



# Neologism and Semantic Shift among Politically Created Terms during Pandemic: A Morpho-Semantic Analysis

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author PLJM abetted in the conceptualization of the study and led the analysis of the paper. Author JABD reviewed manuscript for clarity and consistency, offering revisions and suggestions to enhance the overall structure. Author KTO analyzed broader contextual factors influencing the study and provided critical insights into the interpretation of findings. Author LLJN contributed to the final writing of the results and discussion sections, integrating literature to support findings. Author ELP supervised the study, and author JMB helped in furnishing and finalizing the study. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper morpho-semantically analyzed the various global politically-created words during pandemic focusing on neologistic features and semantic changes this plethora of words convey. The researchers used discourse analysis as a research design to analyze these terms integrating

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the frameworks of Hatch and Brown [11], O'Grady and Guzman [12], and Yule [13]. The types of word-formation processes elicited from the politically-created terms were coinages, acronyms, compounding, borrowing/loan words, and derivational. This study found out that the new terms are rooted on different processes, while other terms have already existed and the pandemic attached new meanings to these words. These newly created terms are an affirmation to human creativity and language evolution thus supports Lawson's [76] assertion that linguistic creativity reflects major preoccupations of the time and is able to show how people gather to talk about new challenges and contexts. Therefore, the researchers commend that language enthusiasts should cover wide language studies in concepts including semantics since conceptual meanings and the relations between words, context, components, and features may be congruent, but the way language is used is different. This study provides understanding of the new terms that were created during pandemic and how these terms are used in context.

*Keywords: Neologism; semantic shift; morpho-semantic analysis; discourse analysis; politically-created words.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The world is still at its peak of adjustments since the World Health Organization has announced the spread of novel coronavirus last December 2019, which was now considered as pandemic [1]. It shocked the world and brought new ways on how people live across the globe, changed their daily lives and affected various channels of education, economy, livelihood, politics, and even language [2]. Take for instance the unfamiliar words that are popularized due to the anticipated acing COVID19 cases. Carter, [3] pointed out that playing with words to create new ones are made just for fun, for the reason to bring people closer together, but then he argued that inventing languages or words during times of health crisis is not just for fun but is also for practicality. The outpouring of metaphors, neologisms, and lexical innovations we have seen and heard during this time points to the fact that linguistic creativity has a big part on language as it reshapes our way of engagement [4]. On the other hand, most of the COVID19 related terms have something to do with the existing common obscure words that are launched into common usage.

Thus, the focus of this study is to analyze the neologistic features and semantic changes or shifts on the politically-created words during pandemic. Neologism came from the Greek words "neo" which means new and "logos" which means "speech or utterance". Literally, neologism means new term, word or utterance. Neologism is a set of new words that has not yet made into the lexicon or words that are still in the process of lexicalization [5]. Time and again, these words are traced back to their origins, implying that any (intentional) creation of a new word is acceptable, thus putting neologisms on

par with occasionalism [6]. Meanwhile, from a linguistic point of view, politically-created term is a politically correct term in linguistics which refers to terms or words that have been accepted, used, and entered into people's day-to-day vocabulary in the emergence of a certain phenomenon. This discernment helps enhance the understanding of individuals that is not just usually found in minorities of societies and communities but globally [7]. It is both an active behavior and an intentional avoidance of using words that could imply misinformation or misunderstandings about people who are considered disadvantaged due to the existence of such words.

Throughout the time of pandemic, the meaning of the commonly used words shifted from the literal meaning to its expanded meaning. Hamilton et al. [8] stated that a semantic change or semantic shift refers to any changes in the meaning of a certain word over the course of time. In fact, common words were associated with the pandemic and its meaning has changed over time that people hearing and using these words became confused to what it means [9]. These words provide solidarity in the age of social distancing therefore, when semantic shifts occur it should be explained to the public [10].

Consistent with the premises above, this study will be undertaken to shed understanding on the underlying concepts and ideas that revolve around these politically-created terms during pandemic. This will further shed light towards unearthing morpho-semantic features (neologism and semantic shift) on the politically-created terms that existed during pandemic. Making meaning through neologism and semantic shift will demonstrate a clear and visible root on how

these terms are derived, close connections of such words to other signs and other underlying notions which will further help the public.

