LOVECASTING: LOVE IN THE TIME OF THE SNS: STRATEGIES FOR PRESENTING THEMSELVES AND ANALYSIS OF POSSIBLE PARTNERS

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ABSTRACT

According to Luhmann's lesson, love is not a sentiment but a code which has rules through which it is possible to express or deny feelings. To outline the new features it becomes relevant to take into consideration the way the web has changed our being together, so if internet cannot be separated from our daily activities or let's say it is integrated with them (Wellman and Haythornthwaite 2002) if it has modified our way of being together and the relationships in which individuals get involved and live, one may then ask how it has changed the conception of love and its semantics. Besides sites to find a partner are already widespread and well used. What does love become in these social networking sites? How is it lived? To answer these research questions we took as a sample 400 profiles of users subscribing to dating sites. These were 200 men and 200 women between the ages of 18 and 45.

Keywords: social network sites, online communication, social relations, semantics of love, qualitative data analysis.

VIRTUAL TOGETHERNESS BUT ALONE

Wellman and Haythornthwaite in the text *Internet in everyday life* (2002) outline the implications of Internet now having entered in the context of everyday life. If the earlier studies looked at the difference between virtual and real these now (online and offline) the work of these two authors is based instead on the analysis of human experience conceived as a continuum of the merging of activities lived on the screen and not. It is based on the idea that Internet cannot be separated from everyday activities, but moreover it nowadays is integrated with them. This embedded with internet represents the present moment in which it is possible to consider it an instrument collocated in people's lives, in their relationships with their friends, in the sphere of affections, social, working and daily life. A domestication, or an appropriation of the medial technologies into family context. To comprehend the significance of such changes we first look at the idea of Simmel's notion of social circles (1903) before we carry on to Wellman and Horthornthwaite's ideas. We will try to study the structure of social media having as centre community relations. The step from communities to network is obviously not only due to technology and did not take place overnight but was a long process which according to Wellman (2001) grew from the traditional door to door to the type place to place which were made possible by means of transport and urbanization. In the reconstruction of this evolution an important step is the connection which become more and more personalized, person to person then from role to role in which one's attention is taken towards the role one covers in social places which are always more complex. It is possible to see a transformation in how to handle social relationships, that if in the traditional communities they happened among themselves, now due to the transformations mentioned above it is a role delegated to the single individual. According to Wellman (1996) three types

of communitarian relationships emerge from here: those which have a structure characterized by a strong consistency, those in which it is possible to confer a scattered structure and those with a pronged structure: from these derive three types of "ideally typical" models of "networked sociality". In social networks prevails the Individualized networking that doesn't represent a form of disconnection but rather it is thought as another form of connection (Wellman, Quanh-Haase-Boaes, Chen 2002). The individual, to whom is now recognized the possibility to proceed with a personalized networking- establishes a personal and independent browsing of the Web "navigating" in different social networks. The individualized networking outlined by Wellman and Boase (2006) allows the individual to manage both social and distant relationships: the personal networks are scattered: relationships are developed with different people in terms of social background: some social ties are strong, but many others are weak, which allow access to new and different resources (….); relationships are always more specialized according to the different roles that an individual covers. The individualized networked person finds Internet , which is always more mobile and personal, a support to the independent management of the social networks scattered everywhere. New forms of community, new technological assets delineate a new type of user, from the use of the tools to the being together. Bakardjeva (2003) uses the expression virtual togetherness to express the existence of a new way of being together that goes beyond the concept of community. By using this expression the scholar gives the idea of the complexity of the forms of communication allowed by the Internet and delivers a solution to the old mass media versus personal media dichotomy, distinguishing two ways to communicate that on the Internet are meant as a continuum: the way of using it and the community. The first represents that form of social use of the web that doesn't expect the presence of the other and the participation of the user, elements that are necessary instead in the community. The elements mentioned above all mark the passage to the web 2.0 meant as social and active, opening the path to new ways of understanding the audience, the interconnected public.

