

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND



**ANALYSING THE PROMOTION OF INDIGENOUS AFRICAN LANGUAGES
THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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DECLARATION

I, Mosibudi Aretha Munyadziwa, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Analysing the Promotion of Indigenous African Languages through Social Networks in South Africa” is my own work in design and execution. All sources consulted and quoted in this study have been acknowledged both in the dissertation and reference list.

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I declare that this dissertation is from the student's own work and citations have been made where other sources of information have been used. The dissertation is therefore submitted with my approval.

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my sweethearts, Ofunwa Makwarela and Matamela Ittai Bulagi. My parents David Munyadziwa and Christerbella Mahlangu, and my aunt, Mahlomola Theresia Mahlangu.

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1Maanda anga a bva kha Mudzimu! Wo amba kha Yesaya (41: 13) wa ri, "U Yahave, Mudzimu wanga, u do mpfara nga tshanda; ndi songo ofha ngauri u do mpfarisa." I am grateful for your grace, mercy and strength you bestowed upon me. *2Nga ngoho vha Murena, dzithendo dzo vha fanela!* Your timing is not like that of a man

To my supervisor, Dr Elliot Mncwango, I would like to convey my heartfelt appreciation. Thank you very much for your guidance, patience, and motivation throughout this journey. *3UNKulunkulu akubusise ngokuchichimayo.*

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Ndi Mukwevho wa Luonde. Nguluvhe-khulu ya Luonde, zwibwamutanda zwi Luvhola. Ndi Mukwevho wa ha Nyakhumba Nyandala. Kuḽu kwangu ndi kwa Luonde tshiḽangani tsha Tshivhodza. Ndi ḽivhadwa heḽi ḽo vhadwa Nzhelele miḽangahumani. Ndi wa ḽhaha dza mapango, dza sa vha dza mapango dzo dzhia dza ha mmeni. Aa!

1 My strength comes from the Lord! You said in Isaiah 41: 13, "For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you."

2 Indeed, you are God and deserve all the glory.

3 May God bless you in abundance

4 Where would I be?

5 May God bless you for me.

6 Sweetheart

ABSTRACT

Languages remain a tool that allows human beings to communicate and provides foundation for a vigorous and multicultural interaction. The introduction of platforms that aid communication across different communities caters for languages to flourish. Coming second to emails as the most popular communication tools, social networks remains the most preferred platforms for both informal and formal communication. In South Africa, social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and other chat-zones, are widely used by speakers of different indigenous African languages. However, it is uncertain if these platforms can be tools of promoting indigenous African languages. Therefore, this study sought to understand the promotion of indigenous African languages on social networks.

South Africa has 11 official languages, however, this study focused on five namely; isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga. The languages selected are spoken in three different provinces. IsiZulu has the most speakers, followed by Sepedi, Xitsonga, siSwati, and Tshivenda, respectively. These languages have been equally promoted by the central government of South Africa and there is need to understand the relationship between social networks and indigenous African languages. This dissertation analysed the promotion of indigenous African languages in South Africa using social networks. This study was conducted using qualitative and quantitative approaches. The first objective assessed the growth of indigenous African languages and their use in social networks. The second objective compared the use of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga languages among each other on the social networks. The third objective investigated the promotion of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga languages through social networks. Both objectives one and two used cross-tabulation while the third objective used thematic analysis. The sample size of 384 respondents was randomly sampled according to their first language and were tendered with a questionnaire. The study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces of South Africa.

The quantitative research findings revealed that people's interaction on social networks has become a vital aspect of corpus development. The qualitative research revealed how the respondents' choice of social networks affects how language is used. While most of the respondents prefer using the English language on social networks, they code mix.

Access to websites that support indigenous African languages is limited due to irrelevant and insufficient content. Languages, including indigenous African ones, have been redefined and new words have been created. Lexicographers, Terminographers and PanSALB should therefore use social networks to for their research purposes.

The study recommends the use of indigenous African languages on social networks and the continuous integration of words developed on social networks on daily use. Furthermore, government should play its role of promoting indigenous African languages.

Keywords: Social networks, indigenous African languages, Lexicographers, metalexigraphy, language redefinition.

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CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Background of the Study

Language allows human beings to communicate in their daily lives by supplying the foundation for a vigorous and multicultural world. As many speech communities incline to different social network services such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and other chat-zones, people use a language. South Africa has several indigenous languages that are spoken by unique communities with the same indigenous origins across the provinces (Buhmann & Trudell, 2007). The promotion of indigenous languages into official status in 1996 resulted in 11 official languages in South Africa. The study sought to analyse the promotion of indigenous African languages using social networks. The focus was on five indigenous languages: isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga.

IsiZulu is the most spoken language in South Africa with 23.8% speakers (Lehohla, 2012). However, languages such as Sepedi, Xitsonga, siSwati, and Tshivenda have the smallest distribution in the country but a significant distribution of speakers in the provinces in which they are concentrated (Ndebele, Finlayson, Lubic, Madadzhe, Ngubane, Nyamende & Tsheole, 2003). South Africans have a right to language and, the responsibility to promote it together with the government (Constitution, 1996). Comparison results of Census 2001 and 2011, show that the chosen indigenous African languages experienced either a positive or negative language growth. That is a consequence of new people using, learning a language or not at all. Tshivenda and Xitsonga each had a growth of +0.1%. Sepedi, isiZulu, and siSwati experienced a negative language growth of -0.3%, -1.1% and -0.2% respectively (Lehohla, 2012).

This study used a different measure of the indigenous African language promotion. Social networks were a tool for indigenous African language promotion including corpus planning and language use. Unlike studies conducted by scholars such as Perez-Baez (2014) that focus on social networks and indigenous language revitalisation, this study sought to understand the relationship between social networks and indigenous African language promotion.

1.2 Problem Statement

The codification of South African indigenous languages is moving slowly, there is not enough reading material for teaching and learning (Sepota & Madadzhe, 2003). Furthermore, South African former marginalised languages lack enough terminologies that allow them to function socially, for example, science and technology, medical and legal fields. Before 1994, missionaries standardised South African indigenous languages (Hill, 2010). However, the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) and its structures surpassed the standardisation, although their accomplishments still have gaps.

The consequence of that left evidence of a shortage of language practitioners in the form of editors, proof-readers, typesetters, interpreters, and even translators. It is for this reason that most South African languages like isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga do not perform all functions that an official language should. Some South African indigenous language speakers have developed negative self-esteem and attitude towards their own languages (Tshigabe, 1998), leading to the slow adaptation of these languages on social networks. The contribution of social networks to the promotion of indigenous African languages remains unknown. With the rapid growth of social networks in developing countries like South Africa, ignoring the role that social networks can play in the promotion of language is a peril. It is for this reason that this study attempts to find other ways which policymakers and PanSALB can use to promote indigenous African languages.

