



NEOLOGISMS IN THE POPULIST DISCOURSE: A SEMIOTIC APPROACH

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Research purpose. This research aims to analyze the coining of neologisms within the political discourse developed in Spain and Latin America by political parties inspired by Ernesto Laclau's theory of populism. Concretely, the present work focuses on the analysis of neologisms created by the Spanish party *Podemos* and the role of these neologisms in the populist narrative from a semiotic approach.

Keywords: narrative semiotics, neologisms, political discourse, populism, semiotics of culture

Research Methodology. Neologisms are analyzed according to several Spanish authors (Cabré Castellví, 2006), (Sarmiento and Vilches, 2007), (Esteban Asensio, 2008); through the implementation of Greimas' generative trajectory of meaning (1966, 1973, 1982, 1990); Lotman's concept of semiosphere (1996); and Uspenski's works (1988). A qualitative approach based on the descriptive analysis of documents elaborated by *Podemos*' leadership as well as content analysis of Pablo Iglesias speeches in different mass media as well as the discourses of Latin American leaders like Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales is implemented.

Results / Findings. Within the framework of political discourse, the various players involved in public life find the creation of neologisms as one among several tools intended to catch the attention and, eventually, persuade public opinion. Neologisms are indispensable for constructing the social antagonism advocated by Laclau's theory of populism. The most used neological resource for characterizing political opponents is that of semantic neologisms. Regardless of the chosen neological resource, all terms coined by populist parties to refer to political opponents imply a derogatory vision. Neologisms coined by populist parties belong to a political narrative that calls for its semiotic analysis (*Figure 1*).

Originality / Practical implications. The originality of this work rests on the interdisciplinarity of a field of study as neology that permits the connection between disciplines as Semiotics and Politics in an attempt to provide insights about socio-political transformations that occurred in Spain and Latin America in the last decades. The work may be for researchers and students from the fields of Semiotics and Political Sciences due to the implementation of Greimas' narrative semiotics and Lotman's semiotics of culture to the study of Laclau's theory of populism and its put into practice by political parties like *Podemos*. Finally, this research entails the elaboration of a material that could be useful in teaching / learning Spanish for Specific Purposes.



Figure 1. Social antagonisms pursued by populist discourses overcome the boundaries of democratic discussion. www.istockphoto.com, 2019