These changes in the way of creating and managing the relationships also come with consequences: they make us be together in a different way than before. According to what McLuhan taught us (1964) the media expands our senses and in doing so it demands a different participation depending if they are hot or cold, and however, when technology widens one of our senses a new cultural transport happens with the same speed in which the new technology becomes internalized (McLuhan, 1962). The result, nowadays, of such extension is what Bolter and Grusin (1999) describe as hyper-remediation, meaning a definition of the self whose main quality is not much the fact of being immersed, but rather to be interrelated or connected. The hyper mediated self is a network of affiliations which are in constant change. Concerning what the web "does" to us, probably, is valid the same theory that Debord (1967) gave about a performance: a performance is not an ensemble of images, but a social connection between people linked by images. It doesn't come as a surprise that what Turkle (2011) supports, that nowadays we rely on the web to defend ourselves from loneliness, also when we use it to control the amount of our connections. Technology allows us to communicate easily whenever we want and to let us be free whenever we like. Turkle believes that people want both to be together and also to have a personal attachment to the web, despite favoring a cyber-intimacy which fosters itself from the connection with the online contacts and produces a mirror effect of cyber-loneliness in front of the populated physical space. Therefore technology redesigns the landscape of the emotional life giving us the multi-lifing or the existential mix, born from the mobile technology that allows us to enter into the virtual world with fluidity and while it is moving. Technology guarantees the expression of emotions while they are being created, in their development, returning them so

that there can be a full understanding only after they have been communicated. In the moment in which you answer the question "What are you thinking about" and it comes with an emoji put to express how you feel, you are showing what is felt before actually feeling it, subordinating the consciousness of what you feel to comments from others. Once again, technology is not in itself the cause of this new way of relating with our emotions and with the others, but definitely it makes it more simple. Having to be always connected does not seem to be a problem or a disease, but a compliance to what technology allows us to do (Turkle, 2011). If technology keeps together the relationships when we are far from home for work or study, if the many Apps that have radically transformed the mobile phones help us live a distant love relationship, why should they not help us find it? To make us feel less alone? Finding each other individually (Bauman, 2008) we live distant love relationships in the chaotic world of the affections (Beck, Beck- Gernsheim, 2011).

TOWARDS A NEW LOVE SEMANTICS

By remembering and having as a guide Luhmann's lesson (1982) we understand love not as a feeling, but as a communication code. In addition, the considerations by the scholar of Luneburgo are supported by the theory that the literary idealistic writings, which idealized the concept of love do not choose their dominating themes and thoughts by chance, but rather, they react, time after time, to what is their society and to their tendencies to change (1982). In fact in his analysis Luhmann takes into consideration the novels of the 1600s and 1700s, two distinct centuries, and he does it to show how suddenly the reactions to the same problem receive different answers during the two centuries The semantics of love reconnects the different reactions of the same problem to one only system. The semantics of love offers to each and every one of us, even though in different centuries, the words and the feelings that would want to be expressed. This makes possible a flexible behavior, that does not consist of a code from which the behavior is oriented, but rather to consider the partner and the story of the system of interaction (Luhmann, 1982). It is possible to hypothesis a first thought on "love" as a medium, relating it to the cultural transformations of the social structure, the diffusion of the web 2.0 which changes the perception of the individual, the social relationships, the concept of community. If the changes made by the social media are this deep and cover the current social structure it is not surprising that they can affect love that is a form of communication generated by symbols. The semantics of love, according to Luhmann, can give us access to the understanding of the relationship between the means of communication and the social structure. This happens because love does not have points of reference in the psychic system, but it does in the social. Luhmann therefore tells us that until love was seen as ideal, the man had to be represented through reason: to then change according to the transformations in society. It is necessary to ask ourselves, and this is our research question, how love can transform itself and its meaning as code, when the possibilities of the individual grow staggeringly and the means of communication increase the possibility to communicate. Can social medias and their social implications redesign the ways to understand love and answer to its needs?

