

The demise of dialects

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Abstract

While most people are able to communicate in the dialect of their region and understand those who use dialectal features. The amount of active use in daily speech has noticeably decreased in recent years, despite it being an important part of our culture and history. This research tries find out how big of a decrease this actually is, using data from both young and elderly age groups. The results will reveal the extent to which people have decreased the usage of dialectal features. This can hopefully aid in preserving the dialects to prevent them from fading away.

1 Introduction

This research investigates the usage of dialectal features among two different age groups within my region. The usage of speaking in dialect had decreased over the years and this study aims to find out how bad it has decreased.

Preserving and using our local dialect is important to me. The dialect is not just a way to communicate with each other, but it is also part of our heritage, history and identity. Witnessing its decline has intrigued me to research and learn more about the demise.

Understanding this demise can help us see how our way of speaking across generations has changed. By doing this research I hope it contributes to the perseverance of our dialect and gives us an insight in what we need to do to revive the usage.

Based on our expectations, it seems likely that people in the older age group aged fifty to sixty use dialectal features more often than those aged ten to twenty.

2 Related Work

First of all it is important to know the difference between languages and dialects, Cornips (2013) explains, as a linguist, that she perceives no difference between a language and a dialect. They both share core linguistic elements, encompassing sounds, words, sentences, and grammatical rules.

Cornips emphasizes that dialects, which are far from being simpler, can have broad variations in pronunciation compared to standard languages. She draws attention to the regional differences in pronunciation, showcasing that there is linguistic diversity within all dialects Cornips (2013).

Now it's clear what a dialect is we can discuss what others have found in their studies about the demise of dialectal features in language. A study in 1989 by Giesbers and Kroon (2006) shows that when youth use dialect it is often perceived as an expression of 'adolescent bravado'. Basically meaning they are using dialectal expressions for a certain effect rather than using the dialectal system to communicate in normal conversations Giesbers and Kroon (2006). We think that this is still the case in recent years among the youth, using dialect is a way to maybe be perceived older or to get a certain status.

A survey among North Limburg students revealed that, despite being raised by dialect-speaking parents, these individuals rarely dialects in their daily lives. Girls occasionally adopt dialect features, reflecting a complex and changing language environment. Giesbers and Kroon (2006). Moreover, a lot of dialect speakers, even those who were taught in dialect. Shift in their linguistic patterns, switching from fully speaking in dialect to using a mix between dialect and stan-

standard Dutch. Making the boundaries between these two systems a lot thinner, adding to this dialectal features who are to distinct being replaced by standard Dutch due to external factors. Giesbers and Kroon (2006)

This process of replacing distinctive words with their Dutch counterparts seems to be still going on, and it makes a lot of sense. When more and more people speak standard Dutch language, the people that do speak in dialect have to adapt. If we all speak standard Dutch the usage of dialect is irrelevant right? Well maybe it is, the increase of speaking standard Dutch causes the amount of dialect speaking individuals to decrease. In essence, Speaking dialect exclusively is no longer a viable option for those who identify with broader identities like being Dutch, a spouse, a parent, a colleague, a volunteer, or a sports enthusiast. Giesbers and Kroon (2006).

Now we have explained what a dialect is and also shown a study that talks about the disappearance of dialect and the possible causes to this demise. I now want to shed the light on a Belgium article talking about the way they preserve the dialects that rapidly fade away.

The data on traditional dialects are gradually being digitized to make them accessible to both science and the public. As the dialects disappear, they are considered to be heritage, and are attracting more societal interest. The loss of dialects is perceived as a loss of linguistic authenticity in an increasingly globalized world, and the desire to preserve linguistic identity is strong. In response to this interest, Ghent University addressed the matter in 2009 with the launch of the science popularization project, Dialectloket: a new multimedia website focusing on language variation in general and dialects in particular. Professor of Dutch Linguistics Jacques Van Keymeulen leads the project. Van Daele (2016)

3 Data

In this study the data is really important to find out about the trends in the usage of dialectal features among the mentioned age groups ten to twenty and fifty to sixty. These specific age groups were chosen to get a dataset of an elderly and young age group. The independent variable involves these two age categories.

The data will be obtained by using a survey, asking questions about their daily usage of dialectal features. Participants from the two age groups will be selected randomly, ensuring that there is a representative mix of people.

This way of collecting data has multiple limitations. Participants themselves report on their frequency of dialectal feature usage, which may lead to bias. Participants might understate or overstate their usage even if this was done unconsciously.

The second limitation has to do with the random sampling, while random sampling is the best way to get a diverse group of participants. There is still a chance that this may result in a sample group that doesn't represent the entire population. This could have multiple causes sample size being one of them.

Prior to analysing the collected data it will be pre-processed. This involves organizing the survey responses into easy to process data, and ensuring that wrong data will be removed.

Table 1 summarizes the simplified results

Age group	Frequency
10-20	frequency
50-60	frequency

Table 1: This table shows the different age groups and the frequency's .

4 Predicted Results

Based on the literature review and the research framework that we have outlined, we expect there to be a big difference in dialectal features among the two age groups.

Table 2: summarizes the predicted results of the survey

Age groups	frequency of usage dialectal features
10-20	low frequency
50-60	High frequency

Table 2: Predicted results

Discussion :

The predicted results are that the individuals ages 50-60 are likely to use dialectal features more

compared to the individuals aged 10-20. This prediction aligns with the already existing literature spoken about in the literature review.

These results suggest a shift in the utilization of dialectal features and thus the way further generations communicate with each other language wise. Which also means that our culture is changing, as language (dialect) is a big part of our culture.

This change has two sides to it, on one side this shift can spark the means to preservation efforts in order to preserve the dialect. To ensure that further generations also know about our heritage in language. On the other side these results mean that the usage of is decreasing to possibly a point where no one speaks it anymore.

Moreover, these predicted results imply that we need to acknowledge the decline in the usage of dialectal features and acknowledge the fact that the dialect is possibly dying.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed at answering the question how much the usage of dialectal features in different age groups has decreased. We provided related work as a way to empower the predictions of this study. Being motivated by the decrease in my area in active dialectal use in daily speech, particularly among the young and thus my generation. I hope the research helps with the making of preservation strategies. The anticipated results, aligning with the given existing literature, show a big difference in dialectal feature usage between individuals aged 50-60 and those aged 10-20. Signifying a shift in the usage of different language dynamics in further generations.

However, the study is not without its limitations. Potential biases in self-reported data and the usage of random sampling are things that may impact the outcome of the findings. In understanding the expected outcomes, it is important to recognize that the usage of dialectal features is decreasing. And that we should think about ways of preserving the dialects. Doing this we learn more about our culture and identity.

6 Github

Link to github:
<https://github.com/JulianLief/Final>

References

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