

ITALY: WEB TOURISM PROMOTION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in current post-modern societies with a significant share in the GDP. That is why the states, regions and cities are actively trying to break through the changing, unpredictable and highly competitive global tourism market. In this process the *destination image* plays a crucial role. Therefore, economic disciplines as tourism marketing or destination management pay increased attention to the creation of a desirable image in the eyes of the potential investors or tourists. However, the issue also provides a number of interesting stimuli for research in linguistics and communication.

The attention of experts in the field of communication in this context focuses on the presentation of tourist sites in various types of tourist texts from traditional printed texts up to the most advanced forms of communication on the Web. Regarding the latter, tourism was one of the first areas in which the potential of the internet was fully exploited. Nowadays, the Web is an inseparable tool of announcing one's existence (Sfodera, 2011: 17). In comparison to the traditional tourist material, it is a specific communication tool which provides an attractive environment with multiple benefits for communication partners².

Electronic communication in tourism is carried out using various Web tools (blogs, social networks, websites). This study focuses on websites as a specific subcategory of the Web, in particular on the institutional destination websites among the many sites with various communication functions or the issuers. Whereas Italy is one of the traditional tourist destinations worldwide, we chose the institutional websites of several Italian regions. Our aim is to outline and compare the nature of websites, highlight the selected rhetorical strategies and their possible impact on the recipient. Due to the limited scope of the study, we draw attention only to the home pages.

In theory we discuss the issue of destination websites in broader specialized discourse concerning tourist texts in which the information, prescriptive and promotional/persuasive functions are represented. From this perspective, the destination websites are particularly characterized by the information and promotional functions³. They are in the middle between the guidebooks' texts in which the information function dominates and leaflets or brochures with a significant promotional function (Calvi, 2010: 24). The close links between both functions are enabled by

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² The sender can reach a large number of recipients at once who have a lot of available current information at a marginal cost. Additionally, the users may no longer be merely passive recipients of the information but they can actively contribute to development through a medium that supports dialogic and participatory forms of communication.

³ Prescriptive function is weakened in hyper-media environment because the Web gives the choice of information to the user or their order according to the user's own priorities and interests (Askehave, Nielsen, 2005: 126).

specificity of the medium: hypertext organization⁴, multimodality⁵ and interactivity⁶. These specifics are used to fulfil the main communicative intent of the institutional destination websites, which is to present a location to the addressee, to deepen their understanding of it, to catch their attention and to try to persuade them to visit the location or to return there (Antelmi, 2007: 176).

The specific issue of linking tourism and Web communication is expanded upon in several studies, e.g. Paloscia, 2006; Antelmi, 2007; Maci, 2007; Garzone, 2008; Pierini, 2008; Hallett, Kaplan, Weinger, 2010; Dann, 2012; Francesconi, 2014; there is also a work dedicated to Italian tourism portals (Sfodera, 2011) focusing mainly on technical and marketing aspects (number of website visitors, qualitative attributes: findability, accessibility, usability, credibility). The topic catches the attention of professionals, mainly because of changes which happen in communication due to advances in information technologies, development of the tourism market and clients' requirements. The topic is also interesting for its interdisciplinary character in which rhetoric (of advertising texts), information architecture for the website, semiotics and pragmatics are represented⁷.

2. METHODOLOGY

When analyzing the websites, we start from the genre analysis of tourist texts (Antelmi, 2007; Calvi, 2010). The *websites* belong to the macro genre; as for the issuer, the texts are published by official institutions and are attributed, to the higher level of abstraction, to the so-called *institutional genre family*. Websites consist of a home page and the subpages that create the chapters to which in the navigational menu items are linked. *Home pages* are earmarked as a separate genre based on joint communication and pragmatic functions. Their main function is to navigate the user in the structure and contents of websites but also to catch their attention and arouse interest in additional contents (cf. Antelmi, 2007: 218; Janoschka, 2004: 172).

⁴ Hypertext is a characteristic way of organizing the information on the Web. Askehave, Nielsen (2005: 126) talk about "nonlinearity of hypertexts" while e.g. Fritz (1999: 222, in Janoschka, 2004: 172) says that "the structure of hypertext is multi-linear". See also Askehave, Nielsen, 2005: 126.