AN ANALYSIS OF LOVECASTING

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Dating online first transfers on the pc and on a *mobile* the practice of finding a partner. According to some articles, published on the web we can recognize:

- *speed dating* that differently from the traditional it is practiced in the communities and on the websites that make available videochat platforms, through which the users can meet and talk with the help of webcams. The traditional form of speed dating consists in an event properly created where there is the possibility to get to know and talk to somebody even only for a few minutes, after which it is possible to change interlocutor and start a new meeting process;
- *the mobile speed dating* represents the mobile evolution of the traditional speed dating;
- *the localized mobile dating* is the mobile version of the online dating, using the GPS on the devices it is possible to track the person;
- *the casual dating* represents the most random way to search for a partner. It facilitates the meeting between the two people looking for an adventure that can be limited to pure enjoyment;
- *the slow dating* is the polar opposite of the speed dating, where differently from before there are no time limits in which to meet the person;
- *the casual dating* represents a quick and targeted flirting technique, where the meeting of the two people is finalized to a physical thing.

From the point of view of this research, the dating sites are considered as a community in which its practice is oriented to a purpose. This means that together with communities of practice, they are composed by groups of people that share and interest for something, the search for a partner. However, despite the structure that welcomes the individuals that are part of such community is permanent, the people that occasionally populate it are destined to leave the moment when they reach their goal of finding a partner.

In the technological world they take us back to the *repositories*, the archives, in the modalities of interaction, but they work as *social networks*, however with some exceptions. Where there is:

- a user profile in which apart from having the information about himself, it is possible to add information about "what you are looking for", such as the characteristics/requirements of the partner;
- *friends* as an imaginary *audience*. you acquire new friendships, often individuals who were strangers before, keeping in mind the idea that the connected audience represents a resource and what is projected about oneself on the site can become useful to achieve the goal;
- the conversations: not only as a way to comment freely and sharing things with your friends but in a private way of talking about oneself one to one in a chat.

Accessing these websites means entering in another world for the researcher, with the purpose to rebuild ways of interaction and culture of the "natives" that populate it. The ethnographic method seems to be the most suitable one: it is composed by two research strategies: the *non participative observation* and the participative observation (Gobo, 2008). In order to enter into this territory it was necessary to create a profile, a *fake,* to access and consequently to interact with the users. By creating this fake profile it was necessary to fill in different spaces, both to present oneself and to fill in the characteristics of the desired partner. The spaces to fill in are represented from the socio-demographic differences and those related to the characteristics acquired, such as: 1) physical: weight, height, color of the eyes and the hair; 2) culture: music, cinema, books, sport activities, interests. Finally, it is possible to insert one's own pictures and it is possible to fill in a space in the form of a free comment dedicated to "who am I" and to "what am I looking for". Filling these fields, apart from

creating a full form about themselves, are needed to optimize subsequently one's own and the others' research. The system allows to do researches with filters, offering a selection list through which it is possible to select both the physical and the cultural characteristics.

The research followed a dual path distinguished by gender. By creating two profiles, one male and the other female, were unable to access to different environments. Within the two environments were applied both observation: nonpartecicant and participant. Research has stopped the stage desk. At a first stage the adopted research strategy was the non participative observation where the researcher observes its subjects with a "distance" without interacting with them. This technique has allowed to analyze the profiles of the users. Only after it was chosen to carry on the participative observation, through which it is possible to establish a direct relationship with the other users. This second step of the research consented the dialogue, therefore the analysis of the conversations. When online, only after a few minutes, through the alert operated by the system, you are contacted by other users that with a brief message that is usually "hello, what are you doing?", or " I am Name" o "Hello, nice to meet you", " Hello I visited your profile, I would like to meet and get to know you", ask to interact.

In this first moment the attention is devoted only to the two *dating online websites,* leading, first of all, to an exploration of what is there, that can be compared to a wandering around in an unknown place, with one's own notebook. From this first impact and reading of "who am I" and "what am I looking for" emerges the idea that there is are differences of gender and generations in understanding what love is and how to achieve it.