1.3 Motivation for the study

The use of South African indigenous languages on social networks is debatable. It remains to be seen what social networks can do to promote the use of indigenous African languages. Initially, social networks were perceived to be tools that will endanger the growth of indigenous languages. However, Islands like Guernsey in Europe have used them to revitalize indigenous languages (Sallabank, 2010). It is astonishing how the attitude between technology and language promotion has shifted. Social networks are affordable and can be easily used to foster language growth. Accordingly, Blattner and Fiori (2011) suggest that social networks have the potential to encourage positive interaction between language speakers and those trying to learn a language. Moreover,

the emergence of the new media can be beneficial in promoting indigenous African languages.

The other important aspect of language planning assists in selection and promotion of administrative languages, therefore representing a comprehensible effort to influence language use (Robinson, 1988). South Africa's majority languages are African indigenous; however, it is astonishing to see nine languages struggling to uphold their status. The written form of a language may be developed, modified, or standardized using social media but its contribution is not documented. Initially, social networks had their own codification which confused those who were not registered to these platforms. On the contrary, social network users now abide by the rules of sentence construction which is beneficial for their growth.

1.4 Purpose of the study

1.4.1 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to analyse the promotion of indigenous African languages in South Africa using social networks.

1.4.2 Objectives

- i. To assess the growth of indigenous African languages and their use in social networks in South Africa.
- ii. To compare the use of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga languages among each other on the social networks.
- iii. To investigate the promotion of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga languages through social networks.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. Do social networks play a role in the growth and use of indigenous African languages in South Africa?
- ii. How is the use of siSwati, isiZulu, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga different from one another on social networks?

- iii. Can social networks be used as a tool for possible promotion of siSwati, isiZulu, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga?

1.6 Intended Contribution

This study will advance the knowledge of people by offering information on the issues of language promotion, predominately on how social networks can be an essential tool in this process. The study will further give insight into the corpus development of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga in democratic South Africa. Using indigenous African languages in both formal and informal settings will influence their development. This study is relevant because multitudes of people browse social media using their mother tongue, which can help promote the language. How the speakers use the languages can determine the growth or death of those languages.

1.7 Definition of Terms

To simplify the discussion to follow, the definitions of promotion, language (indigenous languages, indigenous African language) and social networks are provided below.

1.7.1 Promotion

- i. Being raised in a position or rank.
- ii. The act of furthering the growth or development.

Pergamit and Veum (1995) affirm the above explanation by stating that, most promotions are simply an upgrade of the current position. When people see or hear the word promotion, they think sales and advertisement, however, in this study, promotion means giving a prominent status, enhancing something or simply elevating the status.

1.7.2 Language

- i. Language allows different people to communicate.
- ii. It also depicts the emotions of a speaker, showing whether the person is angry or happy.

“Language is the most common and reliable way for people to translate their internal thoughts and emotions into a form that others can understand”, (Schwartz, Eichstaedt, Kern, Dziurzynski & Ramones, 2013: 1). The significance of a language cannot be measured. The imagery of dreams becomes vivid through language. Language can be used both consciously and unconsciously. The use of language has developed into a tool that can be used variously:

- i. People communicate over distance using cell-phones,
- ii. Businesses grow, and
- iii. The media depend on the language to send information.

Traditional or indigenous languages refers to the “language spoken uniquely by an indigenous community and/ or with origins in each community or country” (Buhmann & Trudell, 2007: 1). Accordingly, Phillipson (1994) maintains that:

Through language, important means of classification of African people is provided. It benchmarks individuals' sense of identity and membership in the group. It further confirms the history obtained through the knowledge of first speakers of the languages of a group to which one belongs by birth or by upbringing.

1.7.3 Social networks

- i. These are internet-based and mobile services that allow the user to take part in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities (Dewing, 2010). Boyd and Ellison (2007: 1).
- ii. Web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

These social network sites are different, therefore, nature and language used on these connections varies from site to site. Social networks or social media in this study are the new media that permit people to communicate instantly and affordably. Unlike the other

media, social networks allow people to talk bi-directionally and have crossed the age gaps by allowing the old and young to communicate on chatting zones.

1.7.4 Meta-lexicography

- i. It is the theoretical lexicography. It analyses and describes semantic, syntagmatic and pragmatic relationships within the lexicon of a language developing theories of dictionary components and structures (Bergenholtz & Gouws, 2012).

In the context of this study, meta-lexicography is the theoretical process of finding relationships between words used in social networks and their meaning in daily use.

1.8 South African Indigenous African languages

The South African Indigenous African languages are isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho, Sepedi, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, and Khoisan (Sikhweni, 2016). Apartheid was responsible for division within various South African ethnic groups (Murray & Simeon, 2007) however, these groups further divided themselves. South Africa's apartheid system left its own legacy that cannot be erased, for example, Bantu education and Bantustans among others.

IsiZulu is one of the South African indigenous languages that gained their official status in 1996. It is the most frequently spoken language in South African households. Three-quarters of the population in KwaZulu-Natal use this language as their first language (Lehohla, 2012) although it is also used in Gauteng by many people. Consequent to this, the language has evolved, with words borrowed, new sounds and possibly the reduction of clicks (Webb, 2005).

One of the indigenous African languages that have official status in the two states is siSwati. This language is spoken both in South Africa and Eswatini. Lehohla (2012) estimated the number of siSwati speakers to be around 1 194 438. This language is one of the minority languages in South Africa and makes up the third smallest official language. SiSwati is one of the Nguni languages which fall in the same language group as isiZulu, isiXhosa, and isiNdebele (Matfunjwa, 2016). EmaSwati are the speakers of siSwati and carry the Swati culture, norms, and values.

Sepedi is known to be a language that is full of controversies. This language is also known as Sesotho sa Leboa or previously, Northern Sotho. Arguments about this language started when the English version (signed by the president and regarded as the official version) of the final constitution recognised Sepedi, even though the Interim Constitution had designated Sesotho sa Leboa as an official language (Constitutional Review Committee, 2011). According to Mokgokong in Mojela (2009), Sepedi has 27 dialects that are represented in the standardised language, namely: Sekone, Sepedi, Sekopa, Sekgaga (spoken in Ga-Mphahlele) and the dialects spoken in Turfloop and Chuenespoort. Mojela (2009) continues to denote the relegated dialects which are: Seroka, Khelobedu, Sepulana, Setlokwa, Sehananwa, Sekgaga (spoken in Maake) and Sephalaborwa. These dialects are relegated because they have contact with Vatsonga and Vhavenda in the Low-veld and the northern part of Limpopo. Sepedi is spoken by 9.1% of the population of South Africa (Lehohla, 2012).

Takalani (2009) outlines Tshivenda as a language spoken mainly in South Africa that became one of the nine indigenous African languages to gain an official recognition post-apartheid regime. Mathivha (1972: 9) claims that “Tshivenda is the language of the Vhalemba and Vhasenzi invaders who came to the land from Mashonaland.” Tshivenda is a language whose majority speakers are found in Limpopo, Vhembe, and has six dialects, namely: Tshiilafuri which is spoken in Nzhelele, Kutama-Sinthumule region, Tshimaanda in Luonde and Lwamondo, Tshimbedzi in Thengwe and Tshaulu, Tshilembetu in Ha-Mutele, Ha-Gumbu and some parts of Zimbabwe, Tshironga in Vuwani, Tshimbupfe, Tshitungulwane and Tshino, and Tshiphani which was promoted to be the standard dialect and is spoken in Tshivhasa, Mphaphuli, Rambuda, and Khakhu. It is spoken by approximately 2.4% of the population of South Africa (Lehohla, 2012).