⁵ The multimodality is perceived as contemporaneous use of different semiotic codes (eg. font, image, sound) and also that a communication channel allows using several semiotic systems, e.g. the visual channel allows perceiving image as well as font. See also Kress/Van Leeuwen, 2001; Van Leeuwen, 2004; Francesconi, 2014.

⁶ Interactivity refers to the ability of the user to communicate with the medium at different levels, whether through selective reading, activation of the hyperlinks, selecting the items in the menu, entering the keywords into corresponding interactive windows or through other forms of active participation.

⁷ The specialized language and communication in tourism have been in the centre of attention since 1990s when the language contribution for communication began to be emphasized in the sphere of professional activity (Dann, 1996). A number of studies have been created since then which deal with the linguistic, communication, terminology or translational aspects. The traditional text forms were focused on for a long time, but more attention is currently given to communication through "new media". As in many other fields, the number of studies comes out of English but intensive research also takes place within the particular national languages: in Spanish e.g. Calvi, 2001, in Italian e.g. Nigro, 2006; Santulli, Antelmi, Held, 2007. We draw from contributions from Czech and Slovak works which concern communication in new media (Petráš, 2004; Polách, 2008; Kořenský, 2008); multimodality (Drugdová, 2008; Suwara, 2012), communication in advertising Vopálenská, 2009; Čmejrková, 2000). The language of tourism has not been elaborated on yet, only few works deal with the topic e.g. Stehlová, 2011.

2.1. In terms of the specifics of the media, the websites and other electronic texts (e.g. chat, mail, blog, forum) belong to the so-called *digital genres*. Two Danish authors Askehave and Nielsen (Askhavé, Nielsen, 2005) point out the need to take into account this parameter when performing analyses in their studies about home pages, where they propose to extend the Swales model of genre analysis (Swales, 1990) by the hypertext dimension. The authors present a two-dimensional model in which they take account of two ways to use digital texts: (i) reading of a traditional linear text with the possibility of identification of some *moves*, and (ii) navigation through the links enabled by a hypertext structure. Particular phases are obligatory or optional, they can be verbal or visual and are used to meet the main communication objective. The identification of the client, indication of contents, and description of the main intent of the websites belong to the compulsory phases of communication. Optional phases include attracting of the interest, reception of the user, demonstration of credibility, promotion of other websites or making contact. Their realization corresponds to certain steady, but not unchanging rules in accordance with the definition of the genre (Bhatia, 2006). In terms of the navigation in the text, again it is necessary to consider linkage to other websites through general and specific *links*. The former are related to the general topics in the menu (*Arte e Cultura*); the latter are more comprehensive and provide further text in order to arouse the curiosity of the recipient and attract them to continue reading (*EUR. Una città nuova dal fascismo agli anni sessanta*).

2.2. In terms of the relationship of communication partners, it is mainly the asymmetrical and formal relationship. In our case, the sender-specialist is the Regional Tourist Office (*assessore regionale per il turismo*) which communicates with the general public. Since we focus on the Italian version of home pages, the recipients are primarily domestic, which means users with certain knowledge of the destination, which requires a more detailed offer. Taking into account the persuasive function of websites and the specifics of the media (interactivity in particular), it is becoming an increasingly apparent trend to move the relationship between communication partners towards more open, informal types of communication. In this respect, websites possess various degrees of dialogicity. Informational websites mostly provide one-sided communication⁸; in this case the website content is generated primarily by its owner and interaction is limited to listing an e-mail address to which users can send their comments or offer to download promotional and informational materials, or to sign up for the *newsletter*. Even greater space on the home pages is dedicated to the increase of dialogic and participatory dimensions that enable services related to Web 2.0⁹. The user can thus actively participate in the creation of content, and interaction is both welcome and desirable. Communities are created in which users share opinions, adventures, experiences, photos

⁸ Compare typology of websites according to Baggio, Covini (2002) which lists *siti di presentazione* (presentation websites), *di vetrina* (information websites), *siti marketing* (marketing websites) and *siti interattivi* (interactive websites).

⁹ Vladimír Polách (2008) says that Web 2.0 also includes a big amount of very popular and developing services and web projects among which he states: (I) websites based on collective cooperation, sharing the information and values, collective creation of the final product (for instance Wikipedia) and websites based on interaction of the individual with the world, community (social) websites (eg. YouTube Facebook, MySpace, blogs).

or videos. On the home pages, the icons for social networks Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and other websites appear.