PROFILING THE USERS

The first step of this research consisted in analyzing the presentation profiles of 400 users aged between 18 and 45. The profiles were selected dividing the number according to the gender, 200 men and 200 women, and subsequently identifying within the group two under-groups: 100 between 18 and 32 years old and 100 between 32 to 45 years old. The profiles were chosen according to what the system notified on who had connected in the twenty four hours previous to the survey. Of these 400 subscribers, most of them stated that they were single or however not engaged in any love relationship. Besides the breakdown by gender, it was decided to divide evenly profiles for geographical areas that divide Italy. The decision to select profiles from the eighteen years depends on the coincidence of this age with becoming older. The limit laid down in the 45 years depend on data provided by the National Statistics Italian indicating that the majority of separated and divorced has between 35 and 44 years (31.3%), to 45 years should be resumed the search for a new life.

The majority of the single were men aged between 18 and 32 (56,3%) and those between 33 and 45 years old who were engaged or married, despite being connected online (77.3%). Among the women stood out the group aged between 33 and 45 who were separate or divorced (65,2%). A second important information were the qualifications: whereas for the adults prevailed a graduate and post-graduate education (respectively 56, 7% and 32% on the total for gender), for the young this information is often left out. Therefore, age becomes a discriminating factor also in the importance given to this type of information, in fact the most completed profiles, from the point of view of basic information (socio-demographic changes) are those of the adults. To fill in almost completely the personal details form are both women and men, aged between 33 and 45, describing themselves with all the information required from the system of the site. An explanation of what has just been told is to be found in the

yon age of the other group of users, in fact if one looks at their current occupational field, without any gender divisions, most of them declare that they are university students. Furthermore, it needs to be considered that while someone "grows" information related to their qualification, the professional role, the salary start having a fundamental role also in the research of a stable relationship. A man and a woman with "experience" have acknowledged that their own lifestyle can become an obstacle or a point of contact to maintain a relationship. But who are these individuals? How do they present themselves? what are they looking for?

The "young" girls

The narration of oneself happens using the first person singular, in fact the "am" of the verb to be is found 96 times in the text. This group identifies itself as "girls" and not "women", it is meaningful the fact that the word woman is in the text only once. Despite this group includes profiles of female gender between the ages of 18 and 32 they see themselves as being girls, not even young women. The identification of the qualitative characteristics associated to them defining themselves can be traced back reconstructing the sentences they gave[1]. There is who presents themselves as "a simple girl", "sweet, nice, happy", "a very special little person". Who instead describes herself as "extrovert", "freaked out", "bothersome", "wild", "crazy". It fluctuates between two stereotypes: the angel of the hearth and the bad girl. Nonetheless, among the descriptions that mark the positive values the adjective "sweet" stands out, on the other hand "acid" , as though it was a pot of yogurt. What has made the sweet acid? They say that " they are tired of finding superficial men". Therefore, one must ask the reason why these websites do exist. There is who writes she is there to "make friends", " to chat", " to look for a very special friend". The type of desired relationship is well explained, meaning a "serious relationship" with a "person that makes me laugh". The expression " a serious relationship" often recurs as further proof that the device used, the dating site, what is looked for is not a one night stand "I'm not looking for one night stands, don't be so fastidious" one of them tells. Even, a 25 year old girl expresses herself explaining that she is looking for a "soul mate". It is interesting to notice that how in the section " what am I looking for" the word that occurs more often is not man but " person". The difference is not so little, person is found 70 times whereas man 15. Reconstructing the context in which there are inserted two words it is possible to notice how they are used with different meanings, referring to ideas and descriptions of different partners. When the noun man is used it comes with adjectives such as "true", "charismatic", "decisive", "rich", "perfect", the "one of my life". Instead, when the noun "person" is used the semantic world to to which the adjective refers to is marked as less strong. The person is "intelligent", "sensible", "serene", "reserved", "simple", "cool", someone who always "is himself" "that lives passionately", "that has principles", "with whom to spend the rest of the life". The person that is being looked for is never an adult man, in the indications given about the age range it must be a person of the same age, or at the most five or seven years older. But is all of this enough to find love? Actually, although being young women, love seems to be a quiet protagonist of their research, an abstract noun. "Love is a strange thing". You don't look for love, it is the relationship or the story to be the reason of the research.