Thus, this research determined the morpho-semantic features of the politically-created words during pandemic through determining the neologism and semantic shift elements of the words. Specifically, it provided answers on the different neo-logistic features of the politically-created words; the semantically shifted meanings attached to the politically-created words during pandemic; and social implications generated from the morpho-semantic features of the politically-created words during the pandemic. Further, this is a tool to decipher and recognize how changes in meaning are associated with the development of human culture and technology, exhibiting the maximum importance of social change in linguistic creativity, processes, and evolution of language.

This paper was anchored on the Frameworks of Hatch and Brown [11], O'Grady, & De Guzman [12], and Yule [13], in explaining and classifying the word formation processes. Word formation is one of the concerns in the field of morphology as it discusses the ways how the new words are created in the language. According to Yule [13], this forms and creates new words from the use of old words. Additionally, there are various word formation processes that a word could have gone through. Coinage is the invention of a totally new term. Additionally, Hatch and Brown [11] defined coinage as a process when a new word is needed but there are no appropriate borrowed words and native words to express it. Borrowing is one of the word formation processes. It is all language-borrowed words from other languages [11]. While Yule [13] has defined borrowing as the process of taking over words from other languages. Compounding is a process of joining two separate words to produce a single form [13]. Whereas, O'Grady and Guzman [12] states that this process is the combination of lexical categories. For example: Fast food: fast (Adjective)+food (Noun) [13] Textbook: text (Noun) + book (Noun) [13]. O'Grady and Guzman [12] state that a process when a word is created where its meaning or its category is different from its base by adding an affix is called derivation. Whereas, Hatch and Brown (1995) [11] say that derivation morpheme makes explicit the word class assignment of the word to make it into an adjective, an adverb, or another part of speech. The following is how the derivation process works:

Noun to Adjective : *boy + ish (boyish)*  
Verb to Noun : *sing + er (singer)*  
Adjective to adverb : *happy + ly (happily)*  
Noun to Verb : *vaccine + ate (vaccinate)*

Acronym is defined by Yule [13] as new words formed from the initial letters of a set of other words. However, this process was defined by Hatch and Brown [11] as *Initialization*, another reduction process where each letter on the word is pronounced. Acronyms according to Hatch and Brown [11] is a word made up of abbreviations, too, but the result is pronounced as a word, not as a list of letters. FBI is an example of Initialization which means the Federal Bureau of Investigation. UNICEF is an example of Acronym which stands for The United Nation Children's Fund.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This paper utilized qualitative research design employing discourse analysis (DA). This analysis explores meanings, practices, and processes as to where such language or term is associated. According to Hajer and Versteeg [14], discourse analysis analyzes the function of a language and the politics of meaning that arises through language use. Additionally, it analyzes the way in which the meaning of the language affects people's understanding and cognition, and the way it distributes power to some and less to others. In the context of this study, this analysis was used to describe the processes in analyzing written and spoken languages of the politically-created terms during pandemic giving firm focus on its morpho-semantic features (neologism and semantic shift). This study focused on analyzing the morpho-semantic features (neologism and semantic shift) of the existing pandemic-related terms. For Cotterell and Schütze [15], morpho-semantic analysis is simply the analysis of word formation with a given meaning at the end of the word formation process. This kind of analysis thrives on using morphological processes to achieve a meaning end in the creation and coining of new words in a language.

Here, the researchers gathered the data by retrieving terms that have been politically-created during the first hit of pandemic last March 2019, until the present. The data that have been collected were taken from the published article of the University of Miami and from randomly selected high frequency used terms of WHO press releases [16]. As this research is a societal-related topic, this paper was framed

using discourse analysis as a methodology focusing on morpho-semantic analysis of the politically-created terms. The neologistic features used in this paper to discuss word formation processes were *coinages*, *acronyms*, *compounding*, *borrowing/loan words*, and *derivational*. Also, this paper discussed the semantic shift that took place in the meaning of the politically-created terms during pandemic. Anent to this, the researchers indicated social implications that can be generated from the morpho-semantic features of the politically-created words.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Different Neologistic Features of the Politically-Created Words during Pandemic

Word-formation process refers to how new terms were generated. In this research, the researchers used the combined frameworks of O'Grady and Guzman [12], Yule [13], and Hatch and Brown [11] to analyze the data. The word-formation processes that the researchers have observed from the politically-created words were coinages, acronyms, compounding, borrowing/loan words, and derivational.