2.3. One of the significant characteristics of tourist texts is the multimodality. Francesconi (2014: 131) divides multimodal objects into static texts, which means various written/printed texts, e.g. postcards, guide books which have a spatial orientation (*space-based texts*) and dynamic texts such as speech, dance, advertising spots, and films which take place at the time (*time-based text*). Hypertext combines the features of both. Webpages are thus hybrid texts (Francesconi, 2014: 138-139) characterized by a number of codes:

- visual semiotic system (*linguistic devices*: the characters of the written/printed text; *paralinguistic devices*: font – the type, size, etc., the overall structure and design in terms of the content layouts, *extra-linguistic devices*: images, photographs, text colour, links, backgrounds¹⁰;
- auditory semiotic system: spoken language, music, sounds.

Each component of the multimodal structure has its own semantic and cognitive characteristics, as well as semantic potential. Different semantic characteristics of text and image (linearity, verbal text degradability into smaller units, e.g. graphemes, words, sentences, paragraphs), condition very different perceptions of both codes. Verbal text is perceived gradually, while the image is perceived simultaneously. Picture/photo perception may be faster because they are illustrative. Colours support their persuasive potential and are able to leave a more permanent perceptual trail (Francesconi, 2014: 6; Drugdová, 2009).

As for the overall webpage layout, there is a standard configuration of the elements such as the layout of the information units within one to three columns; the arrangement according to the zones with different degrees of importance in relation to the specifics of perception and reading of the text in the web surroundings: (i) the *header* of the website, is the part of the screen where the user pays the most attention – it contains the sender's identification data (often in the form of a logo), a slogan, title, main menu); (ii) the body of the website – the middle part created by contents and (iii) the *footer* thus the bottom of the webpage. Home pages that are a part of the corpus are distributed vertically in most cases.

The basic functions of institutional tourist home pages can be therefore summarized as informative and persuasive ones. These functions are expressed by different linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic devices which coexist in the hypermedia space and form a unit designed for multi-sensory perception (Antelmi, 2007: 159-160).

¹⁰ Colour is one of the most important aspects of any design, including websites. It is possible to create the style of the webpage thanks to the colours, to create emotion, first impression or to compel somebody to take action. Nielsen (2000) says that the first ten seconds are critical for the user. In this time they will decide whether they stay on the website or leave it and the colours play the crucial role. See also Van Leeuwen, 2011.

3. RESULTS

We chose the home pages of the six Italian regions in the Italian language version which are institutional destination websites:

- two regions of northern Italy (Emilia Romagna, Lombardia);
- two regions of central Italy (Lazio, Tuscany);
- two regions of southern Italy (Campania, Calabria).

Our research covers the period November 2014 – March 2015. Methodologically, we proceed from the analysis of the home pages according to Italian linguist Antelmi (Antelmi, 2007: 184-186 and 191) who identifies six categories (called information units) following the work of mentioned Danish authors:

1. *attrazione* (attracting attention);
2. *identità dell'emittente* (identifying sender);
3. *contenuti* (content structure);
4. *contatto e scambio* (establishing contact);
5. *link*;
6. *utility*.

The proportion of individual elements on the webpage is changing which affects their communication and persuasive effect. The goal of the study is not a complex qualitative analysis of the websites. Here we will discuss only the first four categories with the aim to analyze the weight attributed to individual categories and components the regions use for self-presentation, making contact, and catching the interest of the addressee. Although we pay special attention to each category, we take their mutual interdependence and interaction into consideration.

3.1. *Attracting attention*

This category covers a wide range of elements that have the ability to attract the interest of the recipient. In addition to what we have already partially mentioned in section 2.3, there are also other elements which belong there, e.g. various special effects (animations), short movies, real time weather forecast, elements with games or entertainment function etc. From the linguistic devices, they are mainly expressions used for the greeting and also a number of elements typical for the language of advertising, e.g. the using of imperative, address, questions, superlatives, foreign words, repetition of the words and slogans.