The "demanding" women
Who are these women? They tell us themselves. They are "curious", "demanding", "brilliant", "direct", "sociable", "difficult", "creative", "trusted", "serious", "make

proposals". It is suddenly recognizable that it is a range made of adult individuals, which age range is between 33 and 45, the adjectives that are used to describe themselves belong to a more rational, cognitive sphere differently from the "girls". The difference is also the appearance of full shapes, of the negation "not". The background of having already lived sentimental experiences comes out strongly "I am not looking for a one night stand" and mainly it has to be a man that "does not live with his mother", "I don't want to be the second mother". The reconstruction of the content for the grammatical particle "not" gives the idea of the reasons about previous relationships that can lead to failure. They are closed relationships due to the inability to ask forgiveness from men, because they behaved badly and so the important thing is not to "make mistakes with me", "little princes or little men are not allowed" "I am not looking for sleeping partners", "I am not interested in army guys, or career men", and then there are also the economic reasons, "I do not want to be maintained and I don't maintain others, difficulties tied to the perception of oneself. "do not contact me if you do not love yourself" that bring these women to explain things clearly immediately" who does not love himself, cannot love somebody else". Even though of them state that "I am not looking for the moon" it is clear that their past comes out strongly and that influences on the requests explained in the "what i am looking for" section. All of this brings them to say that they want a "man with the capital M", "a man with balls"," a serious man", "mature" aged between "42 and 55". Despite the disappointments you make them feel, they continue to look for "love with a capital A" because "love is an extraordinary emotion, "love changes life shockingly".

"I am" a boy

A group of males between the ages of 18 and 32 declare they participate in online dating to "make friends" "to find a person who wants me" "a nice girl" "somebody". The girl they are looking for is described as "warm and sunny" and "sweet". However we may note immediately that the term "woman" is used more often than "girl", this might be due to the age range of the people who they are looking for, in fact there is a variation that goes from 25 to 45 so not a person of the same age, this is why the word woman is used more frequently than the word girl. In the analysis of the section "what I am looking for" the woman is described as "interesting" "simple" "who knows how to understand me" "who is at my level" "who is able to conquer me" To describe themselves they use the verb "to be" which appears in this group more than in others, these males "are" many things (the verb "to be" appears 106 times): "sweet", "very romantic" "cheerful", "likeable", "polite", "sociable", "proud", "serious" "with my head on my shoulders" "reliable". They are also "willing to listen to others" "reliable". They are also "vegetarians by choice", "passionate for wines and spirits" a "musician". In these descriptions of themselves, this group use their passions and their hobbies, the way they use their free time. They fill in this field with more information compared to that of the others, giving not only a description of their character but also opening a window on the way they spend their days. They give us a picture of their daily activities. All this should move them towards finding love, because "it is necessary at least to find a love story before dying", "a serious love". Therefore the intentions appear good.

The "true" men

The presentation of oneself appears in the first person, so in the whole forms the present indicative of the verb to be "I am" appears 59 times. One discovers that all these men are "simple people" "I'm a sensitive and sweet man" "Sociable and kind" "true and proud of my imperfections." Next to a person who describes himself as "a common guy, sociable and

intelligent" there are those who take advantage of this space almost like a twitter to get stuck into a homely marketing for himself. Now someone describes themselves as "good and evil", "everything and the opposite of everything" "I am nobody but nobody will ever be like me". Not far from those who show a lively pride in themselves one also finds those who play the card of modesty and of being awkward "I've never been able to describe myself well" "I'm a person of few words" and then there are those who ask to meet face to face and finally those who confess "I am waiting for somebody who loves me".