**Acronyms:** This type of word formation process involves taking the initial letter from a set of words to form a new single word that can be read as a complete unit of words [17]. In some cases, an acronym is a process of forming words from initial letters which are pronounced letter-by-letter which is dubbed by other linguists and language researchers as initialism [13]. The following politically-created words that fall under the word formation process *Acronym* includes:

EHS	: Essential Health Services
FFP2/FFP3	: Filtering Face Piece
HEPA	: High Efficiency Particulate Air
IPC	: Infection, Prevention, and Control
PHSM	: Public Health and Social Measures
PPE	: Personal Protective Equipment
SPRP	: Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan
WFH	: Work From Home

**Compounding:** Compounding is joining two separate words to produce a single form. In other words, it is the combination of two free forms, or words that have an otherwise independent existence. Words generated through

compounding are usually created by combining two different words of some lexical categories such as adjectives, nouns, verbs or prepositions to form a single new one [18]. Words that were created through compounding:

**Aerosol Transmission:** Aerosol Transmission is an open compound composed of two separate words *Aerosol + Transmission*. *Aerosol (noun)* as defined by Merriam-Webster is a suspension of fine solid or liquid particles in gas. *Transmission (noun)* is the process of transferring or passing something from one point to another point. Aerosol Transmission refers to the transfer of small droplets through air [19].

**Community Transmission:** Community Transmission is an open compound formed from the words *community + transmission*. *Community (noun)* which means a group of people who live in the same place having a particular characteristic in common [20]; and *transmission (noun)* which means the action or process of transmitting something. Community Transmission is the process of an infectious illness spreading through a large group of people in a general way that the source of infection in a particular case is unknown [21].

**Fomite Transmission:** Fomite Transmission is an open compound that originates from *fomite + transmission*. *Fomite (noun)* came from the Latin plural word *fomes* which literally means "touch wood or tinder" [22]. *Transmission (noun)* means transferring. Fomite transmission refers to any surface, any material, such as doorknob, bedding or clothing that was contaminated with pathogens touched by a carrier of a disease or infection; such can transmit disease to others.

**Hand Hygiene:** Hand hygiene is a long unused term. The term may appear new since presently "hand hygiene" is everywhere in the media. This term has not been standardized until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the latest National Geographic, it featured the "wash your hands was once a controversial medical advice", proving that hand hygiene is not a neologism [23]. Hand Hygiene belongs to an open compound. It was derived from hand + hygiene. *Hand (noun)* that is part of the human body and *hygiene (noun)* that links to clean and healthy practices. Hand hygiene basically equates to hand washing or sanitizing.

**Shutdown order:** Shutdown order is an open compound which is a type of compounding written as two separate words but uttered as one word in which it directs a new word meaning.

Shutdown order came from shutdown + order. *Shutdown* (noun) which means suspension of an activity [24]. While *Order* (verb/noun) which means to give an authoritative direction to do something [25].

**Sneeze Screens:** Sneeze screens is an open compound from *Sneeze* and *Screens*. *Sneeze* (verb, noun) as defined by Oxford Languages, *sneeze* refers to an involuntary expulsion of air from the nose and mouth. *Screen* (noun) refers to an object used to protect, shield or block something [26].

**Sporadic Cases:** Sporadic cases refer to an open-compound term. It came from sporadic + cases. *Sporadic* (adverb) from the Medieval Latin *Sporadicus* and from the Greek *sporadikos* which means *scattered, dispersed* and *cases*(noun) that directly means in a particular situation or condition. Sporadic cases indicate transmission scenarios of cluster cases [27].

**Telehealth Services:** Telehealth services is an open compound comprising the words *telehealth* + *services*. *Telehealth* (noun) which came from the Prefix *-tele* which means at a distance or telecommunication, the word *health* (noun) which means a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity [28]. *Services*, on the other hand, is defined as someone or something that is intended to provide help or assistance to others [29].