In terms of using the visual extra-linguistic elements, the regions have been trying to attract attention, especially through visual stimuli (colours and pictures). The purpose of the photographs is to introduce an elusive product which the tourist destination is and colours in turn help to create the desirable atmosphere. The Calabria, Emilia-Romagna, and Lombardia regions offer a series of several alternating images at the top of the webpage. They offer an attractive tourist view: nature, cities, people doing different activities and culinary delights, as well as the images of works of art (paintings, sculptures); we also recorded trailers of cultural events (e.g. exhibitions, concerts). The home pages of Tuscany and Lazio present a more sophisticated design, images form the

background for the whole website and provide it with depth. The home page of the Calabria region is an exception which uses only a tourist logo with the name of the region in order to draw attention. Among other elements which try to attract attention, we find for instance short videos or interactive maps, e.g. Lazio (*Visite virtuali*), Lombardia (*Visual Lombardia*), Tuscany (series of short videos about the destination), Campania (video *Itinerari*) Calabria (*Video*). We have identified the majority of visual elements of persuasion on the home page of Lazio (7), Calabria (6), Tuscany (6), E-R (5); on the contrary the least of elements were represented on the home page of the Campania region (4) and Lombardy (4) during this period. Music or other sound effects were not active on any home page when it was opened (they will activate only after clicking on the respective videos, e.g. Tuscany, or they are matter of other levels). We will discuss the attention catching language elements which in 3.3.

3.2. Identifying sender

The category of sender identity belongs to the obligatory components of home pages because it is necessary to establish the credibility of the website. Identity is usually expressed through the links like *Chi siamo* 'Who We Are' (Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany), *Dicono di noi* 'About Us' (Calabria), *Stampa/News* 'Press Release/News' (Campania, Calabria) and secondarily through other links *Informazioni Privacy*, *Note legali*, *Contatto* or through the coat of arms of the region (Lombardia) and/or the information about types of the websites, e.g. *Sito ufficiale di informazione turistica* (Emilia-Romagna, Campania). This information can be positioned in various ways – at the top or bottom of the webpage.

Self-identification of the region as a tourist destination is usually highlighted by the region's tourist logo and slogan (elements from 3.1). The logo may be of visual or visual-verbal nature. It is usually placed in the top left corner of the webpage. The sender tries to cover in it the nature of the region as of a tourist destination. We identified it in five cases (Lazio, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Campania, Calabria). In two cases, the logo was accompanied by a slogan (Lazio, Emilia-Romagna).

3.3. Content structure

In the contents category we indicate the structure of website contents and an overview of key information. They usually occur in the form of links in the menu. The links most frequently include:

- i. general information about the region – *Territori* (Lazio), *Località* (Emilia-Romagna);
- ii. practical information – *Cosa fare* 'What to do', *Cosa vedere* 'What to see', *Dove andare* 'Where to go'; *Come raggiungerci* 'How to reach us'; *Dove dormire* 'Where to sleep', *Dove mangiare* 'What to eat';
- iii. the links to the news (*News*), and events (*Eventi*) – *E-R in primo piano* 'E-R from near', Toscana Events;
- iv. types of tourism offered – *Temi vacanze* (Umbria), *Scegli destinazione per ...* 'Choose destination according to ...' (Tuscany), *Da non perdere* 'Do not miss' and *Top Ten*

(Lombardia), *Itinerari* (Emilia-Romagna, Campania), *Idee di viaggi* 'Ideas for trip' (Calabria).

An endeavor to engage the interest of the addressee demonstrates in the wide offer, divided according to types of tourism. In terms of our work, however, we are interested in the language component of this category. Since home pages mostly contain a very short texts (captions, headlines, slogans), we draw attention to the typology of links in the menu which can create the atmosphere of the home page (with respect to the overlapping of the information and persuasive function).

The links with the informative function prevail on the majority of observed webpages and predominantly are of nominal nature, e.g.:

- Campania: *Eventi, Turismo, Beni culturali, Rubriche, News, Contatti, Borghi, Itinerari*;
- Calabria: *Arte e cultura, Enogastronomia, Eventi, Mare e spiagge, Natura e paesaggio, Terme e benessere*;
- Lombardia: *Itinerari, Destinazioni, Blog/Eventi, Speciali, Guide*;
- Tuscany: *Mare, Montagna, Campagna, Terme, Arte*;
- Emilia-Romagna: *Come arrivare, Dove dormire, Località, Eventi, Itinerari*.