Among these men there are those who are looking for a woman, a partner, a flirt, a friendship, an exchange of words, a chat, and then there are those who are confused, those who candidly confess "I'm not looking for anything I already have everything" but who continue to stay there online. "What am I looking for? Absolutely nothing, I want peace and tranquility" There are the undecided "I'm looking and I'm not looking, I want and I don't want, I'd like". There are those who openly declare to want a woman and they describe her as "a serious and amusing girl", "intelligent, sweet and down to earth", "a woman for a serious affair", "someone who will make me feel good". There are those who are looking for a woman and have very clear ideas on what they want, in fact next to the concordances for "I look for" if they enter those for "looking fo" it is possible to reconstruct the profile of the ideal candidate. It is important to know that the that the word "I look" occurs 31 times in the corpus and "looking" 22 times. The sought after woman is always younger, keeping in mind that the target taken into consideration is composed of men between the ages of 33 and 45, the ideal partner is 10 or 15 years younger than the male, "I'm looking for a woman between 22 and 26". There are very few cases in which the age range required goes beyond the twenties "I'm looking for a woman between 35 and 45. Filling in the identikit of the ideal partner goes with the messages of presentation and research. The profiles of the possible loved ones are detailed and answer the process of optimization of the insertions. Useful information to find love. However the words "love" and "to love" occur infrequently, the first appears in the text only 6 times and the second only 2. The ability to love is only required on behalf of the woman "a large autonomous woman, enterprising, genuine, serious and able to love", none of the selected subjects attribute it to themselves or state they want "to love" a woman. Devoid of romanticism it is likewise the semantic universe which binds love, furthermore this expression summarizes its use "a beautiful person outwardly and inwardly, tranquil who doesn't have strange theories about love".

LOVECASTERS

Who are lovecasters and what are they looking for? They are for sure people who have learnt to handle the applications of the social network and spend a lot of time on them. They are marketing themselves aiming to find a companion, a friend, a relationship. They are positioning themselves in the complicated and crowded market of love. They are used to defining themselves in the first person and to communicate their needs and their emotions. Today, one is used to define oneself in relation to "mega events". As directors of our existence, we use emotional frames of memory and desire in the same way as more general cultural and social sources to give a form to oneself (Elliot, 2010). This type of experience and the consequent permeation in one's life and therefore in one's biography traces the function of *ipséité* outlined by Ricouer (1990). Ricouer defines this *ipséité* as the narrative identity capable of problematizing the relationship between two different types of self: on one hand the character – which indicates a self that exists in the time and space of a relation. The narrative identity becomes a bridge between *idem* and *ipse:* character and the maintenance of self. Character is therefore the "what of who", it is a sedimentation which however the story

can reopen and lay claim to. This tension is inferred above all in the descriptions of the women between the ages of 33 and 45 that may be summed up in this slogan: what women don't want. They know above all not want they are looking for but what they don't want to find. Next to this there is the naivety or the genuine approach of the girls who describe themselves in an "easy going" way. The males of their same age who tell of their passions, how they spend their time and how they are waiting for a "woman". On the other side we find the delusions of the male adults, who contrary to the females of the same age, have stopped looking. They don't look for anything, it appears they live the present, the space of a relationship without commitment, perhaps on a daily basis but without implications. The character of the lovecasters emerges powerfully through the narration they offer of themselves. Although the age and the sex divide it is also true that dating sites represent for everybody a way of declaring openly and uniquely who one is, what one is looking for, bypassing the initial moments of a relation begun in a traditional way when the time to get to know one another is usually in a bar, having a chat, or during a walk, and then to realize – perhaps – that one has nothing in common and will have to start again. Dating sites are a specialized form of place given to the research for love and they correspond perfectly to the need to optimize time, to the necessity to meet even if one is distant; in a "time without time" and in a "space without space" (Castells, 2002).