**Zoombombing:** This word in the context of pandemic functions as a verb. This came from the words Zoom + Bombing. *Zoom* (noun) an application used to hold meetings and conferences online and the word *bombing* (verb) as defined by Merriam Dictionary is a means to attack with bombs. Zoombombing is an act of harassing the online avenue of conferences and meetings [30].

**Borrowing/Loan Words:** Borrowing is any language borrowed or formed from other languages. This is a process where a new word is adapted from one language which is incorporated into another language without being translated [31]. Additionally, these borrowed words are pronounced according to the phonological rules of the borrowing language. For instance, the word *Democracy* which is derived from the Greek language *demos* and *cratos* [32] and *ketchup* from the Chinese word 'Ke-stiap', which refers to as a concoction of

pickled fish and spice. Same process was used with the following politically-created words:

**Aerosol:** It originated from the Greek word "aēr" (*aero*) which means air [33]. The word *aer* is added at the first syllable in the word "solution" *sol-* which is referred to a mixture of particulate matter in a fluid system.

**Transmission:** This is adapted from the Latin word '*transmissio*' which means sending over or across passage [34].

**Triage:** Subjectively, the word "triage" means to break into three pieces. Primarily, it is derived from the old French *trier* to choose; to select; to find; to pull; to sort; to verify; to make sure of. Convergence to that, may be influenced from the Latin word *tria-* which means three [35].

**Quarantine:** This is adapted from the Italian word '*quarantina*' which means space for forty-days [36].

**Derivational:** Derivation is by far the most common type of word-formation in the English language. New words are derived by adding affixes from already existing words, in which there are three types of affixes – prefixes, infixes and suffixes [37]. Prefixes are added to the beginning of a word, suffixes are added to the end of the word, while infixes are affixes that are incorporated inside a word. Most commonly, prefixes and suffixes are added to a word which changes its word class. For example, *dance* (verb)+ *er*, the word *dance* which is a verb when added by a suffix *-er*, the end word *dancer* becomes a noun. However, there are other cases when derived words do not change their word class, take the word *read* (verb) when added by a prefix *re-*, the end word *reread* remains a verb. In the politically-created terms during the pandemic words such as *isolation*, *asymptomatic*, *ventilator*, and *zooming* underwent the process of derivation.

**Asymptomatic:** (*a+ symptomatic*). The word *asymptomatic* (adjective) originated from the term *symptomatic* (adjective) plus the prefix *a-*.

**Isolation:** (*isolate+ ion*). The word *isolation* (noun) came from the word *isolate* (verb) added by the suffix *-ion*.

**Ventilator:** (*ventilate+ or*). The word *Ventilator* (noun) is derived from the term *ventilate* (verb) added by the suffix *-or*.

**Zooming:** (*Zoom+ ing*). The word *Zooming* (*verb*) is rooted from the term *Zoom* (*noun*) joined by the suffix *-ing*.

**Coinages:** Coinage as a neologistic feature is the least common word-formation process as it requires a discovery of a totally new word [38]. This neologistic feature commonly creates a term that never existed before which in a sense becomes a new invention, a new discovery, or an expression for something that is existing at the moment. However, some coinages never become anything more than a nonce-formation, but the words that survive after being coined tend to become everyday words in the language [39]. In this paper, coinages in the context of pandemic are as follows:

**COVID-19:** It means Coronavirus Disease. It is an acute respiratory illness in humans caused by a coronavirus, capable of producing severe symptoms and in some cases death, especially in older people, young children and those with underlying health conditions [40]. It was originally identified in China in 2019 and became pandemic in 2020.

**Infodemic:** Infodemic is a combination of the word "*information*" and "*epidemic*" which means that it is too much information including false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during a disease outbreak [41].

**SARS-CoV-2:** SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2). This term may appear as an acronym but to highlight the word "SARS-CoV-2," this compressed term was coined in the year 2019 after the virus was primarily detected in Wuhan, China in the month of December [42].

**Variants of Concern:** Variants of Concern is a new word that existed during the period of pandemic. This term is formed from the words *variants* and *concerns* added by the preposition *of* in between. The term *variant* (*noun*) refers to a set of viruses with the same or similar patterns of mutation, the word *concern* (*verb/noun*) on the other hand means to worry or a matter of interest or importance. Therefore, variants of concern in this time of pandemic are terms used to describe variants or viruses that potentially behave differently compared to other virus strains and they are more transmissible and might cause more severe infection than the other viruses [43].

