

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

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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 phenomenon name study is to investigate how the coronavirus situation is described in journalistic communication. Starting from La Repubblica online, as a reference journalistic magazine, the study assumes that if the ci phenomenon, the excessive accessibility to sources of information (Infodemia) can be modulated by the “how” the phenomenon is described by the journalists. The methodology proposed is quanti-qual SketchEngine software (Thomas, 2016) was carried out first, then supported by a Diatextual Analysis (Papapicco & Mininni, 2019). The results show the presence of contrasting visions about COVID-1

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of January 2020, the attention of the medical-scientific community and the dissemination of information is for (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://sys> there was a high level of contagion, understood as the spread of the virus, but also as the spread of information in a viral ; Organization to coin the term Infodemia to give “a name” to the phenomenon of excessive information. With neologism “Infodem these days when fear of the coronavirus was raging, to point at perhaps the greatest danger for global society in the age of socia in the rumble of echoes and comments of the global community on real or often invented facts ([Cinelli et al., 2020](#)).

2. THE STUDY

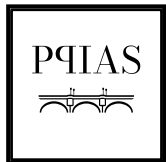
The general purpose of the exploratory study was to investigate how the coronavirus situation was described in the journalistic co a reference journalistic magazine, the research aimed to understand the way in which journalistic communication described the restrictive measures of social distancing in the Italian context. The study starts from the hypothesis that if the circulation of info phenomenon, the excessive accessibility to sources of information (Infodemia) can be modulated by the “how” the phenome proposed in the exploratory study is quanti-qualitative (mixed) method. A Content Analysis ([Mayring, 2004](#)) with the SketchEn support of the Content Analysis, a Diatextual Analysis ([Papapicco & Mininni, 2019](#)) was carried out. The Diatextual Analysis is texts, that is the online articles of *La Repubblica* on the topic of coronavirus, Subjectivity, Argumentativity and Mode ([Mininni “How” the are events related to coronavirus in the online articles of La Repubblica about COVID19 phenomenon.](#)

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 co analyzed, is the result of the advanced research on the database of archive and, therefore, the set of articles of *La Repubblica* (objective, the research, in an exploratory phase, aimed to understand the way in which journalistic communication described the p spread of contagion and restrictive measures of social distancing in the Italian context. The study started from the hypothesis th social representation of the phenomenon, the excessive accessibility of sources of information (Infodemia) can be modulated by ‘ The methodology proposed, in fact, in the exploratory study is quanti-qualitative (mixed) method. A Content Analysis ([Mayring, 2 was carried out first. In support of the Content Analysis, a Diatextual Analysis \(\[Papapicco & Mininni, 2019\]\(#\)\) was carried out.](#)

2.2 Results

The results of the exploratory study demonstrate the presence of a contrast between an “unexpected event” (‘emergency situation’ in the references to places and times, with adjectives related to closing and the use of status verbs. The fundamental aspect the opposition of the analyzed terms. The contrast exists at the spatial level (“regional” vs “national”), at the cultural level (“Weste the action (“To Leave” vs “To Remain”). This logic of contrast outlines the way in which the Infodemia is presented in the co coronavirus in Italy ([Papapicco, 2020](#)). The contrast, therefore, does not attenuate, but intensifies the feeling of information unce representations about the current pandemic. Therefore, the mediated social representation that is built on the phenomenon is emergency, but the verb “strike” contributes to creating a representation of passivity, as if this emergency is suffered and not ; research aims to extend the corpus by collecting more articles and compare the results with other Italian online newspapers more



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