

“Shorts Last Sunday, Snow Pants Today”: Delving Into the Information Values of Immigrant and Expatriate Users of Twitter

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*How does the **information and communication technology (ICT)** used by **Canadian immigrant and expatriate** members of **Twitter** interact with the **information values** of community members?*

Purpose

- **Information-centric online communities** are frequent sources for **seeking, sharing** info
- Greater info sharing encouraged when users **share similar information value judgments**
- **Information sharing, ICTs** particularly important for immigrants, expatriates **informational and social support**
- **Further research is needed** into immigrants' ICT use, information value judgments

Methods

1 OBSERVATION

Ethnographic

Unobtrusive

Info Value
Negotiation

Information
Sharing

Boundary
Crossing

Select hashtags and keywords
Guide codebook

#cdnimm

#newtocanada

#welcometocanada

#expats

#newcdns

Significant, relevant keywords

Framing

ONLINE COMMUNITIES

Computer-mediated, social aggregations on the Internet
True, socially-constructed human communities

THEORY OF INFORMATION WORLDS

(Jaeger & Burnett, 2010)

Explicitly multi-levelled theory of communities
Centered around **socially constructed information**

Information Behaviour

“Full spectrum of possible normative [info] behaviour available to [world’s] members” (p. 23)

Information Value

Value judgments placed on info within and across worlds (p. 35)

Boundaries

Places where “info worlds come into contact,” where “information exchange can—but may or may not—take place” (p. 8)

2 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Information Worlds

Info Values

Information
Sharing

Boundaries

536 relevant tweets
Both authors coded

Findings

2 CONTEXTUAL

Shorts last Sunday, snow pants today. [#WelcomeToCanada](#).

- Extremely close relationship between **hashtag** and **user**
- Importance of **following, “belonging”**
- Events, weather

4 SOURCE

These are [#Vancouver](#)’s best (and worst) places to live: [#YVR](#) Magazine

- **Media, government** outlets
- Accounts **mentioned, cited**
- **“Official” sources**

6 TRUTH

...[among the] Top US [#expat](#) [#destinations](#) [was] [#Vancouver](#) [#Canada](#)

- “Facts” but **no clear evidence**
- Often **overlapped context**

1 CULTURAL

Events for [#NewCdns](#): The Immigrant Café: How to research for your small business.

- **Cultural capital** in events, organizations, countries

3 ECONOMIC

[#welcometoCanada](#): Thinking of [#renting](#)? Several types or rental housing exist. [self-link]

- Job, business **marketing**
- Employment, income
- Establish a **relationship**

5 RHETORICAL, IDEOLOGICAL

How is someone born in Canada to a Cuban immigrant father & USA American mother considered ‘natural born citizen’?

- **Emotional** belief, disbelief
- Supporting **political position**
- **Varying** degree of agreement

IMPLICIT vs. EXPLICIT

- Explicit valued, recognized as **immediately important**
- Implicit **still valuable**, but couched **covertly**
- **Implicit** made more use of **platform / ICT features**

Conclusions

- Information of use in daily lives provided **most cultural, contextual, economic value**
- **Clear interactions** with ICT-based features: retweeting, liking, quoting, replying, following
- **Strong role for boundaries** and for **cultural values** (cf. Seraj, 2012)
- Some **establishment of common ground** seen (Ardichvili, 2008)
- Unclear if new knowledge created or new communities emerging (cf. Haythornthwaite, 2006; Worrall, 2015)
- Semi-structured qualitative **interviews** to further explore, detail cases
- Examine **other expat communities** and **platforms** (blogging, forums)