**Quaranteam:** The word *Quaranteam* is acquired from the words *quarantine* which means separation or restriction on the movement of

individuals to prevent the spread of a disease or infection [44]. While *team* means a group of people with the same goal or objective [45]. Hence, *Quaranteam* means a group of people under quarantine.

**Quarantini:** The term *Quarantini* is obtained from combining the words *quarantine* and *Martini*. *Quarantine* is the restriction of the movement of individuals while *Martini* refers to a cocktail made from gin or vodka. Thus, the term *Quarantini* in the context of pandemic is a cocktail you make and drink at home during an imposed quarantine.

### 3.2 Semantically Shifted Meanings Attached to the Politically-Created Terms During Pandemic

This segment elucidates the meanings attached to the global politically-created terms during pandemic, whereby showing the foremost meanings of these words prior to the pandemic and semantically shifted and/or expanded meanings attached to these words in the context of pandemic.

**Asymptomatic (derivational):** By definition, asymptomatic means having or no showing no symptoms of a disease [46]. Pandemic as an ongoing crisis created a new and specified definition of the term *asymptomatic*. Thus, *asymptomatic* implies individuals having no, late, mild or moderate symptoms but are infected by a disease, Covid-19 in particular. They are sometimes called silent carriers or spreaders of the disease (Covid-19) [47].

**Community Spread:** *Community spread* refers to the spread of contagious disease to people in a certain location who have no known contact with infected individuals or who have not recently traveled to areas where disease has existed [48]. In the context of pandemic, *community spread* refers to bringing and spreading the virus throughout the community that has no history of positive cases until it had. Mostly, the spread happens when an asymptomatic individual has come into contact with local people in a certain community.

**Contact tracing:** *Contact tracing* is not new since it was practiced even before the COVID 19 pandemic era. In the field of medicine, *contact tracing* is an action that is being undertaken after a person or several people have come into contact with a person infected with communicable disease [49]. The contacts were

identified, monitored and often, quarantined. In the emergence of COVID 19 pandemic, *contact tracing* became limited in use as the process of identifying, managing, and assessing persons who have been exposed to the virus. This is a practice of preventing and breaking the chain of transmission of the virus [50].

**EHS (Essential Health Services) (Acronym):**

Generally, *EHS* or *Essential Health Services* are services that prioritize means to prevent or treat disease or even disability [51]. In the context of pandemic, EHS are health systems that focus more to combat COVID 19 related cases. Basically, *Essential businesses* are businesses that produce basic needs of consumers. Businesses like Food Processing and Agriculture, Fishing and Aquaculture, Biomedical, Industrial Manufacturing, Grocery and Household Goods, Pharmacy and other Medical, Psychiatric, and Long-Term Care Facilities, Banks, and all utilities such as Electricity, Water and even Telecommunications are included. Amidst the surge of pandemic, *Essential Businesses* is limited to purchasing foods and medical transactions, and all other that is considered indispensable in any given setting [52].

**Fatality Rate:** Formerly, *fatality rate* is a term used to provide data consisting of the number of people within a particular group who are killed by a particular cause [53]. Causes can be in different means like AIDS, construction businesses, wild animal attacks, terrorist attacks, suicides and so on. In light of the pandemic, *fatality rates* are data consisting of the number of people who died due to terrible effect caused by the virus (COVID-19) [54].

**FFP2 and FFP3 (Acronym):** This term has been defined as kinds of respiratory masks that protects both the wearer and the people around them [55]. It is composed of three layers of synthetic non-woven materials that are available in different thickness with inclusion of filtration layers between [56]. During this time of pandemic, FFP2 and FFP3 are respiratory masks that are used to filter the aerosol produced by the wearer. FFP2 filters 94% of the aerosol while FFP3 filters 99% - this type of respiratory mask is reserved exclusively for health care workers when they perform invasive medical procedures.