LOVE AS A POSITIONING

In the meeting sites relationships are orientated towards a friendship and a meeting with a potential partner. "We are here to make new friendships" and then "we might discover a great love together or simply a friendship". Relationships which become close are aimed at reaching the aims for which the profile was opened: "the beginning of a relationship is only the beginning of deeper knowledge which could lead to a sea of love or a river of trouble."
The aim is not to find lost friends, share files or information but to build new relations. One hardly ever opens a profile using one's real name, one usually opts for a nickname. One's real name like one's real identity will be unveiled later in a relation/communication *one to one*. The photos which are added to complete one's profile can either be true or not, they can be undercover in a hidden area which the user decides who to admit or they can be missing completely and sent by chat later on. From the small group of users analyzed here the need to hide one's identity emerges; this almost takes us back to a communication via computer in the first manner where the creation of another self, an avatar, a pretence of oneself prevailed (Rheingold, 1993; Turkle, 1996). The imagined audience is not authorized to add post on other people's walls or boards, the user doesn't communicate his or her moods, doesn't share them; the users have a page to present themselves and what they are looking for available to them. The activities they can carry out are regulated by the architecture of the system that hosts them. It can receive invitations in chat, it can add photos, it can show the composition of the group of friends, it can block other users, it can dedicate itself to researching the ideal partner and it can court him/her. Most of the users spend their time on these sites checking who is online, reading the profile, peeping at the photos, trying to make contact. The lucky ones are able to activate conversations - always one to one - with several users. Often when one is engaged in various conversations it happens they don't take place instantly, when this occurs and the person one is talking to notices he or she can close the conversation because he/she is annoyed not to be the centre of attention of the person courting. Those who arrive on these sites do so with ease because they are used to trusting the web with the activities of everyday life; mobile connections, then, they guarantee the possibility to cultivate this type of relation. One can download onto the App on one's device and the courtship continues while one is on the move. Dating sites get their strength from socialcasting.

The term socialcasting is used to mean the modality of transmission characteristic of the social web, whose distribution process refers to a community of people who decide autonomously to increase the circulation of something thanks to the opportunity of sharing made possible by the new technological platforms. (Bennato, 2012: 6).

Socialcasting represents the present stage of an itinerary that has seen the media change from electric to electronic and that in their distribution strategies (casting) initially addressed themselves to broad public then to a narrow audience arriving at the web users and finally to the social audience in the habit of sharing and collaborating (Bennato, 2012). The users of dating sites place themselves in circulation and their willingness to take on a sentimental relationship, hoping that being there increases the possibility of a meeting. Love is not an alliance, love is not idealized, love is not a passion. Love seems to be the outcome of research, of connection. Besides, according to the various age and gender groups each person "looks for" something different and fills the research with meaning.

That which here is called "lovecasting" is at the same time a process: the distribution of oneself, almost a positioning and selection carried out and lived through. If the first type of selection - that carried out - concerns the possible ideal candidates, the second - the one that is lived through - it is the one investigated on oneself while the others search for their ideal partner. Lovecasting figures as a marketing activity of oneself and of one's relations, in its first form - that is in this first part of the research - it sees individuals like a brand positioning itself on the market of love. The brand positioning in commercial communication indicates the role a product or a company name is destined to take on in a particular section of the market compared to its competitors. Positioning is the result of three principle elements: the occupied territory, the public it addresses, what it offers the consumer. One needs to be aware that on these dating sites, by taking out a subscription or subscribing to extra services it is possible to access added information. For example, men who wish to know what type of man women are looking for must take out a subscription. We refer to men here as on the sites taken into consideration such services are free for women. Free service- for men- is limited to registration, the creation of the profile and the possibility to access the area "who I am" of the women as well as "what I'm looking for". In other dating sites users can pay the subscription for a service which allows them to be seen/indicated among the first possible options for who in that moment is asking . In the construction of one's own profile not only the "simplicity" and the "honesty" in presenting the product (that is who one is) are necessary but it is also important to make it appetizing for the public. One's own profile, composed of a description, message and photo takes on the characteristics of the packaging of a product and to get a hold on the market it is necessary to create a personal and distinctive image able to be confronted with other competitors in the same space they occupy, and make the difference.

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