

Monitoring the Transition to Parenting: Infertile and Fertile Couples Narrative during Pregnancy

Andrea Smorti*

Department of Psychology, University of Florence, Italy

*Corresponding author:

Andrea Smorti

Department of Psychology, University of Florence, Italy

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Abstract

Pregnancy is complex transition phase for couples particularity in the case they have infertility problems and have made use to conceive to Assisted Reproduction Treatment (ART). This study examines transition to parenthood of women and men during their first pregnancy obtained with ART comparing them with a paired control group of expectant parents with a "normal" pregnancy. A face-to-face semi-structured interview was administered to an sample of 15 Italian expectant couples with a conception with ART and to 25 expectant couples with a normal pregnancy as a control group. The interview, aimed to investigate the story of pregnancy and the wishes and fear for the future (including self-imagine, parents' imagine of child), was done during the fifth month of pregnancy. The text was analysed from a lexical point of view with LIWC software that counts different categories of words (pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, verb, prepositions, articles). The two groups narrated their pregnancy experience according a different language. ART couples's narratives were more socially distributed, more optimistic, more centred on narrating the past with more oppositions in the text, less reflexive and less coherent compared to normal pregnancy couples. Results suggest that physicians and nurses can benefit from considering language infertile couples use to narrate experience during pregnancy because these can serve as a framework to use in monitoring their transition to parenthood and in planning psychological support and health interventions for them.

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Biography

Andrea Smorti has a master degree in Philosophy (University of Florence), a Specialization in Psychology University of Siena) and in Sport Psychology, University of Rome), He was Dean of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Florence and currently is university professor in developmental Psychology in Department of Educational sciences and Psychology - University of Florence

Using a Cultural Psychology stance in the last two decades he has been studying the problem of autobiographical narrative in different personal and social contexts, with particular regard to painful and illness experiences.

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