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# A descriptive study of the Brazilian neologisms *sextou*, *trintou*, and other morphosemantically similar words

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a description of the main linguistic features of some neologisms used in informal contexts in Brazilian Portuguese: *sextou* (derived from *sexta-feira*, ‘Friday’), *trintou* (derived from *trinta*, ‘thirty’) and other morphosemantically similar words. They are identical in form to a past tense verb in 2nd and 3rd person singular but are not pragmatically used in agreement with this tense, person or number -- a corpus study was carried out to show that. Their morphological creation process is argued to be derivation, and they convey not only the meaning of their base noun, but also the emotional feeling speakers get from it – e.g., the joy of being on a Friday and having the weekend ahead to rest. This meaning is accounted for by appealing to context and common ground between speakers and hearers. The proposed account is contrasted with the one existing account in the literature.

Keywords: Brazilian Portuguese, derivational morphology, *sextou*, *trintou*, neologism

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Lexical creativity, or neology, is a universal phenomenon. Brazilian Portuguese (BP), as a language spoken in a large territory, carries plenty of examples of neologisms. This thesis will conduct a study on a group of BP slang expressions such as *sextou* (/ses.'toʊ/), *trintou* (/trĩj.'toʊ/) and other similar words – which will be further listed – rooted in nouns and affixed with [-ou], a verbal suffix that indicates past tense. For instance, *sextou* is derived from *sexta-feira* (*sexta* by truncation, meaning Friday) + suffix [-ou] and is, roughly, used to proclaim the beginning of the weekend as soon as the workday ends on Friday. *Trintou* comes from *trinta* (thirty) + [-ou] and is used to celebrate the 30th birthday of someone, in either a first, second or third verbal person. To understand the context in which such words are created, it is important to consider a brief history of neologisms in BP.

The very first acknowledgments of neologisms in Portuguese dates to the 19th century, with the entry *neologismo* being included in a Portuguese dictionary in 1813 as the “frequent use of new words” (Moraes Silva, 1813. Translation mine). Later, in 1871, Frei Domingos Vieira defines it as “innovation of words and phrases” (translation mine), also adding entries for *neologia* (neology) and *neólogo* (neologist) (Vieira, 1871) (Alves & Maroneze, 2018). Contemporary BP dictionary *Michaelis* defines neologism as “a recently created word using resources from the language itself or adapted from another” and “an old word taken with a new meaning” (Translation mine).

The most prominent neologist in Brazilian literature is the poet and novelist João Guimarães Rosa (1908 - 1967), widely known for his 1956 novel *Grande Sertão: Veredas* (“The Devil to Pay in the Backlands”, in English). Guimarães Rosa experimented with neologisms mostly through appreciative (also known as evaluative) morphology, that is, the

utilization of affixes to convey subjective qualities (Espardaro & Scher, 2013; Kornfeld, 2021). Based on Correia and Almeida (2012, cited by Espardaro & Scher, 2013), the fact that neologisms generally obey the structural norms of their language's linguistic system makes them promptly comprehensible to the hearer, who can grasp their meaning based on previous lexical knowledge, and identify their grammatical category, such as noun, adjective, verb, etc. Therefore, when Guimarães Rosa uses the term *arredondinando* (1956, p. 16), native speakers of BP know that:

1. This word describes an action, since [-ando] suffixes for gerund verbs;
2. It has to do with making something round, or more round, due to the root [*arredond-*], which is itself derived from the adjective *redonda/o*, meaning “round”;
3. It has a delicate quality to it, since the diminutive affix [-inha/o] can work as an attenuant in discourse

We can infer the word *arredondinando* conveys an on-going action of making something round, possibly in a delicate way. When investigated with its context, our inference is most probably correct:

(1) Até as pedras do fundo, uma dá na outra, vão -se  
 even the.F stones of+the.M bottom one.F hit.3SG in+the.F other.F go.PRS REFL

*arredondinando* lisas, que o riachinho rola  
 round+DIM+GER smooth.F that the.M streamlet roll.PRS

‘Even the bottom rocks, bump into one another, go rounding off smoothly, as the streamlet rolls along’

Although neologisms are used for literary or artistic purposes, they also have important communicative value in informal, day-to-day contexts, when the speaker sees themselves in a situation where their known lexicon does not fulfill the meaning they want to convey, and, being familiar with the language's linguistic system, they are capable of creating a new word and being understood by the hearer.

With that process in mind, let us get back to our target words. To the best of my knowledge, there is no formal register of when, where and how they originally came to life, but they have been popularized through social media users ranging from teenagers to young adults. Different sources (O Imparcial, 2021; Krishna, 2019; Lapeloso, n.d.) concur that the most popular amongst them, *sextou*, originated from the 2015 song “Sextou”, by the *forró* group Forró da Pegação, but was only made known when Wesley Safadão and Israel Novaes, both famous Brazilian singers, released their version of the song later in the same year.

The use of these slang expressions first began in social media, often accompanied by a hashtag (#), as post caption, and it is, until today, widely employed in colloquial contexts in Brazilian culture, both on and off of the internet. Almost ten years after its alleged birth-year, *sextou*-like words can be found in advertising and literary pieces, as well as in in-person communication.

Given the low number of studies regarding this specific type of word and the interesting complexity that permeates its linguistic features, this thesis will be one of the first in-depth descriptions of these expressions. Its research goals are

- (a) to thoroughly describe the basic linguistic features of these words;
- (b) to propose a morphological word-formation process for them;
- (c) to conduct a semantic and pragmatic overview of their properties and employment in discourse.

This work will be structured in seven sections, being the first this Introduction. Section 2 will hold a description of the target words, including a brief explanation about verbal conjugation and the names of the days of the week in Brazilian Portuguese, which will be helpful to contextualize the target words. Moreover, this section will describe other attested meanings for the words, besides the ones we are going to analyze. Section 3 will show corpus

examples, gathered from a corpus of Brazilian internet and social media text and music lyrics. Section 4 will explore the possible morphological word-formation processes that originated these words. Section 5 will seek to describe the semantic and pragmatic properties of the target words. Section 6 will compare this study with Oliveira and colleagues' (2022) work on these neologisms. And finally, section 7 will hold a summary of my findings and conclusions.

## 2 DESCRIBING THE DATA

In order to properly present the data, some background on the components that make the target words – the noun and the verbal suffix – is needed.

### 2.1 The base of the neologisms: the noun

A portion of these words refer to **days of the week**. Unlike other Romance languages, Portuguese names the days from Monday to Friday in an ordinal fashion, establishing *domingo* (Sunday) as the first day of the week, due to Catholic Apostolic tradition. It is followed by *segunda-feira* (Monday), *segunda* meaning “second” and *-feira* being derived from the Latin *feria*, meaning “free day” – the second free day after Easter Sunday, which should be devoted to praying and attending to religious festivities. The Church then instituted that all weekdays year-round should follow this nomenclature (Practice Portuguese, n.d.; Kilgarriff et al., 2014). *Terça-feira* (Tuesday) is the third day, *quarta-feira* (Wednesday) the fourth, *quinta-feira* (Thursday) the fifth and *sexta-feira* (Friday) the sixth. *Sábado* (Saturday) remained similar to other romance languages – *sábado* (Spanish, Galician), *sabato* (Italian), *dissabte* (Catalan).