More creative captions were only found on the home page of the Lazio region which reflects a greater effort to attract the attention of the recipient, e.g. *Lazio tra mito e futuro* 'Lazio from myth to the present day', *Bellazio, Roma Caput Mundi, LiveInLazio, Passioni di viaggio* 'Passion for travelling', *I fantastici 20 del mese* '20 the most amazing places of this month.'

In order to increase the attractiveness of the webpage, stimulate the addressee and be as close to them as possible, we identified other emphasized language tools on websites to a lesser extent:

- interrogatives: *Lo sapevi che....* (Campania), *Cerchi un aeroporto?* (Emilia-Romagna);
- appeals in the form of an imperative sentence using the second person singular, e.g. *Scopri le visite virtuali* 'Discover the virtual tours' (Lazio), *Cerca* 'Search', *Prenota* 'Order' (Tuscany);
- foreign words, especially Anglicisms: *Top ten, News, Focus on, LiveInLazio, Download, Tuscany Bike Challenge, Tuscany Gay Friendly*;
- qualifying vocabulary, especially adjectives: *Tradizioni millenarie* 'Millennial traditions' (Lombardia);
- multiple repetition of the region name (Lombardy, Tuscany).

3.4. *Establishing contact*

In this category we mostly find the option for downloading the promotional and informational material, e.g. brochures, guidebooks (E-R, Tuscany, Calabria) or sign up for the *newsletter* (E-R, Tuscany, Calabria). The regions take advantage of the Internet as a participatory communication channel – an invitation to contribute or share ideas through the social networks which are available on all home pages: e.g. *Calabria Community 2.0* (Calabria), *Social network* (Campania), *Blog Eventi* (Lombardia). The

difference is only in the form of how website options are pointed out – placing the icons or the formulation of direct appeal.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. *The home page of Lazio*

The home page of Lazio catches attention with its design. It consists of background picture slideshow in which the addressee can vertically browse particular information units. It provides the website with a multilayered effect. The colours make the overall atmosphere – dark blue prevails, supplemented by the green, yellow and red. In the zone of primary attention, there is the logo of the tourist region which includes the text *visitlazio.com* and the slogan *Lazio Eterna Scoperta* ‘Lazio, an Eternal Discovery’ which is a reference to the rich local history associated with the legacy of ancient Rome. The logo consists of four squares where the colours (yellow, blue, red and green) and symbols highlighted represent the most important attributes of the region: sun, sea, archeology and gastronomy. There is the attempt to present the entire region, not only Rome, as the capital city. The links have informative and persuasive functions. In the part *Passioni di viaggio* ‘Passion for the travelling’ we find these links: *Parchi e Natura* ‘Parks and nature’, *Cammini di Fede* ‘Faith paths’, *Passioni e sentimento* ‘Passions and feelings’, *Andare per borghi* ‘Discovering villages’, *A piedi e in bici* ‘Walking and cycling’.

This page is well-arranged and engaging; contact with addressee is built on visual means or through the selection of the evaluation vocabulary. The dialogical dimension is not particularly supported by the use of imperative forms. On the home page there are links only to Facebook and Twitter.

4.2. *The home page of Lombardia*

The home page of Lombardia immediately catches attention with strong doublet colours. The deep blue background which provides webpage with depth is supplemented by various shades of green and white letters. The home page is identified only by the coat of arms of the region. The identity is highlighted neither by tourist logo, neither by the slogan. The home page is conceived in a rather minimalist way; the links in the menu are mostly of informative nature. In the zone of primary attention, there are photos of nature and architecture (the images of particular locations), culinary specialties and people enjoying wellness. The photos are accompanied by short texts with the names of locations. In the bottom of the screen there are *Meet in Lombardia* trailers of the congress tourism, *Visual Lombardia – visita la Lombardia a 360°* interactive map and *Muoversi in Lombardia* transport facilities including a local carrier: *Trenord – Realizza il desiderio di scoprire la Lombardia* ‘Trenord – Realize your desire to discover Lombardy’.