According to Makamu (2017), Xitsonga is a South African Bantu language spoken by the Vatsonga people, who are mainly found in South Africa and Southern Mozambique. It is spoken by some 4.5% of the South African population in the eastern Limpopo (Lehohla, 2012). This language has Nguni influences and it is also one of the South African indigenous languages that gained official status in 1996. It has about eleven dialects, namely: Xiluleke, Gwamba, Changana, Hlave, Kande, N'walungu, Xonga, Dzonga, Nkuma, Songa, and Xihlanganu. Xitsonga is one of the minority languages in South Africa but a second spoken language in Limpopo.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study will offer information on the issues of indigenous African language promotion in South Africa, predominately on how social networks can be an essential tool in this process. Furthermore, the study will give a perception of the development of South African indigenous languages, particularly in democratic South Africa. The development of these languages will be determined by their use in formal and informal settings. The study is relevant to the changing times with a host of people streaming on social networks while conversing in their mother tongues which is essential to the promotion of their languages. Multitudes of people are registered on social networks for different purposes, and since the platform permits holding of conversations and sharing of pictures and audios, language is used and therefore the user can determine growth, language shift or language suicide.

1.10 Ethical Consideration

The researcher has read the University Policy and Procedures on research ethics. She understood the content of the policy and procedures for preventing and managing acts of plagiarism. Therefore, this research will divide ethical and safety into two subcategories:

1.10.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is a vital part of the research process. It entails more than obtaining a signature on a questionnaire. The researcher has empowered potential respondents with the knowledge to ensure that they reach an informed decision about whether they want to participate in the research or not.

1.10.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants are important elements of ethical research practice. The researcher assured the participants that the data they are to provide will be untraceable. Therefore, the study adopted codes to hide the identity of the participants.

1.11 Scope and limitation of the study

This study analysed the promotion of indigenous African languages by people using social networks around the localities of South Africa. Their use of language is different depending on the circumstances and settings they find themselves in. While the study attempted to look at the growth of different indigenous African languages, participants that took part in this study have their own views, meaning that the results may be exposed to certain subjectivity.

Furthermore, due to financial and time constraints for the study to be completed, the indigenous African languages were limited to isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga, and the social networks users only. Despite that the researcher used previous work done by other scholars, the research emphasised the use of social networks in promoting Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Sepedi, siSwati, and isiZulu in South Africa.

1.12 Outline of the thesis

Chapter one introduces the study and gives the problem statement. The purpose of the study is then discussed, wherein the objectives that accomplish the aim of the study are shown. Research questions that will answer the objectives are presented and the intended contribution is briefly indicated. Terms are defined, and the status of indigenous African languages is briefly discussed. The methodology to be used in this study is brief and discusses data collection methods. Furthermore, the significance of the study is briefly discussed.

Chapter two reviews the literature that is based on studies of indigenous African language promotion and social networks as a channel of promotion. The literature reviewed is aligned with the objectives.

Chapter three analyses the research methodology, research design, and the sample of the study wherein the population, sampling, and sample of this study is concisely elaborated. Data collection, data collection approach and method, and data analysis are also briefly explained.

Chapter four outlines the procedures for discussing and interpreting data. In this chapter, the data provided by respondents is interpreted and discussed. The conclusion and recommendations are discussed in the last chapter which is chapter five.

1.13 Summary of this chapter

This chapter introduced and indicated the problem statement of the study. The purpose of the study was discussed wherein the objectives that accomplished the aim of the study were shown. The research questions that will answer the objectives were presented. Terms were defined, and the status of indigenous African languages in South Africa was briefly discussed. The methodology used in this study was brief, discussing data collection methods. Furthermore, the significance of the study was briefly discussed. The next chapter will present the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The digital age brought about change in how people communicate and interact. It has transformed human communication system, including many benefits and new concerns associated with these new age media (Pardo et al., 2017; Gervasi, 2005). Using social networks allows language to be used. It is therefore vital that this study analyses the role played by social networks in how people choose a language they use on these platforms. “It is believed that social networking is for the youths” (Hodge, 2006: 06) yet, it can be accessed by any person who can access the internet. When social networks were first appropriated, they were only viewed as tools for socialising (Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley, 2009), however, their growth and popularity interested many scholars to use and research about them (Manca & Raneiri, 2016) alas, limited literature in promotion of indigenous African language using social networks.

“African languages are considered appropriate for low-status spheres and are rarely associated with modern technology” (Webb, 2002: 268). This usually occurs because of the misconception that indigenous African languages are underdeveloped, and their vocabulary is so low that they cannot precisely express technical terms (Gxilishe, 2009). This leaves English as a language whose technical resources can be accessed by people worldwide. South Africa is a country that has diverse languages, although only 11 were upgraded into official status. Be as it may, these languages are used in various social networks, therefore, the growth and language shift should be carefully monitored so that language revitalisation can be assessed. Language shift is a process wherein speakers of a language shift to speaking a completely different language (Mesthrie, 2007). The speakers of indigenous African languages should find it easy to endorse their languages rather than English and other western languages (Webb, 2002).

The preceding chapter focused on the contextualisation of the study. This chapter presents various literature sources that explore indigenous African language promotion, indigenous language revitalisation, language policy, corpus planning and social networks as the instrument for language enhancement. Insufficient literature in this study led to the inclusion of related literature on indigenous language enhancement using social

networks. African indigenous languages' process of word creation is terribly slow, hence the average growth. As Hildebrandt (2004) described, smaller communities of specific languages can enhance and conserve their linguistic features using social networks. Driven by Hildebrandt's observation, the researcher will review the additional existing body of knowledge to acquire how other scholars have alleged and on conceptualised issues relating to language enhancement using social networks. Social networks and social media will be used interchangeably in this study, also the inclusion of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as defined by Freeman and Hasnaoui (2010).

2.2 Theoretical Perception

It is essential to appreciate the theoretical aspects grounded in this study. A discussion on the theoretical framework including the Uses and Gratification and Social Network is below:

2.2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

Jay Blumler and Katz Elihu developed Uses and Gratification Theory from the Functionalist Theory in the 20th century (Severin & Tankard, 1997). This theory's intention is to understand why people seek the media they do and for what use. It explores how people deliberately choose media to fulfil their needs, for example, entertainment, relaxation, or socialising needs. When the audience is gratified, it is a reward for them. Blumler and Katz (1974) claim that this theory became prominent in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This was during the years when researchers realised that Traditional Effects theory did not explain the experience that audiences had with mass media. Although this approach originated in the 1940s, it endured restoration in the 1970s and 1980s, representing the satisfaction of social or psychological needs of individuals (Blumler & Katz, 1974).

