurona*.

### ***Determinologization and Functioning of New Words***

Determinologization is the opposite of creating new terms. Its purpose, as is well known, is to designate new concepts and objects. While terms are typically part of a certain functional style and are included in scientific discourse, determinologized units are common in colloquial everyday speech. Words that were previously used as terms become innovations in everyday speech, thus acquiring a new stylistic status. Determinologized units are used to achieve the effect of speech intellectualization, which could very well be what the speaker is looking for. Common properties in

Portuguese usage include: *portador assintomático* (“asymptomatic carrier”); *período de incubação* (“incubation period”); *pandemia* (“pandemic”); *teste PCR para Covid-19* (“PCR test”); *presença de anticorpos* (“presence of antibodies”); *vacina* (“vaccine”); *ventilador* (ventilator).

### *Neologisms in the Field of Proper Names*

Proper names make up a special layer of “pandemic” neologisms, in particular anthroponyms. Anthroponyms are used both to indicate specific people who achieved fame or infamy during a tragic period in history, but also point to events that turned out to be unpleasant milestones in the chain of movement of the disease. For example, in Lusophone countries, the name Adriano Maranhão from Nazaré became known as the first Portuguese national to contract Covid. Adriano was isolated on the *Diamond Princess* ship off the coast of Japan and spent 146 days in quarantine. As he put in, “we’re just here for a while, then they’ll let us all go.”

António Sarmiento was the first Portuguese citizen to be vaccinated against Covid; as a doctor, he administered the vaccine himself as an experiment. He is practically a national hero now.

*Butantan* is the name of a biomedical research centre in São Paulo, Brazil, that develops and produces vaccines, including against coronavirus. During the pandemic, it became famous for producing the vaccine butanvac, on which great hopes were pinned. It is a truncated proper name that has become part of a compound abbreviated word to designate the newest vaccine – an innovation in the neological field of the pandemic.

*Abdala* is an effective vaccine for the prevention of coronavirus infection developed in Cuba at the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. *Abdala* is the name of the hero of the poem “Abdala” by the Cuban poet and philosopher José Martí about the struggle for liberation of the fictional country of Nubia. The developers of the vaccine chose the name of the liberator Abdala to express their pride and faith in their homeland, which, despite all the difficulties it has experienced, is still at the cutting edge of scientific achievement.

In the “coronavirus pandemic” neological field, individual proper names acquire new signifiers and, based on metonymic transfer, extend their designations to new facts of historical figures that appear in the field of view. Some proper names start to function as mythonyms, acquiring the associative connotation of a “historical hero.”

### *Neologisms in Phraseology and Paremiology*

During the pandemic, new fixed expressions arose or became commonplace, the semantics of which reflect the new reality: *distanciamento social* (“social distancing”); *ensino à distância* (“remote learning”); *fatores de risco* (“risk factors”); *hospital de campanha* (“field hospital” – a health facility set up like on the battlefield).



A number of paremiological units relating to coronavirus topics became widespread during the pandemic. These are primarily proverbs that retain an element of comic rethinking of the world, as well as cautionary teaching. The Covid topic is introduced using vocabulary that represents the reality of the pandemic.<sup>13</sup>

*A corda sempre arrebenta do lado mais fraco ou com a imunidade mais baixa* (“The rope always breaks on the side that is weakest, or has the lowest immunity”).

*Água mole em pedra dura, tanto bate até que transmite algo* (“Water erodes the stone until it transmits something”).

*Amigos, amigos, negócios e espirros à parte* (“Friends are all well and good, but sneezing is another matter”).

*A pressa é inimiga da perfeição, espera até passar a pandemia* (“Haste is the enemy of perfection, wait for the pandemic to pass”).

*As aparências enganam, melhor fazer um exame* (“Appearances can be deceiving, you better get checked”).

*Antes só do que mal acompanhado por algum infectado* (“It’s better to be alone than accompanied by an infected person”).

*Cada macaco no seu galho, se possível em outra árvore* (“Each monkey on its own branch, preferably on a different tree”).

All of these innovative units can be considered anti-proverbs. Anti-proverbs are a manifestation of paremiological variation. They are formed on the basis of well-known proverbs (Kozlovskaja 2020). H. Walter and V. M. Mokienko note that anti-proverbs are based on “their own paremiological fund, marked by special linguo-cultural characteristics. At the same time, their axiological portrait is generally universal, since it is dictated by the negative attitude towards the coronavirus pandemic shared by everyone” (Kozlovskaja 2020: 38). The logic of the anti-proverb is a continuation and development of the picture of the world created in the original proverb.

Along with proverbs and sayings, the conditions of new social communication have produced all manner of memes, communicatively significant units (ideas and images), and lexicalized hashtags that contain culturally important information: #BolsonaroTemRazão (“Bolsonaro is right”); #EstudoEmCasa (“study from home”); #UseMascara (“wear a mask”). Despite the linguistic origin of these units, their content is often of a universal nature, as it is associated with the global reality that is the pandemic.

