

incorporates limited stylistic means to convey her emotions and impressions among which syntactic means such as ecphosis, repetition, enumeration, parallelism, questions-in-the-narrative are prominent.

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HASHTAGS AS A NEW FORM OF INTERTEXTUALITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Intertextuality as a concept, also correlated with intermediality, interdiscursivity, vertical contexts, and manifested through its forms such as quotation, allusion, calque, plagiarism, pastiche or parody, that is by interconnections between similar or related works perceived by an audience or reader of the text [2]. The above mentioned are the classic forms of intertextuality, but with the transition to social media, the interrelation between media messages, such as posts, stories, reels, tweets, etc. the relation is made through hashtags. Hashtags are a unique and modern form of intertextuality and intermediality, acting as both textual connectors and bridges across media formats. Bonilla and Rosa [1, p. 5] argue that hashtags can create intertextual chains by connecting various tweets on related or even different topics, while Zappavigna [3] highlights that hashtags also indicate the presence of other users within a social network.

Hashtags are inherently intertextual, as they bring multiple “texts” (posts, tweets, articles, videos) together through a single thematic label, often producing layered meanings and interrelations. In contrast to traditional forms of intertextuality, like direct quotation or allusion, hashtags connect content across independent posts without requiring a direct or explicit reference to each other.

The comparison between major types of intertextuality and hashtags can be described as follows (see Table 1).

Like literary allusions, hashtags often *point to wider conversations*, events, or cultural symbols, providing context without explicit detail. For instance, *#ThrowbackThursday* (*#TBT*) alludes to nostalgia, shared memories, and past experiences.

Table 1
Differences between the forms of intertextuality

Aspect	Hashtags	Allusions	References	Quotations	Parody
Purpose	To create social threads around topics, often in real-time.	To evoke or hint at another text, or cultural element.	To provide direct acknowledgment of another text or source.	To reproduce another author's exact words, for emphasis or clarification.	To imitate or mock an existing text.
Interactivity	Highly interactive; invites participation from multiple users, forming communal discourse.	Typically passive; the reader interprets based on recognition of the allusion.	Limited interactivity; primarily acknowledges other works but doesn't encourage further interaction.	Not interactive; generally a one-way acknowledgment of another's text.	Interactive in reception, as it relies on the audience's recognition and interpretation.
Media Use	Primarily digital, used across social media platforms.	Found in literature, art, film, music, and other media.	Common in academic, journalistic, and professional writing.	Used widely in literature, academic writing, speeches, and media.	Common in satire, literature, social media, and visual media like film or comics.
Temporal Flexibility	Highly flexible; hashtags evolve quickly and can gain or lose relevance based on current events.	Often timeless but depends on the enduring relevance of the referenced text or concept.	Generally stable; references are direct and less influenced by temporal context.	Stable; quotations are precise reproductions with fixed meaning.	Temporally flexible but often related to current trends or cultural shifts, adapting to maintain relevance.

Hashtags *enable diverse authors to contribute* to and shape a theme collaboratively. This “collaborative text” is unique to digital spaces, as individual contributions collectively build and evolve the hashtag’s meaning over time. For example, hashtags mostly used to describe Christmas time in London: #londonchristmas #christmasinlondon #visitlondon #londonlife #londonchristmaslights #christmaslondon #christmaslights #christmastree #prettycitylondon #christmascountdown #londonchristmasdecorations #xmas #festivelondon #timeoutlondon #regentstreet #londonatchristmas #mysecretlondon.

Hashtags evolve *as new meanings and uses emerge*. For example, a hashtag can start with a specific event (#Oscars2016) but may later be used in broader contexts, creating a shifting textual network as users adapt it over time. Users began using it to discuss broader topics in film, such as the history of the Oscars, diversity and representation in Hollywood, and the legacy of certain actors or films. For instance, #OscarsSoWhite became a powerful hashtag to discuss racial underrepresentation after controversy over the lack of diversity in nominations, sparking conversations on systemic bias in the industry.

Hashtags also serve as tools of *intermediality* by connecting content across media formats – text, image, video, audio – and even across different platforms (e.g., from Instagram to Twitter). For example, #Challenge can tie together video challenges on TikTok, image challenges on Instagram, and tweets on Twitter, creating a unified narrative across platforms. By crossing platform boundaries, hashtags often help bridge diverse media ecosystems. The use of hashtags across networks like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube allows users to participate in or witness trends in various forms, showcasing intermedial interplay and creating a cohesive experience across diverse media types.

In these ways, hashtags act as contemporary tools of intertextuality, binding diverse voices and content under a shared linguistic or thematic label, and generating a network of related “texts” that users can explore and contribute to in real time.

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