Uses and Gratification theorists are disposed to overstate the active and conscious choice of media; instead, people do not participate in choosing media suitable for them. McQuail (1987) states that people's perception can lead to an exaggeration of openness of interpretation, suggesting that audiences, regardless of the content they receive, may obtain any kind of gratification. This notion is conservative because if we continue insinuating that people are always satisfied with any use of media, we might completely adopt a naïve attitude towards what the mass media offer. The emphasis is mostly on the

content and social contexts found in the media. That is why Hobson (1982), claims that this is a reception theory mainly because it focuses on what people see in the media and the meanings they decipher from the media context.

The invention of technology has influenced how people stay connected and seek information (Aggarwal, 2011). People's need to increase awareness and knowledge of what is happening around them controls these human interactions. The cell phones that people buy nowadays have a radio, television, internet, and social networks installed in them, which makes it easy for communication and entertainment purposes. The overturn of the media makes people think they cannot live without their cell phones, which makes them a valuable tool for promoting indigenous African languages.

2.2.2 Social Network Theory

A social network is a set of existing relations at a time, which link human beings (Kuper, 2004). For this link to occur there should be a bigger (network) and a small component (people). A thorough examination of these components simplifies an understanding of these interactions (Kadushin, 2012). Accordingly, Dunn (1983) Social Network theory offers opportunities for bridging gaps between individuals, masses, and categorical unit examination.

Brown was the first scholar to introduce the concept of social network (Freeman, 1979). Brown noted that social relation is shallow and defined only by referencing reciprocal behaviour of society. Furthermore, as much as the social world could influence one's behaviour, their persona can also have an influence (Brown, 1940). While Jakobson and Halle (1956) worked on finding various models for social phenomena that could connect disciplines, they found an organisation to be a consolidating idea. They found that social networks influenced people and that lead to having one or more links in a network (Jakobson & Halle, 1956).

Li and Liu (2017: 1) claim, "varied collection of research traditions has shaped the current state of social network theory." Accordingly, Social Network theory is relevant in various disciplines of studies, from mathematics to anthropology. Centrality is one elementary, but important measure in social network analysis (Freeman, 1979). Furthermore, degree, closeness, betweenness, and interaction with the flow of information suggested measures

to control direct structural centrality (Freeman, 1979). Li and Liu (2017) suggest that these structural centralities aid in choosing opinionated leaders because of their social ties.

There are various classifications used to describe the different networks that individuals have (Wiklund, 2002). However, social networks have been the core of human society since the years of hunters and gatherers (Lee, 1979; Hill et al., 1985). Hunters and gatherers were a primitive nomadic group that obtained their food by hunting, fishing and gathering wild plants (Apicella et al., 2012). These people were connected by their relationship and dependence on one another and that is what created social networks. Kinship and family have always been social networks before tribes, totems, and hierarchy. Additionally, telephones and automobiles started a revolution and became popular in rural areas where there was a great distance between households. The new internet-based media now supplement these traditional social networks (Kadushin, 2012).

2.3 Literature Presentation

2.3.1 Language

Different human perspective creates many concepts definition. Language, like any concept, has various definitions. According to Qui (2014), human beings rely on language to express themselves, communicate with others and know the world. Language has been a crucial tool through which society transmits its knowledge and values from generation to generation (Vygotsky, 1986: 78). Mokgokong (1966: 30) claims that; “a language is a vocabulary and way of using it predominantly in one or more countries: method of expression, words and their use, faculty of speech, person’s style of expressing himself.”

The above definitions of language have some similarities. Language is viewed as a system of signs used to communicate, either alone or with other people. These signs are speech sounds and written signs. This means that communication in any language is likely to occur due to linguistic symbols that function according to rules and conventions. The rules tell us how to develop words from morphemes and they govern every characteristic of language such as phonology and syntax (Katamba, 2004). Furthermore, the above definitions illustrate how language is connected to the psychological processes of understanding. People who have acquired language symbols can encode and decode any language they decide to learn (Sofa et al., 2013). Finally, the definitions merely state

that language allows people to speak different sounds, connect them into words and sentences with meaning for communicating ideas and thoughts.

It is important to incorporate languages used by specific cultural groups because language and culture are intertwined. According to Spolsky (2002) in Buhmann and Trudell (2007: 6), indigenous language refers to “language spoken uniquely by the indigenous community and/or with origins in each community or country.” Unfortunately, in Africa, the growth of indigenous languages is slow. The oppression of African culture and linguistics in South Africa affects their growth profoundly. Regrettably to African language speakers, who are overwhelmingly rich with culture, language and histories that were suppressed under colonialism and the legacy of this inherited into the post-colonial era (Prah, 2007).

2.3.2 Languages of South Africa

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa has recognised 11 languages as equal and supports the concept of multilingualism. According to the 2011 census, isiZulu is the mother tongue of 22.7% of South African population and is most of the South African population. IsiXhosa is spoken by 16%, Afrikaans 13.5%, Sotho sa Leboa at 9.1%, English at 9.6% and Setswana at 8.0%. Sesotho is the mother tongue of 7.6% of South Africans, while the remaining four official languages are spoken by less than 5% of the population each. Moreover, 0.5% of the population indicated that they use sign language to communicate in their homes.

Various features have affected the status of South African indigenous languages. If these aspects are taken into consideration, they can preserve and promote indigenous African languages. The aspects are education, globalisation, media, and language policy. Below is a brief discussion of the mentioned factors.

Education and socioeconomic status are intertwined. The type of education that one receives determines the socio-economic role of the person (Sikhweni, 2016). This is aggravated by the society questioning the language that an “educated” person should use. Consequently, parents send their children to expensive schools where English is offered (Sepota & Madadzhe, 2003). Language maintenance is therefore left to senior citizens whose responsibility is to preserve languages through educating the youth. Education and economic status influence the choice of language.

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa recognises 11 official languages. However, to indicate how its ideology is contradictive, indigenous language speakers always consider English for communication purposes. According to Mda (2000) theoretically, all 11 languages are equal but practically, English and Afrikaans are regarded supreme languages by people who aspire to be successful. Every country has a language policy with guidelines on language development (Sikhweni, 2016). However, as Mda (2000) noted, indigenous African languages still lack the decency of language equality. The constitution may disguise all languages as equal, but the people will adopt a language according to the purpose that languages serve in a country (Mda, 2000). Indigenous African language speakers are expected to switch to other languages to accommodate people of different races. South African indigenous African languages are affected by its language policy. The inequality of these languages deprives the country of accomplishing and promoting unity and respect for all languages.

Globalisation refers to the growing sense of interconnectedness (McGrew, 2000). This poses a threat to indigenous African languages because it requires everyone to learn English (Giddens, 2006). Unfortunately, speakers do not treat these languages as global languages, especially the youth and working class. When they want to learn a language, English becomes their first choice. English is alleged to be a global language, thus a lingua franca used on the internet and most of the media. Indigenous African languages are therefore ignored in favour of a language that supports this alliance. The expectation for unity through globalisation is seen to be affecting and destroying the growth of indigenous African languages in a minute (Sikhweni, 2016).

It is rare to ever find an indigenous African language used in broadcast media unaided by English. According to Sikhweni (2016); South African media such as television do not have the facilities to provide equal coverage for all the languages, therefore, various cultures are mixed together. Media can preserve language; however, it also plays a role in their demise. When a language is given more time in the media, it influences the audience to speak it than a language given less time (Sikhweni, 2016). As a result, most indigenous African languages do not thrive since they are usually not used independently in these medium platforms.