Another kind of noun (more specifically, numeral) that can form these words are the cardinal numbers used to represent **age**. The birthdays from thirty on are usually part of these constructions, but only when they are multiples of ten. Neither the number twenty nor the others

within each decade were found serving as the base of a *sextou*-like word. Since this subtype usually carries a similar meaning regardless of the age, we will talk about only three of them: *trinta* (thirty), *quarenta* (forty) and *cinquenta* (fifty).

The last noun group we will address is the one of **seasons and holidays**. Starting with the holidays, we chose to include both *Carnaval*, a national holiday and *samba* celebration, and *Natal* (Christmas) to the target word list, due to their great importance to Brazilian culture. Seasons are a less universal experience in Brazil; given its territorial extension (8.51 million km<sup>2</sup>), some areas, such as North, Northeast and coastal regions, do not experience weather changes like the most southern regions, sometimes not experiencing cold at all. However, since we had corpus results for words formed from the nouns designated to name the seasons in BP, they also form part of our list: *inverno* (winter), *primavera* (spring), *verão* (summer) and *outono* (fall/autumn).

## 2.2 Verb conjugation in Portuguese and its suffixes

Portuguese has three verb conjugations, each identified by its theme vowel. The first conjugation includes verbs which, in the infinitive form, end with [-ar] (theme vowel *a* + infinitive marking *r*), like the verb *cantar* (to sing). The second conjugation is characterized by verbs ending in [-er], such as *crescer* (to grow), and the third conjugation, by verbs ending in [-ir], like *partir* (to leave). Verbs in Portuguese have desinences that indicate person, number and tense, and each abovementioned conjugation is realized differently depending on these factors.

It is worth pointing out that there are different pronouns used to convey second person singular (2SG) in BP: *tu* and *você*. This distinction is simply dialectal, but it implies different verbal suffixes. With regular verbs in past tense, for example, *tu* triggers the suffix [-[theme vowel] + -ste] and *você* triggers [-ou] for first conjugation, which the same suffix pattern as for

third person singular (3SG). Some BP dialects use the pronoun *tu* with the 3SG verbal suffix, but no dialect uses *você* with 2SG suffix.

To illustrate those patterns, the table below shows the inflection of the verb *cantar* (to sing) – which is the pragmatically relevant conjugation for this study – in indicative simple present (*presente*), simple past (*pretérito perfeito*), and simple future (*futuro do presente*) tenses, as well as in the imperative form (Sarmiento, 2005):

Person	Pronoun	Present	Past	Future	Imperative
1st singular	Eu	canto	cantei	cantarei	-
2nd singular	Tu	cantas, canta	cantaste, <b>cantou</b>	cantarás, cantará	cante
	Você	canta	<b>cantou</b>	cantará	cante
3rd singular	Ela (f.) ele (m.)	canta	<b>cantou</b>	cantará	cante
1st plural	Nós	cantamos	cantamos	cantaremos	cantemos
2nd plural	Vocês	cantam	cantaram	cantarão	cantem
3rd plural	Elas (f.) eles (m.)	cantam	cantaram	cantarão	cantem

Table 1: Verb *cantar* (to sing) in present, past, future tenses and in imperative form

We can see in bold the verbal form that carries the second component of our target words: the suffix [-*ou*], exclusive of first conjugation verbs in past tense, for 2SG and 3SG.

### 2.3 The data

From the three noun groups<sup>1</sup> previously described in subsection 2.1, we chose to concentrate on 16 words within them. The table below summarizes a few of their main characteristics. The first three columns show, respectively, the target word, its IPA phonetic transcription – according to the São Paulo dialect, spoken in the Southeastern region of Brazil

<sup>1</sup> This kind of slang expression can, also, be derived from verbs, such as *fechou*, which will be briefly explained in section 4. For the purposes of this study, only the ones derived from nouns will be analyzed.

(Massini-Cagliari et al., 2016) –, and the original noun they are derived from, along with the noun’s English translation.

The fourth column, “PRO value”, discloses the acceptable verbal persons to attribute to each word, when applicable (when not, the symbol ‘ $\emptyset$ ’ represents impersonality). These words can be analyzed as VPs with a null subject, and for that reason, I will use this nomenclature to refer to their understood subject. The “Occasion” column describes what situation each word refers to. Since our words cover birthday celebrations, days of the week, holidays and seasons, the last column, “Time frame”, explains the acceptable time frame for the speaker to use these expressions, along with some exceptional cases.

Word	IPA	Derived from	PRO value	Occasion	Time frame
Trintou	/trĩj. 'tow/	Trinta (Thirty years-old)	1, 2, 3SG 1, 2, 3PL	Birthdays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The exact day of the birthday</li> <li>- After, but still temporally close is accepted</li> <li>- Explicitly referring to the future birthday or non-celebratory (special cases)</li> </ul>
Quarentou	/kwa.rẽj. 'tow/	Quarenta (Forty years-old)	1, 2, 3SG 1, 2, 3PL		
Cinquentou	/sĩj.kwẽj. 'tow/	Cinquenta (Fifty years-old)	1, 2, 3SG 1, 2, 3PL		
Segundou	/segũ. 'dow/	Segunda-feira (Monday)	$\emptyset$	Day of the week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Used in the exact day of the week</li> <li>- Exceptions: it is the day before some holiday and it feels like it is Friday, one could say “<i>sextou</i>”, or the opposite: it is the day after a long holiday, it feels like a Monday, one could say “<i>segundou</i>”.</li> </ul>
Terçou	/ter. 'sow/	Terça-feira (Tuesday)	$\emptyset$		
Quartou	/kwar. 'tow/	Quarta-feira (Wednesday)	$\emptyset$		
Quintou	/kĩj. 'tow/	Quinta-feira (Thursday)	$\emptyset$		
Sextou	/ses. 'tow/	Sexta-feira (Friday)	$\emptyset$		
Sabadou	/sa.ba. 'dow/	Sábado (Saturday)	$\emptyset$		
Domingou	/do.mĩj. 'gow/	Domingo (Sunday)	$\emptyset$		
Carnavou	/kar.na. 'vow/	Carnaval (national party)	$\emptyset$	Holiday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the season surrounding the holiday, as well as on the day it is celebrated</li> </ul>
Natalou	/na.ta. 'low/	Natal (Christmas)	$\emptyset$		

Invernou	/ĩj.ver.'now/	Inverno (Winter)	∅	Season	- Acceptable even if it is not the season declared: on a hot day in winter, one could say “ <i>veranou</i> ”, to comment on the weather’s instability.
Primaverou	/pri.ma.ve'row/	Primavera (Spring)	∅		
Veranou	/ve.rẽ.'now/	Verão (Summer)	∅		
Otonou	/ow.to.'now/	Otono (Fall)	∅		

Table 2: The target words, their IPA transcription, the noun they derived from, their PRO value, and to what occasion and time frame they refer to.

First, we can notice that all 16 target words end with the 2SG/3SG suffix for first conjugation verbs in past tense: [-*ou*], as seen in subsection 2.2. However, despite having the same form as those verbs, they are not used in the same contexts. This property will be explained in further detail a few steps ahead.

