

Parasocial interaction essay



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The concept of parasocial interaction connotes a parasocial interpersonal relationship wherein the mutually between the two communicating forces is vaguely present and composed. Somehow, the sociological perspective towards this concept is a one-sided relationship wherein the individual is greatly intrigued and curious about the persona characteristics, while the other does not know much about the initiation of communication. The best illustration of this concept is the idea of one-sided relationship between celebrities and their fans.

The outburst of parasocial interaction has become most evident during the entry of the twentieth century wherein the social media and networks have greatly revolutionized its linkage, which eventually entail wide parasocial interpersonal relationship between audiences and the prominent media persona. According to the statements of Ruben and Liewrouw (1985), the concept of parasocial interaction is an illusion of face to face interaction; hence, termed as parasocial due to the component of the imagination and a form of self-delusion (p. 136). Discussion

Pioneering of Parasocial Interaction The prominent individual who has first coined the term “ parasocial” was the social scientists who published the 1956 psychiatric academic paper on “ Mass Communication and Para-social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance”, Donald Horton and Richard Wohl. According to the article of Horton and Wohl (1956), parasocial interaction is the formation of compensatory attachments by the socially isolated, the inept, the aged and the invalid, the timid and the rejected (p. 233; cited in Munosov, 2001 p. 328).

Horton and Wohl consider the concept of parasocial interaction as a form of make-believe or a manipulative communication through mass media, such as the fan-celebrity model. The manipulation of interaction through this makes believe fosters a bond of intimacy between television and the star personality, and the social empowerment needs of the audiences or fans.

Development and Application of the Concept The development of parasocial relationship requires constant progress and development, which is usually being based on shared experiences among media personalities.

The feeling of intimacy usually develops among individuals who indulge themselves greatly in media. According to the findings of Norlund (1978), parasocial interaction develop according to the development or changes of the media personality that the audience are interacting with (cited in Lievrouw and Livingstone 2002 p. 170). In analysis of its parasocial interaction use, the attempt to form bonds of intimacy between television personnel and the audience is a type of manipulation to develop a pseudo-community, such as fan's club, etc (Rubin et. al. , 2004 p. 273). Conclusion

In conclusion of the study, the concept of parasocial interaction connotes a pseudo-form of communication that is directed to form bonds of intimacy to the persona being illusioned by the individual. The concept of parasocial interaction can very much be illustrated in the model of celebrity-fan relationship wherein the fan knows and imaginatively interact to their celebrity idols without the knowledge or real-time response of these prominent personalities. The media and the expanding social linkages have created a sphere of parasocial interaction that greatly influenced the activities of society.