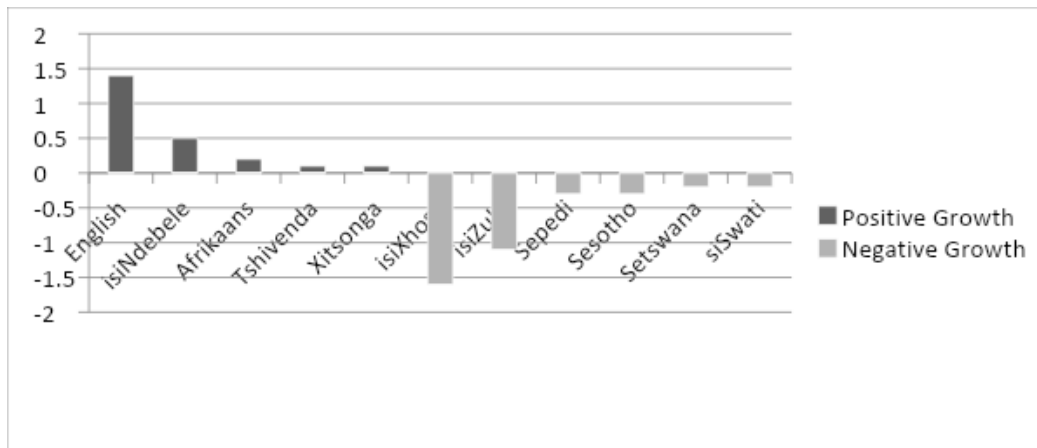


Figure 1: South African language growths between 2001 and 2011 census

Figure 1 represents the phase of language growth between the years 2001 and 2011 in South Africa. According to Lehohla (2012), English had a growth of 1, 4%, isiNdebele 0, 5%, Afrikaans 0, 2%, Tshivenda and Xitsonga 0, 1%. This shows how African indigenous language speakers shifted from their languages to English. The negative growth of the second majority indigenous language in 2011 dropped to -1, 6% followed by isiZulu -1, 1 & Sepedi and Sesotho 0, 3%, lastly Setswana and siSwati 0, 2%. This authenticates that indigenous African language speakers still perceive English as a prestigious language. Even though the constitution supports multilingualism, English is mostly used, making it an elitist language. In South Africa, English is used for government purposes despite the attempt to publish official documents in several indigenous languages (Silva, 1997). English is decidedly used, and yet practical considerations usually result in the choice of English with no struggle or little argument. Silva also states that Black South Africans see English as the language of upward mobility and empowerment. This is because Black South Africans would rather speak English than their mother-tongue even in functions that are attended by the same language speaking people.

2.3.3 Brief communication history

Communication has evolved from how it was some decades ago. The invention of signs by the ancient Greeks to the printing press by the Germans played a role in the evolution of communication (Levinson & Holler, 2014). However, prior to this evolution, human beings interacted. There are stages suggested by Suresh (2003) as a historical survey of communication:

- i. The Age of Speech and Language
- ii. The Age of Writing
- iii. The Age of Printing
- iv. The Mass Communication Age
- v. The Age of Information Revolution

The prehistoric human did not have the ability to talk, so they relied on signs and signals to communicate. Therefore, their communication was limited and determined by instinct. According to Suresh (2003), drum messages, smoke signals, music, and dances were used to communicate.

Storytelling provides a means to document the news, history, character, and identity of a community (Aikat, 2002). Man's first achievement was speech and language and that gave him a prominent position over others. The growth of different languages introduced various expressions that signified variation within communities (Suresh, 2003).

The first art of writing is attested as early as c. 3000 BCE, and is known as Hieroglyphs (Knights, 2009). Writing allowed information to be stored and for traditions to be passed on in writing thus it gave permanence to the spoken language (Suresh, 2003). The invention and manufacturing of paper assisted in safekeeping information and as Suresh (2003) suggests:

China invented the first paper during the first century A.D. The Arab world manufactured paper in the eighth century. Information could be copied much faster and with few mistakes in the fifteenth century when the Gutenberg press was invented. The seventeenth century saw the development of pamphlets and newspapers.

In the 19th century, several media forms determined communication. Print media, especially newspapers, were supplemented by telegraph and telephone. The introduction of radio, film, and television in the 20th century saw the emergence of the Mass Communication era. Currently, human beings are amidst a great information revolution, incorporated multimedia applications are readily available and easy to

administer because of the network that is established from the invention of digital communication technology (Suresh, 2003).

2.3.4 Description and a brief history of social networks

Social networks are a generic term for sites that are used to connect users with similar backgrounds and interests through creating profiles containing pictures and digital audio files (Weinberg, 2009 and Weber, 2000). According to Cranston and Davies (2009), social networking is communication between groups of people mediated at some point by internet technologies. This mediation often takes place through social network sites that are accessed through mobile phones and computers.

These are sites found on the internet where profiles are created, and people connect to create a personal network (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). Therefore, this kind of communication requires one to have a social media profile, internet, computer, or cellular telephone. Social networks are a concept that has various descriptions. It is linked with social structure made of different factors, or communication using the internet. This study takes the view of communication using the internet.

Characteristics of social networks according to Mayfield (2008) include participation, communication, connectedness, community, and openness. Social networks offer interested parties a chance to take part in interactions. Since conversations on social networks are bidirectional, the transmission of information to the audience makes it have a character of communication. According to Stafford et al., (1999), physical presence is ideal in social relations, however, communication technologies have created ties that do not need a face to face communication maintenance. Connectedness is offered to the users through web-links that allow media users to move from one cyberspace to the other.

Social media are means of enhancing communities. That is because; it allows people to form communities quickly and develop friendship effectively with others who share some commonality with them (Mayfield, 2008). Added characteristic of social media is its openness to user feedback and participation by having few barriers to accessing information or making comments (Mayfield, 2008). The openness character is promoted by the availability of easy to use mechanism for creating and sharing content. Figure 2 is a brief social networks emergence to where they are now.