The words we are studying are used to express propositions. The ones related to birthday celebrations, such as *trintou*, are employed to convey, for example, “I’m thirty!” or “You’re thirty!”, since they have a personal PRO value that can be any of the six verbal persons in BP: 1st, 2nd or 3rd, singular or plural. Thus, the understood person does not always agree with the verbal suffix (2SG/3SG). Figure 1 shows the syntactic representation of the proposition *trintou*, with its PRO argument:

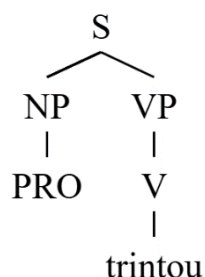


Figure 1: Syntactic representation of *trintou*

On the other hand, the words related to days of the week, holidays and seasons, have rather an expletive pronoun assigned to it, similar to the VP “*llovió*” in Spanish, or “*choveu*” in

Portuguese (“it rained”). In this case, the PRO value is impersonal, like the “it” pronoun in “it rained”. The syntactic structures of these utterances are represented in Figure 2:

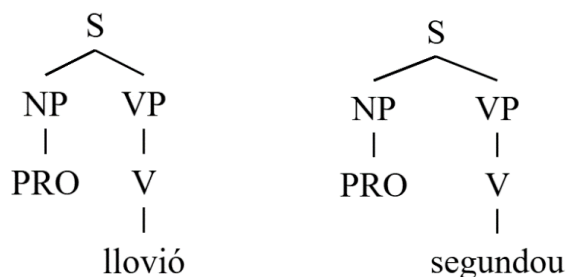


Figure 2: Syntactic representations of *llovió* (Spanish) and *segundou*

The difference between *llovió* and our neologisms is that the former is used exclusively to refer to the past, in accordance with its inflection. For the latter, the same pattern of use is not acceptable:

(2) a. - Tu ropa está mojada, ¿qué pasó?  
 POSS clothes be.PRS wet what happen.PST  
 ‘Your clothes are wet, what happened?’

- Llovió.  
 rain.PST  
 ‘It rained.’

b. - Você estava mau-humorado ontem, o que houve?  
 you be.PST grumpy yesterday DEF what happen.PST  
 ‘You were grumpy yesterday, what happened?’

- ??*Segundou*.  
 monday.PST

The example in (2a) is an acceptable use of the verb *llovió*, whereas (2b) is an infelicitous use of *segundou* (indicated by “??”), because, despite having the form of a verb in past tense, it is not used as one.

Temporal placement plays an important role in the use of these words. Starting from the first three rows, the words related to birthday celebrations are associated with a more restricted time frame, since a birthday, or anniversary, occurs on only one day per year. In this sense, their

use is completely acceptable on the exact day of one's birthday or birthday celebration, even if it happens a few days after (it may be acceptable to use it before the birthday, depending on the subject's beliefs on congratulating someone before their birthday). It is also possible to refer to a future birthday, but never to "round up" one:

(3) [Context: it is the subject's 29<sup>th</sup> birthday]

a. - ??*Trintou!*  
thirty.PST

b. - Ano que vem *trintou*, hein?  
year REL come.3SG thirty.PST INTJ  
'Next year *trintou*, huh?'

The situation portrayed in (3) concerns the person, or people, who is/are celebrating a birthday, therefore, it is this individual's life cycle that dictates the use of *trintou*, *quarentou*, *cinquentou*, and so on.

The remaining occasions depicted on the table show a similar temporal behavior, differing only in the frequency of occurrence and length of the event referred to. Since the days of the week recur much more often than holidays and last much less than seasons, these words are most commonly used on the exact day they refer to. Exceptions can happen if, for example, today is a Thursday, but tomorrow is a holiday, so today *feels* like a Friday, and, out of humor, one can use *sextou*.

This use is comparable with the words referring to holidays (*Carnavou* and *Natalou*), which do have specific predetermined dates associated with them, but, culturally, are celebrated in a *season* that lasts a month or two – the first *bloquinhos de Carnaval* usually start in January and go up to March, when the Carnaval holiday happens in February; and Christmas decorations in streets and malls usually are put up between late October and early November, staying up until after New Year's Day. Therefore, it is acceptable to use these two

words when the ambience is that of Carnival or Christmas, that is, when it *feels* like the holiday, even if it is not Carnival or Christmas day.

Lastly, the words related to meteorological seasons are the most flexible of all. Since seasons last longer than the other events cited and have typical features that can be easily associated with them – like the summer heat or the winter cold – it is acceptable to use the words even if the “official” season is not the one declared. It is common to have hot days in winter all over Brazil, so it would be acceptable if a person used *veranou*, out of humor, to comment on the weather’s instability.

## 2.4 Propositional and pragmatic contents

Before providing examples of use of each word, I want to describe the propositional and pragmatic content of the target words. Although these contents are not equivalent, which I will explain in further detail in section 5, they can be described as in Table 3:

Word	Propositional content	Pragmatic content
Trintou	sb. is turning 30 years old	A celebration of this milestone (entering a new decade) achieved by the subject of the utterance.
Quarentou	sb. is turning 40 years old	
Cinquentou	sb. is turning 40 years old	
Segundou	it is Monday	It has more of a negative connotation, but can also mean the complete opposite, to show off a non-work/school activity happening on a Monday.
Terçou	it is Tuesday	More generic, can be used simply to say, “It is [day] and I’m doing this”, but the speaker can attribute a specific pragmatic content if they can and assume hearers will understand it.
Quartou	it is Wednesday	
Quintou	it is Thursday	
Sextou	it is Friday	Used as a celebration of the end of the work week and beginning of the weekend. Often has a night-time activity connotation, since normally people leave work from 7 pm on. Can also be used ironically, to say your Friday night is not being spent on leisure activities.
Sabadou	it is Saturday	Used to highlight weekend activities, usually leisure, with a positive connotation. It can be used ironically as well, like <i>sextou</i> .
Domingou	it is Sunday	

Carnavou	it is Carnaval	Used throughout Carnaval/Christmas season and Carnaval week/Christmas day, for the speaker to show they are involved in activities related to these festivities, or that the ambience is decorated accordingly, for example.
Natalou	it is Christmas	
Invernou	it is Winter	Acceptable use when the weather is resembling the season in question; need not entail that, meteorologically, it is the season (but usually used when it is somewhat close).
Primaverou	it is Spring	
Veranou	It is Summer	
Outonou	It is Fall	

Table 3: Propositional and pragmatic contents of the target words

This is not an exhaustive list of possible interpretations for these words' meanings. They are, rather, inferences based on empirical knowledge and the corpus study to be presented in section 3. It goes without saying that native BP speakers might have other uses for these words, which are, also, valid and potentially subject for a future study.

## 2.5 Other instances of meaning

As mentioned before, our target words are identical in form to the past tense of first conjugation verbs inflected in 2SG and 3SG, due to the suffix [-ou]. Some of them resemble previously existing verbs with different origins and with a completely or slightly different meaning from what the slang form conveys. In the case of weekdays, for instance, since in Portuguese the days from Monday to Friday are named ordinally, the meaning can be related to fractioning, or to numerical order.