4.3. *The home page of the Tuscany*

The home page of the Tuscany region employs dynamizing red and white colours, but their sharp contrast can be disruptive for the user. Informational contents are placed on the background depicting a typical central Italian landscape. The region is defined by the portal address *turismointoscana.it* with text *per un turismo sostenibile*. The sender apparently wants to draw attention to ecological tourism and to the coat of arms of the region. At the top of the webpage the menu is horizontally arranged (3.3) and seven alternating photos are supplemented by brief informative and persuasive texts: *La Via Francigena in Toscana*, *Natura e Sport in vetta sulle montagne della Toscana* 'Nature and sport at the top of the Tuscan mountains' *Gita d'inverno in Toscana: scopri cinque borghi da favola* 'Winter trip to Tuscany: the discovery of five fabulous medieval towns'; *Antiche terme toscane: acque sane amate dagli Etruschi* 'Ancient Tuscan Spa: sacred water beloved by Etruscans', *Nelle terre di Arezzo sulle orme di Piero della Francesca* 'In the footsteps of Piero della Francesca in Arezzo'. Then there is a vertically arranged menu with practical information (*Dove dormire*, *Dove mangiare*, *Come arrivare*, *Travel Planner*, *Mobile App*, *Multimedia*) and links in the middle which encourage the viewer to select a location (*Scegli una località*). It offers different types of tourism through the appeal *Scegli destinazioni per...* 'Select destination for': *Cicloturismo* 'Bicycling tourism', *Via Francigena*, *Artigianato in Toscana* 'Crafts in Tuscany', *Neve in Toscana* 'Snowy Tuscany', *Toscana da cinema* 'Tuscany and Cinematography', *Vacanze per famiglie* 'Family leave', *Toscana Gay Friendly*, *Turismo senza barriere* 'Barrier – free tourism', *Vacanze all'aria aperta* 'Holidays in the open air', *Strade del vino o dell'olio* 'Wine routes for olive oil'.

In the second half of the webpage from left to right: a teaser for archeological tourism, a series of short videos about the region and a *Toscana Events* section can be seen. Underneath, there are trailers for mobile applications, blog (*Diary Toscani*) and social networks (*Fb*, *Twitter*, *Flicker*), an appeal to follow them on social networks also in English (*Scopri gli altri social in inglese*); ask for information (*Talk to Tuscany. Ask a question, here!*), Section *Aspettando la primavera* 'Waiting for spring', *Sulle strade del vino* 'Wine routes'. The effort to make a contact with the addressee is supported by many other appeals in English and also Italian on the website, e.g. *Scegli* 'Choose' *Cerca* 'Search' *Prenota* 'Order', *Trova* 'Find' *Scopri* 'Discover'. In terms of the information links provided, the home page is more complex than the previous websites but it is also less transparent.

4.4. *The home page of Emilia-Romagna*

The home page of Emilia-Romagna engages the addressee's attention with multiple self-identifications. At the top of the webpage on the left in a red square the first two letters of the name of the region E-R have been placed with the text: *Il portale della Regione Emilia-Romagna*; on the right there is a slightly less distinctive coat of arms of the region created by its name itself. Underneath there is a dark blue strip in the background with the tourist logo: the sun in a blue and white graphic design with sun rays emitting from one side, and the name of the region inserted on the other side. It is followed by the text *emiliaromagnaturismo. Sito ufficiale di informazione turistica*. On the right side of the blue strip, there are four links to the most significant tourist products (orange arrows pointing to the links: *Costa Adriatica* 'Adriatic Coast', *Appennino e verde* 'Apennines and Nature', *Città d'arte* 'Cities of Art', *Terme* 'Spas'). The main menu with the information

links follows (see 3.3). In the background at the top of the screen there is a slideshow eliciting the four main items the region offers (sea, greenery, cities, spa) supplemented by other specific forms of tourism (food and wine, motoring, etc.). The photos are accompanied by slogans.

