Informative Contagion: The Coronavirus (COVID 19) in Italian journalism

Papapicco, Concetta

ABSTRACT

In addition to becoming a global phenomenon, the spreading of the new Coronavirus, following the declaration of a pandemic state, has generated excessive access to information, a p purpose of this exploratory study is to investigate how the coronavirus situation is described in journalistic communication. Starting from La Repubblica online, as a reference journa to create a social representation of the phenomenon, the excessive accessibility to sources of information (Infodemia) can be modulated by the "how" the phenomenon is described by method). A Content Analysis (@mayring_qualitative_2004) with the SketchEngine software (@thomas_discovering_2016) was carried out first, then supported by a Diatextual Analys visions about COVID-19 situation in Italy.

Papapicco, C. (2022). Informative Contagion: The Coronavirus (COVID 19) in Italian journalism. In *Proceedings of the Paris Institute for Advanced Study*. https

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of January 2020, the attention of the medical-scientific community and the dissemination of informati coronavirus (SARSCoV-2) emerged in Wuhan in China at the end of 2019.

Italy had 12.462 confirmed cases according to the Istituto Superiore di Sanità as of March 11, 2020, and 827 deaths (https:/ result there was a high level of contagion, understood as the spread of the virus, but also as the spread of information in a Health Organization to coin the term Infodemia to give "a name" to the phenomenon of excessive information. With neol (OMS) wanted, in these days when fear of the coronavirus was raging, to point at perhaps the greatest danger for global soci the distortion of reality in the rumble of echoes and comments of the global community on real or often invented facts (Cine

2. THE STUDY

The general purpose of the exploratory study was to investigate how the coronavirus situation was described in the journa online, as a reference journalistic magazine, the research aimed to understand the way in which journalistic communication spread and the restrictive measures of social distancing in the Italian context. The study starts from the hypothesis that if th representation of the phenomenon, the excessive accessibility to sources of information (Infodemia) can be modulated b journalists. The methodology proposed in the exploratory study is quanti-qualitative (mixed) method. A Content Analysis (Thomas, 2016) is carried out first. In support of the Content Analysis, a Diatextual Analysis (Papapicco & Mininni, 20 qualitative analysis useful to detect in the analyzed texts, that is the online articles of *La Repubblica* on the topic of co (Mininni, 2014). The research focuses mainly on "Mode", or "How" the are events related to coronavirus in the online article

2.1 Corpus, Objective and Methodology

Starting from *La Repubblica* online, as a reference journalistic magazine, the database "Archivio Elettronico Repubblica" was "Coronavirus" and "Covid19". The advanced search has returned 100 articles divided into national and regional articles. The and analyzed, is the result of the advanced research on the database of archive and, therefore, the set of articles of *La Repu* specific objective, the research, in an exploratory phase, aimed to understand the way in which journalistic communicatic COVID-19 virus, the spread of contagion and restrictive measures of social distancing in the Italian context. The study st information helped to create a social representation of the phenomenon, the excessive accessibility of sources of informa phenomenon is described by the journalist. The methodology proposed, in fact, in the exploratory study is quanti-qualitati 2004) with the SketchEngine software (Thomas, 2016) was carried out first. In support of the Content Analysis, a Diatextual out.

2.2 Results

The results of the exploratory study demonstrate the presence of a contrast between an "unexpected event" ('emergency sit reflected in the references to places and times, with adjectives related to closing and the use of status verbs. The funda continuous logic of opposition of the analyzed terms. The contrast exists at the spatial level ("regional" vs "national"), at the level of intentionality of the action ("To Leave" vs "To Remain"). This logic of contrast outlines the way in which the In *Repubblica* online regarding the coronavirus in Italy (Papapicco, 2020). The contrast, therefore, does not attenuate, but int contributes to constructing different social representations about the current pandemic. Therefore, the mediated social represe has been hit by a health and economic emergency, but the verb "strike" contributes to creating a representation of passivity, by Italy. Among the future prospects, the research aims to extend the corpus by collecting more articles and compare the clicked.

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