

Bibliographic note

TORSELLO, Vittoria (2022) *The reproduction of structural power through discourses of delegitimation. The portrayal of the climate crisis in Italian newspapers*, 122 p. Master thesis. Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Supervisor prof. Annamária Neag, Ph.D

Abstract

When experiencing an environmental crisis, legitimacy is necessary. Since the climate crisis is a long-term process that human beings cannot experience directly, journalists must fill this gap by giving an adequate representation of it. In this process, the people who control knowledge and power secure political decisions by legitimising their actions and words in the news media. This study explores the legitimisation discourses, and the sources adopted to refer to the climate crisis in Italian news articles published in 2021. The critical discourse analysis illustrates the mechanisms involved in gaining discursive legitimacy: ideology, hegemony and power. These elements, interacting with each other, help to understand which sources, journalistic practices and discourses achieve dominance in the representation of a crisis. Discursive hegemony in the media is, in fact, able to shift responsibility for the crisis away from the agents involved, protecting their authority. The study, therefore, explores the power that elite actors can have in their relationship with journalists in legitimising their hegemonic position in the media, establishing a consensual perception of their actions and opinions to achieve discursive dominance in the climate crisis.

Keywords

climate crisis, critical discourse analysis, legitimisation debate, authority building, med