

## **Parasocial Interaction in Twitter Context**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Internet, being the most significant advent of new technologies, has fundamentally changed the way people interact. The purpose of the Internet goes beyond communication into virtual social spaces or third places. Some of the third places where socialization takes place are chatrooms, social networks and microblogging services. Among the latter, one of the most popular is Twitter, an online microblogging site.

The present study aims to explore the complexities that a computer-mediated, Internet based platform for communication and socialization such as Twitter presents. By problematizing follower- followed asymmetrical parasocial relationship, it is argued that through the use of hashtags and re-tweets, which is intertextual and dialogic. It has mainly been contended Twitter features instantiate Parasocial Interaction Theory, elaborated means being Internet lingo or Netspeak.

In order to explore the Parasocial Interaction Theory and the employment of Internet lingo in Twitter context, a digital corpus of 1000 tweets was built (around 25, 900 words approximately) by taking screenshots of Twitter timeline. In order to carry out the analysis, the sample under scrutiny was tabulated and finally classified according to the categories of analysis. Two criteria have been looked into, Netspeak features elaborated and functions of Twitter features like Hashtag and re-tweet in constructing and maintaining a parasocial interaction. The variables selected within each system have been explored both quantitatively and qualitatively.

As a result of the analysis, it is seen that Twitter context encourages the use of Netspeak features, like abbreviations, acronyms and letter homophones. And features like RT and # serve to carry on the parasocial interaction.