Thus, according to dictionaries *Michaelis Online* and *Dicio*, *segundar* (which can be a variation of *secundar*) is a transitive verb that means to come right away bringing help, or simply to assist or collaborate on something. *Terçar*, also a transitive verb, has multiple distinct meanings. It can mean (a) to mix three ingredients, like corn, rye and wheat to make bread; (b) to divide something into three parts, like an inheritance; (c) to cross swords, intercede, fight for; (d) to set something athwart, diagonally. *Quartar*, as a transitive verb, means to mix four

different qualities of flour to make *quartado* bread. As an intransitive verb, it means to step out of the line when fencing. *Quintar*, a transitive verb, means to take the fifth part of something.

On the other hand, the words related to the weekend and to seasons are more similar in meaning to their slang form. *Sabadar* does not exist in the consulted BP dictionaries, but *sabadear* does, with the verbalizing affix [-e-], an intransitive verb meaning to keep the Sabbath as the Jewish people does, and not work. And *domingar*, an intransitive verb, means to loll about, resting and not doing anything important. It can also mean to dress in your best clothes on a Sunday. *Invernar* can mean to spend the winter somewhere, to hibernate, or the weather being rainy and/or cold. *Primaverar* means to spend the spring somewhere, or simply to enjoy it. There is no *veranar* in BP dictionaries, but *veranear*, with the verbalizing affix [-e-], which means to spend the summer in vacation towns. And *outonar*, which is a term more specific to agriculture, means to dig and water the ground with the first waters of fall, or to plough and leave to rest a plot of land intended for planting.

We have seen that neologisms can be not only the creation of a new word, but “an old word taken with a new meaning” (*Michaelis*). This seems to be the case of some of our target words. The examples above show that *segundou*, *terçou*, *quartou*, *quintou* and *outonou*, are very similar in form to existing verbs – *segundar*, *terçar*, *quartar*, *quintar* and *outonar* –, but have a completely different meaning and do not refer to fractionating and/or mixing a number of elements, or to preparing the ground for planting, as the latter group do. Others, like *domingou*, *invernou* and *primaverou* have a more similar meaning to the verbs *domingar*, *invernar* and *primaverar*, but do not convey exactly the same. *Sabadear* and *veranear*, despite keeping a slightly similar meaning, lost the verbalizing affix [-e-] in their slang form. Our target words, however, have this particular use of the 2SG/3SG past tense form that do not always agree with the personal value of the subject, and neither with the sense conveyed by the utterance, as I will demonstrate in the next section.

### 3 CORPUS STUDY

With the popularization of their use, a few of these slang expressions made it to the dictionary (*Michaelis, Dicio*) as regular verbs. It is the case of *trintar* and *quarentar*, both categorized as intransitive verbs and neologisms, and defined as turning thirty and forty years-old, respectively. They even have a full conjugation table – beyond 2SG/3SG past tense *trintou* and *quarentou* – spelled out. *Sextar*, the infinitive form of *sextou*, is flagged as restricted to informal contexts, and defined as a slang often used in virtual contexts, especially on social media, to announce that the week is over, and the weekend is about to begin, usually with a sense full of excitement and happiness. *Sextar*'s entry also has more conjugations than 2SG/3SG past tense.

Not all of our target words are acknowledged neologisms/slang expressions in dictionaries; therefore, a qualitative corpus study was carried out to confirm the uses these words have in contemporary BP.

#### 3.1 Method

The Portuguese Web 2020 corpus (Lexical Computing CZ s.r.o., 2020), with 12.5 billion words from internet texts and available in the corpora search tool Sketch Engine, was the main source for gathering examples of our target words in context. The *Corpus do Português* (Davies, 2016), the fan-fiction community archiveofourown.org (AO3), the lyrics repository letras.com and the social media platform Instagram were also employed.

Each word was searched individually in the corpora, and the results were then added to an inventory, discarding duplicates, instances involving typographical errors and excerpts that did not correspond to the relevant use of the target word. For example, in the sentence (a), where

it reads *\*quartou*, the correct spelling is *quarto*, meaning fourth; in (b), the word *terçar* does not mean anything related to Tuesdays, but to cross weapons with someone:

- a. A OPPO conquistou o *\*quartou* lugar.  
DEF.F OPPO conquer.PST DEF.M fourth place

‘OPPO conquered fourth place.’

- b. Vargas afagou as classes empresariais e com elas *terçou* armas  
Vargas appease.PST the.F classes business and with them.F cross.PST weapons

‘Getúlio Vargas appeased the business classes and with them, also, crossed weapons’

All 16 target words have at least one occurrence in the inventory made from the corpora search. Relevant examples add up to 1686 occurrences, with *sextou* being the most frequent (1412 occurrences), followed by *segundou* (57), *sabadou* (46) and *domingou* (44).

### 3.2 Corpus examples

The target words fit well the genre of social media posts, due to their capacity to convey a great deal of meaning in a short form. The examples below are mostly taken from the Portuguese Web 2020 corpus – which includes material from personal blogs, advertising pieces, online newspapers and tabloid online magazines – and from social media posts, searched directly on the platforms in question.

The selection of examples used to illustrate the use of the words is motivated by the possible pragmatic content of each word, described in table 3, section 2.4. The definitions given in the table will be reproduced here, grouping words with similar pragmatic contents, to facilitate the reader’s understanding.

The birthday-related words convey a celebration of the milestone that is entering a new decade, achieved by the subject of the utterance, which can be understood as 1st, 2nd or 3rd person, singular or plural. We can see below that example (4) is translated as 1SG, but it could

also be 1PL (“happily *we* turned thirty”), 2PL (“happily *you* (pl.) turned thirty”) or 3PL (“happily *they* turned thirty”). (5) shows a 1SG example of use, and (6), a 2SG.

#### (4) **Trintou**

Felizmente *trintou!* Queria agradecer tudo o que fazem por mim,  
 happily thirty.PST want.IPFV thank.INF all DEF what do.PRS for me  
 se não fosse vocês eu nem sequer existiria.  
 if not be.SBJV you.PL I not even exist.COND

‘Happily, *I turned thirty!* I wanted to thank you for everything you do for me, if it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t even exist.’

#### (5) **Quarentou**

Gente, *quarentou* de quarentena. Eu fiquei sabendo hoje minha mãe  
 people forty.PST of quarantine I stay.PST know.PTCP today my mother  
 falou que decretaram fechar todos os comércios.  
 say.PST that decree.PST close.INF all the.M business

‘Guys, *I turned forty* in quarantine. I found out today, my mother said they’ve decreed that all business had to close.’

#### (6) **Cinquentou**

Em seus stories no Instagram, ela escreveu: “Feliz aniversário, meu amor!  
 in her stories in+the.M Instagram she write.PST happy birthday my love

*Cinquentou!* Te amo Cesar Tralli”.  
 fifty.PST PRO.OBJ.2SG love.PRS Cesar Tralli

‘In her Instagram stories, she wrote: “Happy Birthday, my love! *You turned fifty!* I love you, Cesar Tralli”.’

