We define ourselves in terms of social groupings and quickly decide who is part of a group and who is not. This is not only the case in face-to-face interaction, but also on social media like Twitter. Often Twitter users are seen as a large homogenous mass (cf. Macskassy 2012), but that ignores smaller groups and especially in-group, out-group and inter-group behavior. Human cognition is to a large part based on identifying and categorizing things that belong together (Lakoff 1987) which also plays a role when we categorize ourselves in terms of group belonging (Tajfel/Turner 1978).

In our paper we look at tweets by German Twitter users who regularly live tweet during the broadcast of the reality television format *Das Perfekte Dinner*, using the hashtag #dasperfektedinner to understand how users conceptualize group belonging.

*We argue that tweeters start to construct categories of group belonging as soon as they begin participating in the discourse. Our data furthermore suggests that these groups are stable beyond one single episode, which applies not only to the in-group but also the out-group with its ever-changing group members.*

References