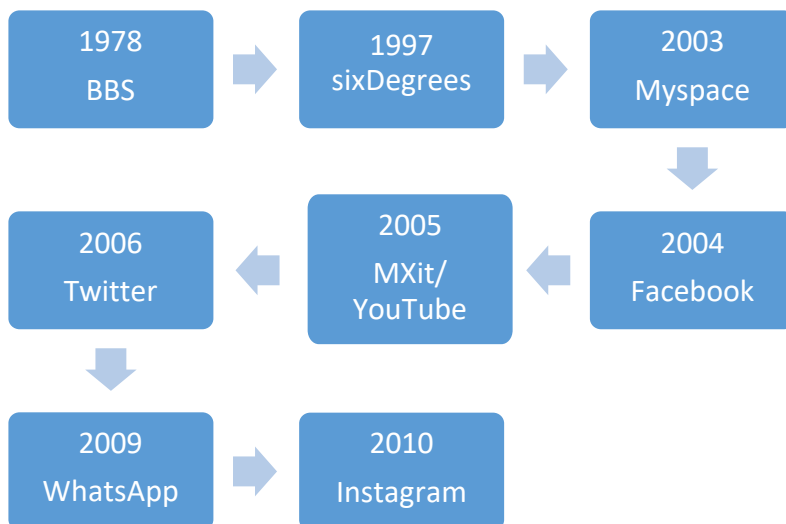


Figure 2: Brief history of social networks

Figure 2 presents the brief history of social networks that are only listed under discussion. Bulletin Board System (BBS) was created in 1978 (Edosomwan et al., 2011). Bulletins were the predecessors of the World Wide Web (www). Users would log into the system to download software, read news or exchange messages with others. The bulletin boards were exchanged via a modem through a telephone line by one person at a time (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

SixDegrees.com was launched in 1997 (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). It allowed people to create profiles as well as a list of their friends. This application promoted itself to be a tool that helps people connect and send messages. Although it attracted millions of users, it failed to sustain itself and closed in the year 2000 (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Most social networks have the same basic features: a personal profile, the ability to add friends, photo albums, and a variety of ways to interact with friends and their content (Weinberg, 2009). During the year 1997 to 2001, a lot of social networks which supported various combination of profile emerged (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011). The emergence boosted and transformed interaction of people and organisations that shared a common interest in edutainment.

Boyd (2006) conducted a study based on a social network called Myspace. This social network was launched in 2003 and became popular with 43.2 million monthly users. Its exclusive feature was the users' ability to customise their profiles to give thorough

information about themselves and their interests. Myspace also has a distinct profile for musical artists where they can download their entire music into mp3 songs (Boyd, 2006).

Facebook is a social network launched in 2004. It was initially launched and restricted for Harvard students only (Facebook, 2004). In 2009, it was graded the most used social network and most visited website in the world (Times, 2010). Facebook may be used by someone who is at least 13 years old (Facebook, 2004).

MXit is one of the first most popular and well-known instant messaging applications from Stellenbosch, South Africa (Dalwai, 2015). Since its initial release in 2005, it became internationally distributed and used in over 120 countries (Dalwai, 2015). Although MXit had reached a total of 35.1 million users in 2011 (Vodacom, 2011), it dropped to 9.5 million users in 2012 (Wilson, 2013). Unlike short message service (SMS) which cost between 70 and 80 South African cents, the cost of MXit was based on the amount of data sent (Vodacom, 2011). Chigona and Chigona (2008) support this by stating that one of the factors that attributed to the rapid growth of MXit was the cost. MXit allows users to send and receive one-on-one text messages and multimedia messages. It also gives access to chat rooms, which is an open service that enables users to chat with strangers. The informal language was used for communication purposes, which included abbreviations, and shortened words (Thomas, 2006).

YouTube was launched in 2005. It is the most popular online video community with over a billion users. People can discover, watch, and share originally created videos (YouTube, 2005). It gives a forum for users to connect, inform and act as a podium for content creators and advertisers. In 2006, this site grew with more than 65 thousand latest videos uploaded daily (YouTube, 2005). It has a total of 76 various languages and is the largest online video destination in the world (YouTube, 2014).

Twitter was launched in 2006, the year in which Facebook opened its door for everyone. It is a micro-blogging site, restricting posts to 140 characters or less. It gained its popularity because of its versatility; users with various preferences could use this facility without a problem (Jasra, 2010).

WhatsApp messenger is accredited to be the most used and widespread (Winkler, 2013). It was launched in 2009 and has over 180 billion active users in over 180 countries that exchange messages and photos (WhatsApp, 2017). WhatsApp started as

an alternative to SMS but now supports sending and receiving of variety of media such as text, photos, documents as well as voice calls that are end-to-end encrypted, meaning that no third party can access them. Although it joined Facebook in 2014 it continues to operate as a separate app focussing on services that work fast and are reliable anywhere in the world (WhatsApp, 2017).

Instagram was first launched in 2010 and had 25 thousand people sign up on the first day. According to Instagram (2014), by the end of 2010, it had over 80 million users with 25 different languages. The original purpose of creating Instagram was for the users to share their life stories through photos (Instagram, 2010). Therefore, the users take photos, enhance them with filtering technology and share them with their followers to comment and like (Lee, Abu-Bakar, Muhammad-Dahri & Sin, 2015). Social networks work differently but the primary motivational factor is to establish and maintain social relationships.

This study was limited to nine social media platforms that are commonly used in South Africa and can directly promote language use by native indigenous language users.

2.3.5 Social networks and language promotion

Social networks have become popular constituents of humans' daily lives especially today. These networks have become significant to human lives because of the provision of interconnectedness and interdependence of culture. In other words, an environment is created wherein people communicate freely regardless of the distance separating them (Sawyer, 2011). Culture and language preserve each other, meaning that they are interdependent on each other. According to Sallabank (2010), social networks may not be enough to maintain indigenous languages, however, social networks may be necessary for revitalising these languages.

On the contrary, Kral (2012) and Cru's (2015) studies report on the success of language promotion in Banda Lampung. The youth of this community used social media to promote their indigenous languages among themselves and everyone from their local community. They would share videos with translated subtitles in the majority language about their culture. Therefore, social networks can assist in maintaining and promoting indigenous languages before they are in danger of extinction.

Language learning through technology has grown. People's ability to express themselves and interact on the internet indicates how language and technology are tied together (Blattener & Fiori, 2011). The emergence of social networks saw a change in language use and its rules, enriching the experience of the speakers and those willing to learn the language. Blattener and Fiori (2011) reiterate that, a little is known about these networks and how they can be beneficial in language development and the performance of the people learning the language. Blattener and Fiori's study aimed at promoting socio-pragmatic development through technology application in a way that encourages interpretation and collaboration.

Socio-pragmatics implies not only on linguistic and lexical knowledge but the ability to know how language is used especially in various situations (Placencia & Reiter, 2005). Social networks offer 'authentic language interaction and the development of socio-pragmatic awareness which is an aspect of language acquisition (Blattener & Fiori, 2011). This awareness is vital for language programs that would want to teach its language to the world. Placencia and Reiter (2005) share sentiments that; "socio-pragmatic awareness via Facebook and other social media platforms may be as important to the students' success in the Trans-Atlantic Project as their linguist reparation". Socio-pragmatics provides authentic sources for language learning.

Patra (2015) suggests that youth are responsible for promoting and preserving their languages. As digital technology advances and people have better access and education to use it, it becomes easier to maintain and contribute to the survival of indigenous language. Patra (2015) discovered that social networks can work as an educational resource and platform to promote indigenous languages, however; social networks that do not have a specific language can restrict the speakers to use one language more often. Furthermore, it was also discovered that language can be revitalised better with technology and collaboration between the speakers.

Most social media networks have over 1.39 billion monthly active users and approximately 890 million daily active users (He, 2016). This emphasises that new ways of presenting information through communication technologies have been established. According to Kennedy, Judd, Churchward, and Gray (2008), these technologies are accessible on most of the cell phones that people use daily. It is studies like these that expose how social networks enable new ways of accessing and

sharing information. Consequently, the new inventions assist in conserving the languages in the web especially with the ever-growing demand of social networking that took the world (Singh, 2010), including South Africa by storm.