The words related to days of the week have a variety of different meanings. *Segundou* usually has a negative sense, but it can also be used contrarily, to show off a non-work/school activity happening on a Monday or, as seen in example (7b) to convey to the hearer something positive, in contrast to the stereotypical negative connotation that Mondays carry.

**(7) Segundou**

a. Eu vou fazer a inscrição pro Encejea, aparece que as inscrições  
 I go.PRS make.INF the.F inscription for+the.M Encejea show.PRS that the.F inscriptions

foram encerradas?? *Segundou* estressada com o site do Encejea.  
 be.PST close.PTCP monday.PST stress.PTCP with the.M site of+the.M Encejea

‘I’m applying for Encejea and it shows that the inscriptions are closed??’

*Segundou* stressed with the Encejea website’

b. Os frequentadores do bairro podem apreciar o espresso por  
 the frequenters of+the.M neighborhood can.PRS enjoy.INF the.M espresso for

R\$4,00 e café gratis nas segundas-feiras, ação batizada de “*segundou*”.  
 R\$4.00 and coffee free on+the.F Mondays action call.PTCP of monday.PST

‘Locals can enjoy an espresso for R\$4.00 and free coffee on Mondays, a campaign called “*segundou*”.

The middle-of-the-week words are more generic and do not usually have a specific pragmatic content associated with them. They can be used simply to say “it is [day] and I’m doing this”; the speaker may also attribute a specific pragmatic content to their use if they can assume hearers will understand it. Examples (8) and (10) represent this more generic meaning, whereas (9) refers to the traditional Brazilian dish *feijoada*, which is commonly offered on restaurant menus on Wednesdays.

**(8) Terçou**

*Terçou* muito bem, obrigada! BTS adiantou uma surpresa para  
 Tuesday.PST very well thank\_you BTS release.PST a surprise for

lá de boa para os seus fãs nesta terça-feira 17.  
 there of good for the.M POSS fans in+this.F tuesday 17

‘*Terçou* very well, thank you! BTS released a surprise beyond good to their fans this Tuesday, 17’

**(9) Quartou**

*Quartou* e hoje é dia da feijoada mais amada do Tatuapé!  
 wednesday.PST and today be.PRS day of.F feijoada more love.PTCP of.M Tatuapé

‘*Quartou* and today is the day of the most beloved feijoada of Tatuapé!’

(10) **Quintou**

Toda quinta-feira o cupom *QUINTOU* É habilitado! Ele fica  
 every thursday the coupon thursday.PST be.PRS available he stay.PRS

ativo por um período de 24 horas com livros incríveis só para você!  
 active for a period of 24-hours with books amazing.PL just for you

‘Every Thursday the coupon *QUINTOU* is available! It stays active during a 24-hour period with amazing books just for you!’

*Sextou* is used as a celebration of the end of the work week and beginning of the weekend, as (11a) shows. It can also be used ironically, to say one’s Friday night is not being spent in leisure and/or celebrative activities, as seen in (11b).

(11) **Sextou**

a. Não é dia de pensar em dresscode, reuniões ou  
 not be.PRS day of think.INF in dresscode meetings or

almoço saudável, afinal, *sextou*!  
 lunch healty after\_all friday.PST

‘Not a day to think about dress codes, meetings or healthy lunches, after all, *sextou*!’

b. *Sextou* sem alegria, mas com zoeira. A maioria da galera do Twitter  
 friday.PST without joy but with jokes the majority of+the.F folks of+the.M Twitter

está usando a *#sextou* para falar sobre seus infortúnios da sexta-feira  
 be.PRS use.GER the.F #friday.PST to talk.INF about POSS misfortunes of+the.F friday

‘*Sextou* with no joy, but with jokes. Twitter folks are using *#sextou* to talk about their Friday misfortunes.’

The words related to the weekend are often used to represent activities practiced on Saturday and Sunday, usually leisure, with a positive connotation.

(12) **Sabadou**

Hoje, *sabadou* aqui também! Esperando no camarim pra  
 today saturday.PST here too wait.GER in+the.M dressing\_room to

curtir o show do marido!  
 enjoy the.M concert of+the.M husband

‘Today, *sabadou* here too! Waiting in the dressing room to enjoy hubby’s concert!’

(13) **Domingou**

Domingou!!!! E eu to como? Na piscina,  
 sunday.PST and I be.PRS how in+the.F pool

brincando com as bóias das crianças  
 play.PRS with the.F floaters of+the.F children

‘*Domingou!!!!* And how am I? In the pool, playing with the children’s floaters’

The words that refer to Carnaval and Christmas can be used not only during Carnaval week and Christmas Eve/Day, but throughout those holidays’ season, for the speaker to show they are involved in activities related to these festivities, or to comment on the atmosphere these holidays give. (14a) shows a more negative use of the word *carnavou*, since it is mostly a street party, and it is very common to get mugged or scammed. (14b) and (15a) demonstrate how clear the meaning of these words can be when accompanied by a photo, which is the case of these examples, taken from social media. (15b), also taken from social media, shows how the author uses other words with the same construction – *recessou*, derived from *recesso*, end of the year recess companies usually take; and *fim-de-anou*, from *fim-de-ano* (end of the year) – to set a mood of summer, vacation and end-of-the-year festivities.

(14) **Carnavou**

- a. Uma amiga caiu num golpe destes. Pegam seu cartão e devolvem outro.  
 a friend fall.PST in+a.M scam of+that.M take.PRS your card and return other

Depois anotam sua senha. Dica: não use cartão na rua #Carnavou  
 after write.PRS your password tip not use.IMP card in+the.F street #carnaval.PST

‘A friend [of mine] was scammed like that. They take your credit card and give you another one back. Then they write down your password. Tip: don’t use your card in the streets #Carnavou’

- b. Fã assumida do Carnaval, a atriz comemorou a chegada da  
 fan assume.PTCP of+the.M Carnaval the actress celebrate.PST the arrival of+the.F

folia: “Carnavou”, escreveu ela na legenda da imagem  
 merrymaking Carnaval.PST write.PST she in+the.F caption of+the.F image

‘Big Carnaval fan, the actress celebrated the merrymaking arrival: “Carnavou”, she wrote in the image caption’

(15) **Natalou**

a. *Natalou*, amigos  
christmas.PST friends

‘*Natalou*, friends’

b. *Sextou*, *recessou*, *natalou*, *fim-de-anou*, aqui na nossa Estância  
friday.PST recess.PST christmas.PST end-of-year.PST here in+the.F our Estância

e a gente não poderia estar mais feliz em receber a  
and the people not can.IPFV be.INF more happy in welcome.INF the

nossa turma de hóspedes no verão! Vivaa!!  
our group of guests in+the.M summer hooray

‘*Sextou*, *recessou*, *natalou*, *fim-de-anou* here in our Estância and we couldn’t be  
happier to welcome our group of guests this Summer! Hooray!!’

Finally, regarding seasons, it is acceptable to use the words when the weather resembles the season in question, as seen in (16). Examples (17), (18) and (19) are temporally situated in the season they refer to.

