A Linguistic Analysis of the Emotional Impact of Breaking News

Headlines in the Social Media

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The emotions of social media users are an important issue both for the social media as well as for their users. The current Corona pandemic seems to be a perfect context in which emotions can be manipulated by creating and sharing specific news. The main assumption that this research relies on is that certain vocabulary is meant to evoke specific emotions, such as fear, anxiety, anger or joy on the part of the audience. The aim of this research is to identify and analyse specific vocabulary used in breaking news headlines regarding the corona virus spread (the new wave) and its influence over people's lives. To achieve that aim, a survey based on 5 0 headlines about the corona virus compiled from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter has been conducted. The headlines were presented in a questionnaire together with a rating system based on which the participants were asked to decide how trustworthy the headlines seemed to them. The survey questions did not reveal the source of the headlines to prevent bias and to gather more reliable answers. Based on the participants' replies, the participants' emotions could be evaluated while lexical elements that trigger their emotional reactions could be identified.