### *Expressive-Stylistic Colouring of Nonce-Formations*

Expressive-Stylistic Colouring of Portuguese neologisms in relation to the coronavirus pandemic is motivated by the semantics of the means of forming new words, and is associated with unusual ways of creating new units of speech.

<sup>13</sup> Fraga Patrícia da Silva. 2020. Provérbios em quarentena. 07.04.2020. URL: <https://coletiva.net/colunas/proverbios-em-quarentena,354579.jhtml> (accessed 27.01.2022).

For example, the nonce-formation *quarentite* (*quarentena* + *-ite*) appeared in the Portuguese language to denote a state of irritation, anxiety and alienation caused by self-isolation (voluntary or mandatory). *Covinado* < *covinar* (to fall ill with Covid; self-isolating does not only refer to falling ill with Covid, but also to isolating oneself due to the pandemic). *Covidices* (pl.) (household chores that people carry out because they are self-isolating and which they would probably not do otherwise): *Hoje dei-me ao trabalho de fazer uma grande covidice – fiz pão* (“I did a big ‘Covid’ thing today – I baked some bread”)<sup>14</sup>.

*Coronado* < *coronar* (“to fall ill with coronavirus”). The evaluative connotation of this word arises in connection with its internal form: *corona* (“crown”) is a symbol of monarchical power. And while the Portuguese word for “crown” is *coroa*, the Latin origin of the word manifests itself in the form of a signifier.

### *Conceptualization in Pandemic Neology*

Conceptualization during the pandemic primarily took place in the medical field, in the media, and in everyday speech. The notion of *doença* took on increasing importance as a basic concept, meaning a disease, a health disorder, a disruption of the body’s functioning, a change in the individual’s health that manifests itself through the appearance of various symptoms.

The word *pandemia* has become socially significant in the concept of “disease.” Medical representations of the matrical concept appear: *infecção* (“infection”); *contágio* (“contagion”); *contagioso* (“contagious,” “infectious”). In media discourse, designations often appear that name the phases of the course of the disease: *surto* (“outbreak,” “rise”); *incidência* (“incidence”). Treatment of coronavirus requires solid scientific knowledge: *genoma* (“genome”); *imunidade* (“immunity”); *letalidade* (“lethality”).

The concept of *quarentena* (“quarantine”) became part of everyday life and people’s cognitive activity during the pandemic. The concept is associated with the measures put in place to limit the spread of the disease. The word *quarentena* had previously been used to refer to the 40-day period of isolation prescribed to prevent the spread of infectious diseases (originally smallpox and the plague). At the same time, this word (alongside *Quaresma*) was also used to refer to the period of Lent before Palm Sunday. In public life, *generosidade* and *caridade* (various types of social behaviour in the new coronavirus conditions, typically benefit events for hospitals and the most vulnerable, or for representatives of specific age or socioeconomic groups) have become more widespread in public life.

<sup>14</sup> Caça ao neologismo nos tempos da pandemia. 25.03.2020. URL: <https://www.trespontos.pt/post/caça-ao-neologismo-nos-tempos-da-pandemia-quem-alinha>

Other words that have increased in popularity in Portuguese speech in addition to *quarentena* include *confinamento* (going into isolation, restriction of freedom for health reasons): *Não se justificam novas medidas de confinamento*;<sup>15</sup> *isolamento* (“isolation”); *autorreclusão* (“self-isolation”); *clausura* (“a solitary, reclusive life,” previously used to refer to life in a monastery).

In Portugal and Brazil (like in other countries), the coronavirus pandemic caused a kind of infodemic, an overabundance of information primarily related to the coronavirus. *Infodemia* < Infodemic < info+demic (information + epidemic). The infodemic spread through various media channels – in traditional media and on social networks. A significant part of the infodemic consists of unreliable information in the form of fake news, rumours, and alarmist warnings. In Portugal, the infodemic uses new scientific terms, which often gives messages an authoritative (albeit pseudoscientific) quality.

## Conclusions

Word-formation processes in modern Portuguese neology are flexible, dynamic and diverse. Neologisms are created according to various word-formation models – abbreviation, affixation, compounding and blending. The pool of neologisms is constant replenished with borrowings from other languages. Neology manifests itself in phraseology and paremiology. In cognitive neology, new concepts – events, situations, and facts – are formed in the fields of medicine, media and everyday discourse. Active processes of determinologization and stylistic neologization have pragmatic relevance. A lexical-semantic field has emerged in modern Portuguese as a result of the pandemic that has the special linguistic status of a neologistic field, the vocabulary of which is weakly differentiated in the variants of the language.

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The author declares no conflicts of interest.

<sup>15</sup> Medidas gerais de confinamento "já não se justificam", defendem médicos, farmacêuticos e enfermeiros em carta aberta. 16.07.2021. URL: [https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/pais/medidas-gerais-de-confinamento-ja-nao-se-justificam-defendem-medicos-farmacuticos-e-enfermeiros-emcarta-aberta\\_a1335888](https://www.rtp.pt/noticias/pais/medidas-gerais-de-confinamento-ja-nao-se-justificam-defendem-medicos-farmacuticos-e-enfermeiros-emcarta-aberta_a1335888) (accessed 11.12.2023)

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