(16) **Invernou**

Estes dias *invernou*, hein? É o friozinho de outono.  
these days winter.PST INTJ be.PRS the.M chill.DIM of fall

Em dias assim, nada como um chazinho.  
in days like\_this nothing like a tea.DIM

‘*Invernou* these days, huh? It’s the fall chill. On days like this, nothing like a cup of tea.’

(17) **Primaverou**

Gud Mornin!!!! *primaverou*!  
good morning spring.PST

‘Good morning!!!! *primaverou*!’

(18) **Veranou**

O melhor carnaval dos últimos 300 anos... #*Veranou* #*Carnavou*  
the.M best carnaval of+the.M last 300 years #summer.PST #carnaval.PST

‘The best Carnival of the last 300 years... #*Veranou* #*Carnavou*’

(19) **Outonou**

*Outonou!!* O outono é a estação que traz  
 fall.PST the.M fall be.PRS the.F season that bring.PRS

as cores da minha paleta e eu amo.  
 the.F colors of+the.F my palette and I love.PRS

‘*Outonou!!* Fall is the season that brings out the colors in my palette and I love it.’

As previously mentioned, this type of construction is believed to have originated from a 2015 song called “Sextou”, which talks about how the misfortunes of the week will not prevent the author from enjoying the weekend and finding love.

## (20) “Sextou” (2015)

Mas eu sei que meu sofrimento pode se acabar  
 Vou é reunir o meus amigos pra “bebemorar”<sup>2</sup>  
 O meu fim de semana chegou, a festa começou  
*Sextou* (x2)

Hoje ninguém me acha, o celular descarregou  
*Sextou* (x2)

Só chego de manhã agarrado com outro amor

Performed by: Forró da Pegação

Compositor: Pedrinho Pegação

But I know my suffering can end  
 I’m gonna gather my friends to “drincebrate”  
 My weekend arrived, the party started  
*Sextou* (x2)

No one will find me today, my battery went away  
*Sextou* (x2)

I’ll get home in the morning clinging to another lover

However, almost fifty years prior, renowned Brazilian singer and songwriter Gilberto Gil was already using the same construction referring to the feeling he gets from a Sunday afternoon.

## (21) “Domingou” (1968)

Da janela a cidade se ilumina  
 Como nunca jamais se iluminou  
 São três horas da tarde, é domingo  
 Na cidade, no Cristo Redentor - ê, ê  
 É domingo no trolley que passa - ê, ê  
 É domingo na moça e na praça - ê, ê  
 É domingo, ê, ê, *domingou*, meu amor

Performed by: Gilberto Gil

Compositors: Gilberto Gil and Torquato Neto

From the window the city lights up  
 As it never has before  
 It’s three in the afternoon, it’s Sunday  
 In the city, at Christ the Redeemer - ê, ê  
 It’s Sunday in the trolley that passes by - ê, ê  
 It’s Sunday in the girl and in the square - ê, ê  
 It’s Sunday, ê, ê, *domingou*, my love

<sup>2</sup> “Bebemorar” is a neologism formed by the verbs *beber* (to drink) and *comemorar* (to celebrate), meaning to drink alcohol, usually in a social gathering, in a celebratory manner.

We can gather from (20) and (21) that the authors are describing a scenario – not only physically, but also emotionally – and using a neologism to convey: *sextou, domingou*.

#### 4 MORPHOLOGICAL WORD-FORMATION PROCESS

In the attempt to explain the morphological process that creates these words, I will compare two different hypotheses. The first one is related to the fact that almost all the original forms end in [-a] – *segunda(-feira), trinta, primavera* –, which facilitates the attachment of the infinitive marker [-r] to turn the nouns into verbs, since [-a] is also the theme vowel for first conjugation verbs in BP. Because we previously had verbs with the same root of some of the words (*terçar, quartar, invernar*) the creation of new verbs from similar nouns could be just a matter of attaching the final [-r]. However, this hypothesis does not explain the neologisms of which the original form does not end in [-a], and still got the first conjugation past suffix [-ou] attached to it, which presumes an infinitive form ending in [-ar]. *Carnavou* and *Natalou* are examples of neologisms that didn't have a similar preexisting verb and do not even end in a vowel (*Carnaval, Natal*).

The second hypothesis is that these words were created through an analogy process. Before the emergence of our neologisms in the contemporary colloquial vocabulary, Brazilians already used a slang almost identical in form to them: *fechou* (/fe'ʃow/), which can be translated as “I agree with what we just came up with, let's go on and do it”, or simply “ok, deal!”. Unlike our target words, which are statements, *fechou* is used with more of an answering or conclusion function. *Fechou* has a null subject with personal value, which can be assigned to all verbal persons, except for 1SG, since it refers to an agreement between two or more people. And, like some of the target words, there is, also, a verb *fechar* (to close), of which the 2SG/3SG past

tense form is identical to the slang expression *fechou*, but these two forms have different pragmatic contents.

Below, (22a) shows an acceptable use of the slang form *fechou*. The PRO value of *fechou* is 1PL, but any other person except for 1SG would be acceptable, since it can be understood as an agreement between all the parties involved in the discourse (speaker(s) and hearer(s)). (22b) is an example of infelicitous use in a pragmatic perspective: it is not being used as an answer or conclusion to previous discourse and not representing an agreement between the parts involved in the conversation. (22c) shows the verb *fechar* inflected in 3SG past tense, which looks identical in form to the slang expression, but does not convey the same meaning.

(22) *fechou* vs. *fechar*

a. - Então a gente se encontra no restaurante às 19h?  
 so the people REFL meet.PRS at+the.M restaurant at 7pm  
 So, we meet at the restaurant at 7 pm?

- *Fechou!*  
 close.PST  
*Deal!*

b. [Context: speaker has just woken up and is greeting their roommate]

- ??*Fechou!* Bom Dia!  
 close.PST good morning  
 ??*Deal!* Good morning!

c. A menina *fechou* a janela.  
 the.F girl close.PST the.F window  
 The girl *closed* the window.

Because *fechou* is a well-known and widely used slang expression in Brazil – it even has a much more direct translation to English, “deal!”, than the other words –, we can speculate that this construction, by analogy, led to the creation of the neologisms, such as *sextou*, *trintou*, and maybe even Gilberto Gil’s “*Domingou*” back in 1968. It is possible that the speaker

identified a semantic property of the suffix [-ou] that, when combined with words of their choice, conveys an idea that was not yet conveyed by this speakers' lexicon.

At this point, we can think of *fechou* as having two different meanings: first, as in “to close”, which can be conjugated in any existing verbal person, tense and mood in BP; and second, used exclusively in informal contexts to convey “ok, deal!”, working in the same manner as our target words, that is, not agreeing with the verbal person and tense that its form is conveying. *Fechou(1)* is realized through inflection and refers exclusively to the past and to 2SG or 3SG, as the verbal suffix [-ou] properties convey; *fechou(2)*, the slang expression, also has the suffix [-ou] attached to it, but it is not a product of inflection. It rather comes from a derivation process, since the suffix does not indicate tense or other verbal properties (Lieber, 2017). It conveys a particular kind of meaning, which motivates the speaker to create neologisms with this suffix and relates to the puzzle I am trying to solve with this second morphological hypothesis.

