

Social Media and Linguistics: Abstract

Same Letters, Different Generations: Abbreviation Use in Gen Z and Gen Y Digital Discourse

This paper investigates the use of abbreviations in English slang, with a particular focus on differences between Gen Z and Gen Y (Millennial) discourse. It addresses the question of why certain abbreviations are used across both generations, while others appear to be restricted primarily to one of the two. Previous work has failed to adequately address this question, as research on internet slang has largely focused on written computer-mediated communication in general rather than a comparison of different generations. We tackle this gap by analyzing the pragmatic, semantic, and sociolinguistic factors that influence the generation-specific use of selected abbreviations. To do so, we conduct a qualitative discourse analysis of the abbreviations *iykyk, fr, fyi, ily, pls and omg*. Our information is drawn from examples from Instagram posts and comments of two accounts. Each account is a representative for Generation Z and Generation Y. This study contributes to a better understanding of how digital language practices shape contemporary English and how Gen Z and Gen Y negotiate meaning and identity across written communication.

No spoken content

Look for a representative genz influencer

Look for written content through comments

Compare genz and gen alpha

Literature:

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