Costa Adriatica. Terra con l'anima (Adriatic coast. Landscape with soul)

Terra del gusto. Sapori e tradizioni (Country of flavors. Flavors and traditions)

Costa Adriatica. Un mare d'incontri (Adriatic coast. A sea of encounters)

Città d'arte. Uno scrigno di culture (Cities of Art. A jewelry box of cultures)

Terme. Il piacere del corpo (Spas. The pleasure of the body)

Mottorvalley. Culla di motori (Mottorvalley. Engine cradle)

Appennino e verde. Avventure nella natura (Apennines and Nature. Outdoor adventures)

Each slogan is accompanied by an invitation to continue to the relevant topic (*Vai alla sezione*). At the end of the first part of the webpage there are icons of particular social networks (Fb, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, blog). In the middle part there are teasers with current events: *Emilia Romagna in primo piano* 'E-R from near' and the activities that the region offers *Da non perdere* 'Do not miss', *Cosa fare* 'What to do', *Da scoprire* 'Discover'. On the rightside there is a column with the weather forecast, a map of the region and a section with suggestions for other activities (*Temi di interesse*).

4.5. The home page of Campania

The home page of Campania catches the addressee's attention through the visual, simple and engaging tourist logo *inCampania* placed on a blue background. Below is a smaller sized text *Sito ufficiale del Turismo e dei Beni Culturali della Regione Campania*. The preposition *in* is highlighted by a different font and red colour (prepositions with the local meaning and as part of the syntagm *essere in* 'to be in', which means 'to be fashionable, be up to date, stylish' with reference to the name of the region). A number of smaller photos are distributed throughout the webpage instead of a single central picture at the top. The white-blue-red combination guarantees cohesion of the text (red and blue colours alternate in titles as well as in strips which graphically separate particular information units). This page is characterized by a relatively low level of interactivity: the headlines and lower level titles *Primo piano*, *Focus*, *Beni Unesco*, *Itinerari*, *Borgi*, *Eventi News*, *Rubriche*, *Sapori* are mostly of an informative function (see 3.3); communication via social networks is limited to Facebook. Multimedia are represented on *YouTube* through the menu and in the form of short engaging videos under the *Itinerari*. Lowercase headlines in short texts might discourage users.

4.6. The home page of Calabria

The home page of Calabria is simple, organized and transparent. The pleasant combination of blue, green and red on a white background immediately catches the user's attention. The color combination is inspired by the logo, which is located in the upper left corner. The name of the region is located below. The logo consists of three circles. The symbolism is based on the historical and cultural context of the region

territory which was a part of *Magna Grecia* in the ancient times. This symbolism is concentrated mainly in the form and in decoration of the logo¹¹. In the zone of primary attention there are photographs of nature in a horizontal slideshow which activates when moving the mouse divides the space into three parts: *Cosa fare* 'What to do', *Servizi* 'Services' and *Web*. The menu is displayed in the form of a list within each of them. A summary of first contact information is readily available.

In the middle of the webpage there are icons *News and Events*, *Calabria Community 2.0*, *Dicono di noi* 'About Us', *Newsletter*. The headlines are supplemented by colours and a distinctive font. At the bottom near the footnotes there are six links in the form of titled photographs: *Scopri la Calabria* 'Discover Calabria', *Idee di viaggio* 'Ideas for trip', *Itinerari*, *TurisCalabria Mobile*, *Video*, *Mappa Interattiva*. Users can also download information and promotional material on the home page. The website uses visual communication; verbal code information is limited only to titles and the three short texts anticipations.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Campania, Lazio and Lombardia homepages are of an informative nature, whilst the homepages of E-R, Tuscany and Calabria regions are of an interactive character. The tendencies that we record in the world of communication are directed precisely to the second type of webpages and thus to higher interactivity. The statements of regional representatives indicate the constantly rising need for direct communication with the addressee.

As for multimodality, the homepages of Calabria, Lazio and Tuscany regions demonstrated the best use of hypermedia environments. Out of all colours, blue and its shades are the most frequently used one. According to various surveys, the blue color belongs among the most popular colours on the Web as it is not only one of the best visible colours, but it also can convey a range of emotions depending on the shades that directly relate with the communication objectives of the destination websites: it can induce peace, escape from everyday worries, add the feeling of attractiveness, confidence, cleanliness and order. As for the styles and fonts, their full potential has not been always used.

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¹¹ The logo is created by three partially overlapping circles decorated with ornamental elements on the edges. The circle symbolizes the armor, and the region's claims of the identity and culture of ancient Greece. The colour and ornaments refer to typical types of tourism: blue embodies relaxation near water, green with symbol of laurel relaxing in nature and red with meandering ornament embodies cultural tourism.

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INTERNET SOURCES

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