I propose that this same process happened with our target words. But, in contrast to *fechou*, their main form is of a defective verb – *sextou*, *trintou*, *quarentou* – and their consolidation as regular verbs, recognized by dictionaries, as mentioned in subsection 3.1, came after the popularization of the slang expression. Therefore, we have, for instance, *sextou(1)*, the slang expression, which has a null impersonal subject, refers to present and/or future, and means a celebration of the start of the weekend. Then, presumably, speakers needed to use it in more contexts, with different inflections, and organically added verbal properties to the slang expression<sup>3</sup>. Because the [-ou] ending is identical in form to the verbal suffix [-ou], it is easy to

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<sup>3</sup> Lunguinho and Rodrigues (2024) describe how BP speakers have been doing it with the word *bora* (slang expression for “let’s go”). *Bora* is categorized as an interjection in dictionaries (Priberam, 2023), but the authors observed that social media users are adding verbal inflection to it in tense and person.

recognize the word *sextou* as a verb and to attach other verbal suffixes to its root, such as the infinitive [-ar], creating *sextar*, the byproduct infinitive form of *sextou*, the slang expression. We now have *sextou(2)*, which is an inflected form of the regular and recognized verb *sextar* in 2SG/3SG in past tense, one of many possible inflections this verb can have, and that present in BP dictionaries (*Michaelis, Dicio*).

In sum, the [-ou] suffix carries semantic properties that allow the speaker to create new senses from words that may or may not originally be verbs. We are focusing on words that were not originally verbs, had the [-ou] suffix attached to it, and are now emerging as new verbs to the BP lexicon. But *fechou(2)*, the slang expression, shows us that it is possible to perform this process with a much larger group of words – not only nouns, but also verbs.

We can split the morphological process of adding the [-ou] suffix into two different ones: derivation and inflection. By a derivational process, these words are turned into defective verbs ending in [-ou], which do not convey past tense and have a null subject – in our example, *sextou(1)* and *fechou(2)*. And, by an inflectional process, these once defective verbs become regular and can be inflected in any tense and person available in BP – in our example, *sextou(2)* and *fechou(1)*.

## 5 SEMANTIC & PRAGMATIC PROPERTIES

Considering that linguistic analyses of this type of neologism are not common, and this is one of the first detailed studies on them, I will attempt to point out and briefly describe the semantic and pragmatic properties of our target words.

## 5.1 Category of meaning

Bearing in mind the descriptions of the words presented up until this point, I propose two categories of meaning they can be grouped into. First, some of the words describe a **change of state**. The neologisms under this category have a subject, that is, their PRO feature has personal value. They are used when this subject undergoes change, such as celebrating a birthday or anniversaries. In our sample, the words related to this kind of change are *trintou*, *quarentou*, *cinquentou*. They can be employed on the exact day of the birthday or anywhere temporally close. When referring explicitly to the future subject's birthday, it is also acceptable to use them. Moreover, they can be used in non-celebratory situations, when the speaker is referring to the birthday-completion, but the focus of the sentence is another, such as example (5), partially reproduced here, or as (23):

(5) Gente, *quarentou* de quarentena.  
 people forty.PST of quarantine

‘Guys, *I turned forty* in quarantine.’

(23) *Trintou*, então eu deveria pensar em arrumar um emprego de verdade.  
 thirty.PST so I should think.INF in get.PRS a job of truth

‘*I turned thirty*, so now I should think about getting a real job.’

Then, we have the **stative** words. This category concerns recurring events, like days of the week (*segundou*, *terçou*, *quartou*, *quintou*, *sextou*, *sabadou*, *domingou*), holidays (*Carnavou*, *Natalou*) and seasons (*invernou*, *primaverou*, *veranou*, *outonou*). These words refer to the state of it being a specific day of the week, holiday or season. As explained in section 2.3, there are different degrees of time frame where these words fit, being days of the week the less flexible and seasons the more flexible in terms of when they can be used, but they are all somewhat flexible, like (16), partially reproduced here, and (24):

(16) *Invernou* esses dias hein? É o friozinho de outono  
 winter.PST these days INTJ be.PRS the.M chill.DIM of fall

‘*Invernou* these days, huh? It’s the fall chill.’

(24) [Context: it is early November and the city’s Christmas decorations are up]

- *Natalou!* Esse ano começou cedo.  
 christmas.PST this year start.PST early

‘*Natalou!* It started early this year.’

## 5.2 *É sexta vs. sextou*

It can be challenging to distinguish between our target words and their propositional content, like *é sexta* (“It’s Friday”) and *sextou*, since most of the objective meaning it carries is that it is Friday. But these two expressions do not have the same exact meaning. Besides the fact that *sextou* is more informal, it carries a meaning that is deeper than simply informing the interlocutor that today is Friday. *É sexta* can be an essentially informative sentence, whereas *sextou* cannot: in its slang form, *sextou* is not used to *inform* that today is Friday, but to describe what the speaker feels a Friday is to them. We can test this by the examples below, assuming that, contextually, it is Thursday:

(25) [Context: it is Thursday]

a. - Hoje é sexta.  
 today be.PRS friday  
 ‘Today is Friday.’

- Não, hoje é quinta  
 no today be.PRS thursday  
 ‘No, today is Thursday’

b. [Thursday, but the next day is a holiday]

- *Sextou!*  
 friday.PST

- #Não, hoje é quinta.  
 no today be.PRS thursday  
 #‘No, today is Thursday’

c. [The next day is a regular work/school day]

- *Sextou!*  
 friday.PST

- Não, hoje é quinta.  
 no today be.PRS thursday  
 ‘No, today is Thursday’

(25a) shows a perfectly acceptable use of *é sexta*, as the first speaker utters “It’s Friday”, and the second speaker corrects them, since today is, in fact, Thursday, according to the context we have established. In (25b), the same answer, now to the utterance “*Sextou!*” is not entirely acceptable, because, contextually, although today is Thursday, tomorrow is a holiday and people will not engage in their daily work and/or school routine, so it *feels* like a Friday. In contrast, in (25c), the same correction is acceptable, if the context determines that today is a Thursday that does not feel like a Friday, because tomorrow is a regular day and, this week, the Friday will have the atmosphere of a Friday.

With that in mind, I offer an approximation of Croom’s (2015) account to my problem. In his study, he argues against the assumption that descriptors and slurs (for instance, *gay man* and *f\*\**) have the same extension, meaning and content. He does that by showing evidence that, in some linguistic communities, certain slurs were used to refer to some but not all individuals they targeted, had specific application-conditions to be used, and were not equivalent with their corresponding descriptor’s characteristics. Croom proposes, instead, that descriptors are conceptual anchors to their corresponding slurs, helping speakers and hearers to ground the felicitous application of the slur in question.

In our case, I propose that expressions like “*é sexta*” are conceptual anchors to expressions like “*sextou*”. They do not have the same extension, meaning and content, and they do not refer to the same set of days: *é sexta* refers to all Fridays, but *sextou* can also refer to weekdays that are not Fridays, but do have the vibe of it. Hence, *é sexta* works as a conceptual anchor to the felicitous application of the neologism *sextou*.

