

Title: **GROUP IDENTIFICATION IN AN ONLINE COMMUNITY**

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The realm of Internet gaming is growing. Through larger and larger tournaments, with cash prizes and matches that are commentated much like any sporting event. Labov's (1966) work on social roles shows that language use differs based on where one's role fits. This study builds on previous literature on social roles, and applies it to an Internet gaming community.

There are several Internet forums that discuss the online strategy game Defence of the Ancients (DotA). These forums cover aspects of the game such as tactics, suggestions for improvement, and general discussion. Additionally, audio commentaries of matches are available for listeners to download. These online communities use game and forum-specific abbreviations and technical terms as markers in order to reflect their identification within the group. This paper will examine two different social roles within the DotA community – commentating of online matches and posting in the official forums – and compare the use of group identification markers with each of these social roles.

References:

Labov, W. 1966. The Social Stratification of English in New York City. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

(<http://library.latrobe.edu.au/record=b1335227~S5>)

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Identity, Computer mediated communication

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