Differences in greetings between younger and older individuals

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https://github.com/jitzek1/Final-assignment

Abstract

Differences in greeting habits between age groups have garnered attention in linguistic research. While numerous studies have explored variations in language use based on demographics, gender, and social factors, age-related differences in greetings remain relatively unexplored. This study aims to address this gap by examining the usage of distinct greetings among young and elderly individuals. Using the Groningen Twitter Corpus, Dutch-language tweets are analyzed to investigate whether there is a significant difference in greeting habits between the two age groups.

1 Introduction

- This research focuses on the usage of different greetings among young and elderly individuals. Given the limited scope of this study, it will specifically investigate two distinct greetings—one presumed to be predominantly used by young people and another presumed to be primarily used by older individuals. The aim of this research is to examine whether there is a significant difference in greeting habits between the two age groups and to assess whether the occasional lack of understanding in greetings between young and older individuals is justified. While extensive research has been conducted on variations in language use based on demographics, social factors, and gender, there is limited investigation into age-related differences in language use Barbieri (2008). The hypothesis is that this study will reveal a disparity in greetings between young and elderly individuals, This hypothesis is drawn from personal observations, societal interactions, and the distinctive greeting practices within each age group.

2 Related Work

The first related work is by Gosse Bouma. He conducted research in 2021 on the future of "die" and "dat." His method employed in his study is particularly intriguing for this research. He utilized the Groningen Twitter Corpus to investigate the usage of "die" and "dat." This is noteworthy as it provides a potential avenue to examine the greetings used by young and elderly individuals on Twitter. Further details on this will be expounded upon in the data section Bouma (2021).

In 2008, Federica Barbieri published a study titled "Patterns of Age-Based Linguistic Variation in American English," which unequivocally demonstrated distinctions in language usage between young and elderly individuals. In this research, young individuals are defined as those aged between 15 and 25, while elderly individuals fall within the age range of 35 to 60. The deliberate choice to maintain a 10-year gap between the two groups prevents overlap, enhancing the precision of data collection for this study. The findings affirm the existence of differences in word usage, making it plausible that distinctions also exist in the choice of words used for greetings between these two age groups Barbieri (2008)

In 2006, Jenny Cheshire published a study on "Age and Generation-Specific Use of Language," wherein the focus was on the variation in language use across different generations. The key takeaway from this research is that language usage is not strictly confined to a particular generation. Certain words, such as greetings, can be passed

on to children of a specific generation, leading to actual language evolution. Additionally, it is essential to recognize that older generations can adopt certain words, potentially rendering specific results or studies no longer representative in the future Cheshire (2006).

3 Data

For data collection, we will utilize the Groningen Twitter Corpus, a compilation of Dutch language tweets, enabling targeted searches for specific words such as greetings. This corpus facilitates searches based on birth years found in usernames, which are generally reliable indicators of age groups Bouma (2021).This allows us to selectively analyze the use of greetings within our target demographics. The two age groups under consideration are as follows: 15-25 (young individuals) and 55-65 (older individuals). This demarcation is designed to prevent overlap between the two groups Barbieri (2008).The chosen greetings for analysis are "jo/yo" for young individuals and "hallo" for older individuals. For the young demographic, two variations are considered due to the possible different spellings of the greeting. It is expected that after 2013, there should be a decline in the usage of "jo/yo" greetings among young individuals, as Twitter usage among this demographic decreased after 2013 Bouma (2021). The usage of the greeting "hallo" is anticipated to remain relatively stable for some time, eventually decreasing as the overall popularity of Twitter diminishes over time.
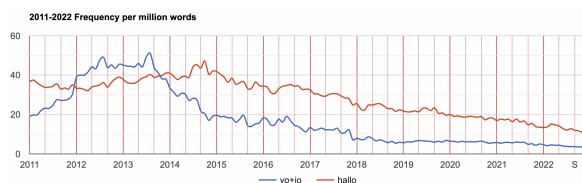

Figure 1: The decrease in the usage of yo/yo and the slow decrease of hallo as explained in data, shown using the corpus.

Pre-processing To ensure the data is clean and focused on relevant content, non-relevant information such as URLs, special characters, and punctuation would be removed.

Retweets may contain duplicated content, potentially skewing the analysis. One approach to handling retweets is to remove them entirely from the dataset, or the original tweet could be retained while discarding the retweet.

Variations in spelling of the greeting "jo/yo" may exist and need to be normalized to ensure consistency in the analysis.

Tweets would be filtered based on the birth years found in user names to separate them into the specified age groups: 15-25 (young individuals) and 55-65 (older individuals), as defined in the study.

4 Predicted Results

Based on the literature, I expect that younger individuals will use "jo/yo" more frequently than "hallo," while older individuals will use "hallo" more often than "jo/yo." This can also be observed in the graph above. Young people have been using Twitter less since 2013, which is evident in the graph (Bouma, 2021). This would suggest a difference in greetings between these two groups. However, this does not automatically mean that this is characteristic of the entire group. Further research would be needed to determine if this is generally done across the entire group. For example, it could be the case that "jo/yo" is used by only one gender, and the same applies to the older group and the word "hallo." This would mean that the word is not used by the entire group or mostly by the group. Barbieri noted that there is little research on age and more on gender, etc. However, this information is necessary to draw conclusions about an entire group. As mentioned earlier, it is not characteristic of an age group if only one gender, for example, uses this word. You can see how the data might have been represented in the table below.

	Younger individuals (25-35)	Older individuals (55-65)
Jo/yo	80%	20%
Hallo	35%	65%

Figure 2: Example of distribution of greetings among young and older individuals

5 Conclusion

However, it is important to note that these results may not necessarily be generalizable to the entire population. Further research is needed to determine if these patterns persist across all demographic factors within each age group. For example, gender differences may influence the usage of

these greetings, as suggested by Barbieri. Additionally, societal and cultural factors may also play a role in shaping greeting practices.

Despite these considerations, this research contributes to our understanding of age-related differences in language use, particularly in the context of greetings. Recognizing these differences can foster better communication and understanding between generations, ultimately enriching social interactions.

Looking ahead, it is recommended to conduct more comprehensive studies encompassing diverse demographic factors to obtain a more nuanced understanding of greeting habits among different age groups. Such research can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of language evolution and societal norms.

References

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