### 5.3 Common ground

Croom’s account of coextension is helpful, but not enough to describe the semantic and pragmatic properties of our target words. How do all speakers of a linguistic community know

*what* a Friday feels like? This question can be answered by the concept of common ground. Allan (2013) describes common ground as a process where a speaker (S) makes an utterance (U) to a hearer (H), and it is known that S believes U is true and that H will be able to understand U and agrees with it. In our case, although a great part of the words' meaning is attributed by the speaker (by their feeling of what a Thursday, winter, Carnaval, to turn forty is), there is a common ground between speaker and hearer, that assures that both understand *Friday* is the end of the work week and, generally, a day where the average individual can go out for a drink. Or that *Monday* is the opposite of that, the beginning of a new work week, and not the most loved day among average individuals.

Therefore, even when these words are used in a seemingly illogical context – like saying *veranou* on an atypically warm winter day – common ground assures that the hearer understands what the speaker is trying to convey with that: not that they do not know to identify seasons, but that, humorously, they are commenting on the unusual weather for that time of the year.

## 6 COMPARISON WITH OLIVEIRA ET AL. (2022)

Studies about this specific kind of neologism are scarce. After a thorough search, only one paper on the matter was found: Oliveira, Mota and Santos (2022). Their goal was to study patterns of formation and use of these words and to discuss their function in discourse, relying on a corpus of advertising pieces.

Oliveira and her colleagues propose to classify these words as denominal verbs, that is, as verbs originating from nouns – more specifically numerals, since *sextou* derives from *sexta-feira* (the *sixth* day), and *cinquentou* derives from *cinquenta* (fifty). It is interesting to notice that many of the words we are studying in this thesis are, too, derived from numerals: *segundou*,

*terçou*, *quartou*, *quintou*, *trintou*, and *quarentou*. Considering that the other eight words we are focusing on are not derived from numerals, but from nouns, and that the ones derived from numerals have important semantic differences among them – the birthday-related have a personal subject, the days of the week ones do not – I believe it would be worth investigating the root of this phenomenon, although it is not the goal of this paper.

Oliveira and her colleagues detail how denominal verbs are formed in BP, but they state that the fact that these words are conjugated in third person singular (3SG) past is not relevant, since their use refers to the day itself (Friday, in the case of *sextou*) and not to an action. Another important argument they make is that the difference between saying *é sexta-feira* (“It’s Friday”) and *sextou* is that the former lacks informality, while the latter performs the function of adding colloquiality to the discourse.

Despite agreeing with Oliveira and her colleagues when they say BP speakers tend to use this kind of word to portray their daily life and social habits, and not just actions related to a specific time, a few points must be argued. Regarding the formation of these words, I do not believe they are not formed through a morphological process of verbalization of a noun (or numeral), where an infinitive form is assumed to be created, and then used in 2SG/3SG past tense form. I propose these words are rather created through a process of analogy, as explained in section 4.

While it seems correct to say *sextou*-like words do not represent an action, I do not believe they portray only a day of the week or event. It would be more fit to describe them as referring to a phenomenon, as they hold more meaning than simply stating what day it is. Moreover, discarding the relevance of the verbal conjugation seems precipitous. It is precisely this suffix ([*-ou*]) that makes these words greatly interesting: they invoke an on-going event, even though having the form of a past tense verb.

Taking into account the research made for this thesis so far, I propose a different analysis than Oliveira and her colleagues: *sextou*, *trintou* and similar words are verbs, although they do not behave like regular verbs, but always convey special sorts of propositions by themselves. However, they seem to carry two different verbs with similar meaning: the first, being a defective verb ending in [-ou], which is used only in this form, has a null subject. Then, as a byproduct of this use, a regular verb emerges from the needs and lexical creativity of speakers and can be inflected in any tense and person available in BP. Evidence for this is the addition of the verb *sextar* in BP dictionaries.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The goals I tried to accomplish in this thesis were three: (a) to thoroughly describe the basic linguistic features of Brazilian slang expressions like *sextou*, *trintou* and morphosemantic similar words; (b) to propose a morphological word-formation process for these words; and (c) to conduct a semantic and pragmatic overview of their properties and employment in discourse.

To achieve (a), I provided a brief historical and theoretical context of the emergence and construction of the target words, and detailed a few of their basic linguistic properties, such as orthographic and phonetic spelling, the BP words they are derived from, which grammatical person they can involve and the situations when they might be used. I also provided information about their propositional and pragmatic contents. Then, I did a corpus study to demonstrate the linguistic descriptions I had made so far and briefly explained how these words are described in Brazilian dictionaries.

For goal (b), I proposed two different hypotheses for the word-formation process that creates these words. The first would be the attachment of the suffix [-ar] (theme vowel [-a] and

infinitive marker [-r]) to create verbs from nouns, but this hypothesis is not sufficient to explain all cases of the words we have been studying. The second one is that the words are created through analogy and a derivation process, that BP speakers reproduce until this day, and consists in attaching the suffix [-ou] to words, since it conveys a particular semantic meaning not yet conveyed by the speaker's lexicon.

And to achieve goal (c), I suggested two meaning categories to group the words into: change of state, which includes the words that are related to birthday celebrations, and stative, which includes words related to recurring events like days of the week, holidays and seasons. I also relied on the concepts of coreferentialism and conceptual anchor, following Croom's (2015) proposal, and common ground to offer a brief pragmatic overview of the target words.

Moreover, I briefly compared my work with the study of Oliveira, Mota and Santos (2022), in which they also analyze the morphological and pragmatic functions of these words, and suggest they are denominal verbs. My conclusion is different: I agree that words like *sextou* and *trintou* are verbs, but behave like statements and seem to carry two different verbs within them: the first, a defective verb ending in [-ou], and the second, a regular verb which is a byproduct of the first, and can be inflected in any tense and person available in BP. A proof of that is the addition of the verb *sextar* in BP dictionaries.

For future studies, I suggest diachronic research to determine the first uses of these words, a study that focuses on words that are morphosemantically similar to the ones we studied here but coming from verbs – like *fechou* and *partiu* (which can be roughly translated to “let's go!”) – and an experimental study which surveys other native speakers of BP about their intuitions and knowledge about these words and their uses.

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## Appendix

This section contains the references to the sentences used as examples along the text.

- (1) Guimarães Rosa, 1956
- (2) Mine
- (3) Mine
- (4)-(8) Portuguese Web 2020 (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/pttnten-portuguese-corpus/>)
- (9) Instagram (@jequitibaespetaria)
- (10)-(11b) Portuguese Web 2020
- (12) Instagram (@tatafersoza)
- (13)-(14b) Portuguese Web 2020
- (15a) Instagram (@debo9th)
- (15b) Instagram (@estancialomba)
- (16) Portuguese Web 2020
- (17) Instagram (@giovannaantonelli)
- (18) Instagram (@brunom2611)
- (19) Instagram (@sunaikabruna)
- (20) letras.com (Performed by: Forró da Pegação, Compositor: Pedrinho Pegação)
- (21) letras.com (Performed by: Gilberto Gil, Compositors: Gilberto Gil and Torquato Neto)
- (22) Mine
- (23) Louise McNally, 2024
- (24) Mine
- (25) Mine