**Flattening the curve:** Ideally, *flattening the curve* is an idiomatic expression that implies figurative meaning. This means to mitigate the

quick leap of passing illness in a population or to slow the progression of the disease [57] If you use the term *flattening the curve* in the context of pandemic automatically it would be directed as a graphical data showing the increase rate of COVID19 positive cases. To *flatten the curve* is to control the rate of positive cases across the entire population [58]; more so a compliance to the health measures imposed by the government.

**HEPA:(Acronym).** Most commonly people regarded HEPA as hepatitis or an inflammation of the liver. People register such a notion since *hepa* in hepatitis means liver. In respect of pandemic, HEPA is the international gold standard for filtering particles and efficiently capturing particles that cause COVID-19 [59]. It traps the droplets of respiratory infections (or other particles) that viruses have attached to and prevents them from remaining in the passenger compartment, whether in an airplane, in a room, a home, or in a public toilet. HEPA filters minimize the spread of the COVID because it instantly catches particles from coughing or sneezing [60].

**Incubation Period:** The term *incubation period* was originally linked in the field of medicine which refers to the period of time of an individual's first exposure to an infectious disease until symptoms and signs start appearing. In biology, *incubation period* would literally mean a period of incubation, where incubation connotes a process of development or progress of a cells, bacteria, eggs, and diseases. During the pandemic, *incubation period* refers to the estimation of the time after being exposed to an infected person [61]. The *Incubation Period* is also known as pre-symptomatic period.

**Isolation (Derivational):** *Isolation* is rooted from the word *isolate* (verb) which means to remain alone or be apart from others. Thus, *isolation* in general means an act to distance or an absence of oneself in social relationships. When pandemic hits, the word *isolation* refers to the process of staying at home or in an isolation area to prevent the spread of the virus or a complete separation of a person suffering from an infectious disease" [62].

**PPE (Acronym):** Initially, *PPE* stands for Personal Protective Equipment which means equipment that is worn to minimize an individual's exposure to hazards that can cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses [63]. This PPE refers to items such as gloves, safety

glasses and shoes, earplugs or muffs, hard hats, respirators, or coveralls, vests, and full body suits. Meanwhile in the context of pandemic, *PPE* is referred to as the equipment that is used for preventing the spread of infection to and from health care workers (HCWs) and patients. These include items such as gloves, face masks, air-purifying respirators, goggles, face shields, respirators, and gowns.

**Quaranteam and Quarantini (Coinages):**

\*Terms under coinages do not have any semantic shifts or change in meaning since coinages are terms that are totally newly discovered which implies that meanings attached are novel.

**Quarantine (Borrowing):** *Quarantine* came from the word "*quarantina*" which initially means a space or period of 40 days. This word was then borrowed during the time of pandemic, which refers to the restriction and separation of an individual from others. Governments used the term *quarantine* as a preventive measure, an activity to stop the spread of contagious diseases. Additionally, *Quarantine* is done for people or groups who don't have symptoms but were exposed to the disease and will be monitored for 14 days whether they are positive or not. Also to those who have recently returned from traveling from another country where COVID-19 is spreading rapidly, or if have knowingly been exposed to an infected person [62].

**Shutdown order (Compounding):** *Shutdown order* is a compound word, a mixture of words *shutdown* and *order*. The word *shut down* can be an open compound and a close compound, as an open compound it refers to the cessation or suspension of an operation or activity, while *shutdown* as a close compound means a temporary closure of establishments or operations due to a malfunction. On the other hand, the word *order* is categorized into two-word classes which are a verb and a noun. As a verb, it is an act of giving an authoritative direction or instruction to do something and as a noun, it refers to the arrangement or disposition of people or things in relation to their pattern or sequence. In the new global context, *shutdown order* (n) is an open compound which means the temporary closure of an establishment or a state due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases. This order is given to restrict people from going out of their homes to avoid getting infected by the virus [13].

**Sneeze Screens (Compounding):** *Sneeze Screen* was invented in the late 1950s designed especially for restaurants to protect food from being contaminated. In the pandemic standing, sneeze screens are used in facilities to block viruses from being transmitted from a person who might unintentionally sneeze. It does not only function as a sneeze barrier but also serves as an additional protection in safeguarding individuals inside a room from possible droplets brought by airborne causing illness (COVID 19) [64].

