Abstract

Rania M Fawzi

RM Fawzy (2020) Weak #Preemies are #MIRACLES #FIGHTERS: Hashtaged Coupling-Metaphors as Instantiations of Bonding Affiliation. CSE, Cairo University

Twitter discourse about preemies encompasses a large scale of communities from the parents of preemies, family members and acquaints who attempt to both share their hard experience and give some hope to support other families with the same experience. This paper examined the role performed by Twitter hashtags in forging ambient online networks of hope and support about preemies - a distressing experience for the parents and the families. It investigated how hashtagging the word preemie convokes a potential ambient community that has the same parental experience and uses the same tag. It was found that tweets about preemies align participants with an affiliated community of believers in hope, miracles, and superheroes. The analysis also revealed that hashtags in the context of preemies discharge participants from the position of sufferers and recharge them as supporters and experienced persons who provide advice. The study took the concepts of Coupling (Knight, 2010a, b) and Communing Affiliation (Zappavigna and Martin, 2018) as its theoretical basis. It deployed these concepts to decode the Conceptual Metaphor established in the ambient community of preemies’ families. Keywords: preemies, twitter, hashtags, communing affiliation, coupling, metaphors