Places and spaces of learning influence learning experiences and are understood as a social construct (Benson & Reinders, 2011). Spaces evolve; but the new technology such as the internet, widens the scope of communication. It allows interactions, collaboration and supports irrespective of distance or location. The new media create online narratives and spaces that sanction opportunities to practice the language [spelling and fluency (Lamy & Zourou, 2013)]. Place is a site or network where language, technology, and people are entangled together. Space is an interactional site or language practice place. Lamy and Zourou (2013), and Benson and Reinders (2011) claim that social networking is good for second language learning.

According to Maseko, Sam, Dalvit, Nosilela, and Terzoli (2010), it is alleged that English and other languages from the west make it easy for people around the world to access ICT resources. This is also found in the African fraternities. That is because of the belief that African languages are not well developed and their vocabulary lacks precise meaning of technical terms.

Social network spaces have English as a dominant language, serving approximately 80% of users who do not speak English as their first language (Christison & Murray, 2014). This shows that the varieties of English spoken throughout the world are no longer exclusive to native speakers only. Due to the diversity of social networks and its various purpose of participating, distinction to the language's use is allowed. Lantz-Andersson (2016) reiterated that:

Social networks allow people to play with self-representation and manipulate images and text in an uncontrolled and dynamic situated vernacular writing, therefore, an environment in which people can develop their socio-pragmatic competence by creatively communicating and self-expression before a broader audience.

Social networks provide opportunities for practicing and preparing people for everyday communication.

Omojola (2009) emphasises that the need to integrate indigenous languages with ICT should be a process that is started by the society's initiatives in developing their languages. That could happen if they start by publishing media content using their indigenous languages. Dalvit (2010) affirms that this integration will be the main segment in addressing linguistic inequality between speakers or users of the languages and the majority or dominating language. This will also assist in the creation of technical words that promote African indigenous languages, alienating the past linguistic and social prejudices that weaken the indigenous languages.

According to Bamaturaki (2008), language development occurs through linguistic and cultural diversity. For these developments to occur, the government together with the speakers of the language (Constitution, 1996) should ensure, among others, that the contents of the internet and user correspondence are in indigenous African languages at disposal, this study suggests. However, many in the population of the African continent, according to Bamaturaki (2008), do not access the internet using their indigenous languages, but a language imposed on them by colonialism. This deteriorates their languages while enhancing the colonialists' languages.

Nzimande (2014) alludes that social networking creates friendship between people of diverse cultures and heritage. However, this has made people move and use English when posting on these sites. Although people do not express themselves freely, they still perceive English as more fashionable compared to indigenous African languages. It should be noted that using indigenous African languages on social networks can assist in limiting typographical errors and having a clear conversation. Furthermore, social networks prohibit the corporate promotion of indigenous African language and it raises a question if the latter generation will be able to speak and write these languages proficiently.

Modern technologies have become an even more prominent domain for the promotion of endangered languages worldwide (Cru, 2015). Indigenous languages are increasingly present on the internet and this occurrence benefits possible maintenance and revitalisation particularly among the users of the internet. Eisenlohr (2004) supported that the introduction of indigenous languages on the internet involves not only the actual promotion through functional expansion but also a potential change of their ideological

value. Social networking sites have become an important sphere that produces countless linguistic use which is underpinned by language ideologies worth exploring (Cru, 2015).

Fishman (1991) shows that the actuality of most minority languages is threatened by language shift whereby the speakers of minority languages prefer using the majority languages. However, Wei (2000) is of the view that social networks are recognised as an essential key for language norms development, especially in conflict to the standard or majority norms. de Bot and Stoessel (2002) claims that;

Regardless of a lack of measurable evidence that indicates a direct relationship between offline social network characteristics and language use, there is a vast agreement among researchers that social network plays a role in language shift.

Therefore, language shift boosts bilingualism, with people using the majority language on social network and the minority language in their everyday interactions. Lanza and Svendsen (2007) affirm that social network analysis has an explanatory power when considering bilingual communities.

Contrasting other scholars, Byrne (2013) is of the view that social networks, syntax, and spelling gives a way to decompose bites of hopeful meaning. People do not care about how they write if the meaning is sustained. There are rules of languages, and not biding by them leaves possibilities of rapid language fragmentation. With these online platforms rapidly changing, the language people write is influenced. Thus, the language used is more malleable than formal writing and this is a recipe for a rapid change. Hitherto, people had to be published through traditional avenues for word to trend to the attention of the masses; however, social media is making its presence felt and provides a rich playground for experimenting with developing and subverting a language. Social media introduces new words and the new meaning of the old words which changes how people communicate.

According to de Bot and Stoessel (2002), social networks have a role to play in language shift. This usually occurs when speakers of indigenous languages abandon their language to a language that can be understood nationally and even beyond. However, speakers of indigenous languages should foster social networks to maintain fluency and provide opportunities to pass on the language to others (Sallabank, 2010).

Milroy (2001) affirms that the strong ties of social networks might assist indigenous languages to resist the pressure towards language shift.

2.3.6 Development of indigenous African languages on the corpus system

It is important to note that every country has a policy with guidelines on how to develop its languages. The language policy promotes language to use for promotion purposes. In South Africa, eleven languages are official, therefore are equal. The National Constitution provides policy and institutional framework for the protection, maintenance, and promotion of these languages (Constitution, 1996). However, fulfilling these expectations after 24 years of democracy remains fruitless. South Africans still prefer using English for communication in social and professional settings.

English has become the sole official language enjoyed by the elite and middle class of South Africa. This leaves a little done in promotion of indigenous African languages to better the lives of the illiterate people (Alexander, 2005). According to Mutasa (2003: 6), “The people do not see much value in indigenous African languages, and authorities are reluctant to ensure that these languages assume their rightful role as official communication in public affairs.” South African language policy does not protect its indigenous African languages and that reduces the quality of these languages. This goes unnoticed by the government because indigenous African language speakers are expected to have the ability to switch to any language to accommodate people of other races.

Terminology development has two aspects, namely; corpus planning and status planning. Magagane (2011) distinguishes status planning and corpus planning as follows:

Status planning deals with governmental decisions about languages and its implementation while corpus planning focuses on language standardisation and creation of new words to meet scientific and technical demand on a language or modernisation.

If South Africa had developed its marginalised languages with functional terminologies, it would be equipped with effective communication tools (Alberts, 2010).

Terminology is essential in language promotion and multilingualism. It also contributes to quality of translations, interpreting and language editing. Therefore, ways of corpus planning should not be limited.

Swanepoel and Pieterse (1993) point out that any study of the language situation in South Africa must take into consideration the missionary endeavours, colonialism, and apartheid. These features have politicised the language situation to various degrees. As results of these involvements in South African history, the language issue is potentially extremely dangerous and divisive. The movement of people according to their cultures (Bantustan) has also played an enormous role in the divergence and slow process of language development. For example, black South Africans can boast about how their English is fluent and polished; when a few white South Africans know how to speak formerly marginalised languages. There is no language speaker who does not enjoy public recognition, particularly when it is possible to access public service or conduct public business in their language. It is important that people help each other to develop and promote languages. For a language to be innovated, the education should not be for a small number of people.