**Social distance:** In 1963, a cultural anthropologist Edward Hall coined the term proxemics to define studies about *social distancing* in everyday life [65]. Hall's concern was that closer distances between two persons may increase visual, tactile, auditory, or olfactory stimulation to the point that some people may feel intruded upon and react negatively. He then proposed four main zones between individuals: Intimate distance, personal distance, social distance and public distance. Presently, *social distance* refers to observing safety measures that a person should maintain a required distance (1 meter) from others to lessen the transmission of the virus from one host to another [66].

**SPRP (Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan) (Acronym):** *SPRP* is basically crafted to plan and take actions in response to any disastrous phenomenon or health related problems. During the pandemic, *SPRP* refers to strategic preparedness and response plans that cover actions against the consequences brought by COVID-19 [67].

**State of emergency:** *State of emergency* is basically a decision from the government or authority that declares an area that should observe measures such as strengthening or increasing the powers for the police or army [68]. This happens when civil disorder arouses or disasters like earthquakes and floods. At the height of pandemic, the word extended its meaning, declaring a *state of emergency* which is a response to containing the virus from spreading as the number of cases increase in one place and another. *State of emergency* in the context of pandemic connotes and denotes danger from the virus.

**Telehealth Services (Compounding):** Most commonly *telehealth services* refer to the use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support long distance clinical health care. As a subject in pandemic, it refers to



the services offered to the people to avoid direct physical contact in order to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission to finally provide continuous care to the community [69].

**Transmission (Borrowing):** *Transmission* from its original meaning is an act or process of sending over certain information. In this time of pandemic, *transmission* changes its meaning and has been defined as a spread of an infectious disease, COVID-19. *Transmission* now has varying modes which includes droplet, contact, and airborne that can cause people to be positively exposed by disease [70].

**Triage (Borrowed):** In the medical field, it boils to the epidemic *triage* mainly the host, agent, and the environment. *Triage* is the process or practice of sorting patients into categories for priority treatment [71]. In the COVID-19 pandemic setting, *triage* is not limited to classification or priority treatment. *Triage* means not only ranking in terms of importance (prioritisation) but also allocation of limited medical resources.

**Ventilator (Derivational):** Originally, *ventilator* came from the word ventilate which means to scatter or disperse air freely, to expose to air, or to allow fresh air to circulate in a space. Hence, *ventilator* implies any machine or appliance for ventilating a room space. Presently, a new meaning is derived from the word *ventilator*. A *ventilator* in the new context is a medical term which serves as a breathing machine to people who are deeply sick of the infectious disease. A *ventilator* is a device that supports the human breathing process [72].

**WFH (Acronym):** Literally, *WFH* is an acronym which stands for Work From Home. This concept is linked to any employee working remotely at home instead of working in the actual office. Usually, *Work From Home* is for workers who have difficulty going to their respective offices just like when they have illness or pregnancy, these workers are given a respective time frame to finish their work from home until they are able. In a pandemic setting, *WFH* is done to prevent and restrict workers from being exposed to the virus and limit the workplace to be crowded. *Work From Home* is a concept usually applied for workers whose work can be brought and done even at home. This kind of modern work approach doesn't require a time frame because other institutions prefer their workers to work at home especially when the job doesn't require workers' physical presence in the workplace [73].

**Zoombombing (Compounding):** *Zoombombing* is a compound word obtained from the words *Zoom* and *Bombing*, wherein originally the term *Zoom* means to view in a focus or enlarged means or a loud sound coming from vehicles. Now, *Zoom* refers to a software application for video communication typically used in conducting conferences and webinars or online seminars. On the other hand, *bombing* initially is an act of attacking a place with the use of bombs. However, due to coining of new terms these two words were joined as *zoombombing*. In the context of pandemic, *zoombombing* is an amalgam of the word *zoom* pertaining to software application and *bombing*. Thus, *Zoombombing* in the new context, is an illegal act of harassment where an uninvited individuals' attack Zoom meetings or conferences. These hackers share sensitive and irrelevant contents to distract the hosts of the meeting as well as the viewers or participants [74]. This also involves exploitation of valid meeting links to the public.

