"@" AS A TOOL OF INTERTEXTUALITY IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC SHARINGS OF CYBER DISCOURSE PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

Intertextuality, as stated by to Kristeva (1980, p.36) and Bhatia (2010, p. 392), is "several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and naturalize one another" and so "transforming of the past [texts] into the present". As a critical dimension of discourse analysis, it has been the focus of several studies on textual production-consumption in different discourses, basicly the ones moving on critical discourse analysis theory put by Fairclough (1992). In this regard, cyber discourse is the one that would actually need further attention due to the invented tools (**such as # or @**) used to perform intertextuality. On this basis, the current study specifically followed one of the intertextuality category put by Devitt (1991), referential intertextuality, in order to explore the use of **@** as a tool of intertextuality in referring to prior text in current, in which reference acts as both subject and authority. From this aspect, this study is an attempt to extend the paradigm of Devitt, who actually applied for tax accounting discourse, to the platforms of cyber discourse. Following this paradigm, how @ is used by the platforms' users as a referential marker to point out text-to-text interaction is the main concern of the current study. Following critical discourse analysis, a quantiative content analysis was conducted to the sharings about COVID-19 pandemics in twitter and instagram. The overall findings of the study show that texts about COVID-19 pandemic are re-texted within the texts both as subject and authority in each of the platform (twitter and instagram). However, while @ is most frequently used as intertextual device in instagram posts, the frequency of @ use in twitter is lesser compared to instagram. In general, the referential function of @ embedded in these sharings could be categorised as definition of COVID-19 pandemic, issue management, knowledge dissemination, and reflection of public on the raising issues.

Keywords: Intertextuality, COVID-19 Pandemic, Cyber Discourse, Twitter, Instagram, @