**Zooming (Derivational):** *Zooming* originally means to increase sharply in size like zooming or enlarging an image or a view. Also, this can mean a produced loud sound or buzz like the zooming of cars passing the freeway. However, in the present context landscape *zooming* is registered as an act or process of joining meetings or conferences online via Zoom. A Zoom is a software application especially designed for video teleconferencing which can be used using a mobile device, a laptop, or a computer. Thus, *zooming* means an act of joining Zoom. Words sprung during this time of pandemic were rooted to the different morphological processes. This plethora of terms is a product of linguistic creativity of the human mind, a proof of lexical innovation and language evolution [75]. Lawson [76] affirmed that linguistic creativity reflects the major preoccupations of the time and can show how people gather to talk about new challenges and context.

Furthermore, this study affirms that during the COVID-19 pandemic, an explosion of new words and phrases are foreseeable. More so, terms discussed in this paper appeared to be entirely new in the emergence of pandemic because they were long been unused. In the surge of pandemic, these terms are now frequently used and in longer span became common words. It has found out that terms' lexical categories may not be constant, terms facing semantic or extended meaning may as well change their lexical category. According to Nordquist,

language change is an occurrence by which alterations are made in the attributes and the use of a language over time. All natural languages can change and these changes are normally reflected in areas of language being used. Language changes can be manifested through its sound patterns, lexis, in semantics or in syntax, however these changes may be sporadic or systematic.

The politically-created terms in this pandemic underwent semantic expansion that occurs majorly on the words that are being contextualized globally in broadening and increasing their range of meaning over time [9]. Semantic expansion is the process in which the meaning of a word develops over time to represent a more general notion or thing than it did originally [77]. In other words, semantic expansion is such extension without the loss of the original meaning of the word. As Victoria Fromkin pointed out, *"When the meaning of a word becomes broader, it means everything it used to mean and more"*.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Language context, global circumstances like pandemics and epidemics incessantly reshapes human way of engagement. Thus, coining of terms and semantic shifts or broadening are typical things in the living era and to the next. Therefore, the researchers concluded that when new words arise, there also occurs new meanings hence, newly created words continue to evolve based or according on the occurrence of situation. Consequently, neologisms are organized in different ways due to the crisis (COVID-19) and social things, thus these terms originated from different contexts of the occurrence of pandemic. Comprehension of these words is necessary in order to know how and when to use these in certain contexts to develop a global understanding for fast and smooth flow of communication.

More so, changes in meaning are as common as changes in form, they can be internally or externally affected. The equivalent to the pattern in morphology and in semantics in which words and meanings change is a stand-in network of relationships in the linguistic or language arena. The change of meanings occurs because words are constantly used in different contexts, in different situations, and with different intentions. Different intentions for words are shared by the speech community and established for usage then a semantic change may occur. At this

moment, when a new word occurs, it may not be possible to tell its eventual status in a language because it could be a part of the norm of the language context or community. Also, neologism can be a fad in language, where such words may not be part of the language norm or formal lexicon, the usage of such word/s is/are limited to the current circumstance or condition.

As discussed above, plethora of words was added to the world's vocabulary, abundance of new terms asserts reflecting concepts thus misconceptions, misinformation may continue to circulate every now and then. Thus, these linguistic changes influence public understanding in the actual usage of these terms, its application in implementing policies, and how these terms are treated when crises arise. Apparently, in language study, the most inevitable truths and interesting explanations were made out of the past occurrences, and since language is dynamic and continuously evolving that this paper was made possible, the researchers would like to recommend the following:

Language enthusiasts should not limit language studies to providing meanings rather reconsider conceptual meanings and the relations between words since context, components, and features may be congruent but the way language is used is different. More so, language history and evolution shall not be rejected but reserved to better comprehend new terms that were coined since lexical relations are anywhere around language. As this pandemic brought significant changes to language, the World Health Organization, the Department of Health and other health related agencies should take charge in tracking down and correlating these words especially on the words that underwent semantic shift and extended meaning to ensure an exchange of quality information especially in times of crisis. Additionally, with the new terms, varying agencies across the field should properly disseminate politically-created terms during pandemic as how it was used in the context of pandemic. As this paper solely focuses on the formation of words and its semantic shifted meanings the researchers believe that neologisms have a massive impact on society.

#### DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of this manuscript.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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