Corpus planning is an important section in the development of language as a written and literacy vehicle (Mesthrie, 2006). However, it is a debatable issue in the South African Language Policy's Implementation Plan because it stresses on the development of terminology, language translation, and interpreting and language technology issues. The country needs proficient terminographers who will invent new terminologies since each invention ought to have a term. Therefore, corpus planning is essential for people who need to grow their languages.

Language planning is a decision making linked with language problems. In other words, "language planners are the implementers or the legislators of the policies and they also turn out to be the government" (Fishman, 1974: 15). Fishman (1974) further stipulates that language planning should be implemented differently in relation to a variety of target population and different social settings. Language, to a lot of people, means identification. Therefore, innovations are necessary in this regard. Language has been planned in one way or another with significant success, hence, there should be efficiency.

Eastman (1990) suggests that language planning should provide the government with policy level guidance regarding the choice of official and national languages. Language planning should be a concern of both politicians and sociolinguists, particularly in post-apartheid South Africa. Eastman (1990) further showed the relationship between status and perceived occupational mobility, agreeing that preceding discussion of language planning should be clear on matters adhering to state-level factors in order to maintain its main aim moving forward. Concisely, the study suggests a politically minimal approach to language planning.

Corpus planning is tangled with the codification and standardisation of a language (Madiba, 2000). When a language is codified, its status changes because it receives the attention that leads to people researching further. In this study, Madiba talks about the gaps found in South African indigenous languages that were designated as official. Furthermore, Madiba exposes the challenges faced by language planners who worked in an environment where some languages were treated as secondary tools of communication used by second or third-class citizens.

Moseley (2010) predicts that, out of the 7000 languages in the world today, a few will not survive. Consequently, language planning is essential in maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity. The promotion and threat of a language lies on its speaker relation and uses their surroundings. Corpus planning is a typical part of language planning. It assists in regulating precarious and resurgent languages (Baker & Wright, 2017). People are constantly on the internet and social media; therefore, they can regulate language use. Moreover, the creation of new concepts and terminologies thrives because of science and ICT.

2.3.7 The growth and use of African languages in the media

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa regards all South African languages as equal, hence the official status. However, South African indigenous languages do not have the same privileges as English. Tshigabe (1998) blames the negative attitude the state has on formerly marginalised languages (Tshivenda for instance) instead of promoting them. The focus of Tshigabe's study was mainly on Tshivenda language, but the researcher is of the view that the opinions given can be applied in some other indigenous African languages, especially the minority ones. It is further stated that the

purity of the Tshivenda language is slowly diminishing, leaving the speakers with little pride in their own language. Tshigabe further denotes how Tshivenda is not treated like other languages even though the constitution of the Republic of South Africa recognises all languages as equal. He gives an example of Tshivenda in the media (SABC). Tshivenda language which is usually spoken on Phalaphala FM can be mixed with other languages. However, when one tunes into SA FM, which according to this study should represent South Africa as a whole, one will realise that there are no interviews of people that speak minority languages like Tshivenda or Xitsonga on air.

Malungani (2003) focussed on code-switching in the media at one of the South African radio stations, Munghana Lonene. Code-switching is the ability to switch from one language to the other. Malungani, among others, wanted to find out the reasons people listened to Munghana Lonene FM and how they felt about code-switching during broadcasts. 80% of tertiary qualification holders responded by saying they hardly tune into the station because of the use of English words as if there are no equivalents in Xitsonga (Malungani, 2003: 82). On the other hand, youths with secondary education from Model C schools appreciated the Afternoon Drive Show and responded in English. It was further noted that the language is dynamic, and the advantage of language mixing is that the stations' listenership will increase because code-switching allows for a better understanding of the show.

The groups with little or no education were found to rely on the radio for information and did not understand English fully or even a bit. The respondents were aware of code-switching during programming and were not impressed. They discourage it and clearly share the opinion that all official languages are equal and as such deserve the same status. Malungani (2003: 57) reveals that 71, 1% of the respondents said broadcasters are neglecting the future of their languages. Respondents who do not know English are concerned about misunderstanding some of the words mixed with Xitsonga during broadcasting.

According to Dowling (2013), indigenous African languages are associated with cheap or second-hand products. This fosters the stereotype that black people and African languages have limited opportunities and restricted access to quality goods. Languages are still subdued post-apartheid, with fewer companies opting to advertise their products in indigenous African languages like isiXhosa. English is perceived to be

global and of higher status and dominates advertising discourse even in magazines like Bona. There are instances where indigenous African languages were used in contemporary commercial society to convey humour and cultural knowledge. Therefore, it is not wise to associate indigenous African languages with inferior products. Indigenous African languages if creatively used could influence many domains (Ngwenya, 2011). Languages can be openings through which one can see into others' social identity and view the world differently. Therefore, respect should be awarded to all languages. This will ensure that people appreciate the diversity, leading to reduction or eradication of stereotypes, grooming common identity (Ngwenya, 2011).

Adèniyi and Bello (2006) compared two television stations in Nigeria; African Independent Television (AIT) and Lagos Television (Lagos TV). Unlike Lagos TV, AIT has English programs that outshine indigenous programs with viewers that are not English first speakers. Additionally, English programs flush radio station with no indigenous language identified. Respondents' attitude towards Yoruba language programs vary (Adèniyi and Bello, 2006). The adversities of Nigerian broadcast are the same as that of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). SABC has not lived to the citizen's expectations. Its vision is to become the leading, credible voice and face of the nation and the continent (SABC editorial policy, 2004) but still lacks the voice of indigenous African speakers. Although they introduced the 90% local program quota costing R183m and R29m (Ndedze, 2017), a lot still needs to be done.

In Kenya, only two languages are official, English and Kiswahili (Orao, 2009). Further, Kenya has more than 40 indigenous languages with no official status and despite different conferences in the name of enhancing African languages; these languages are still in the shadow of the language of colonialism and are ignored (Orao, 2009). It is stated in Orao (2009) that in the 1990's when FM was introduced; Kenya saw an era where their languages were used. The initiative was not from the government in pursuit of promoting indigenous languages since these radio stations are private entities. These vernacular radio stations keep increasing the number of listeners. Like people from Kenya, Ghanaians are not fluent in English and feel more confident using their indigenous languages in communication (Kafewo, 2006).

2.4 Summary of this chapter

The literature reviewed studies that were carried out in language, indigenous African languages, and social networks. The study focused on how indigenous African languages can benefit from these new platforms in terms of their use and growth. Uses and Gratification and Social Network Theory were discussed, and the language was briefly analysed. The literature review found that speakers of a language are liable for using and being comfortable using their languages. The next chapter will look at the methodology of this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the literature review. This chapter discusses the data collection process and the research design used in this study. The tools used for data collection and data analysis are discussed. This study opted for mixed methods research design for better understanding on how indigenous African languages can be promoted through social networks. Mixed methods provide the strength that balances the weakness of both qualitative and quantitative research. It allows the researcher to collect and analyse data, integrate the findings, and draw inferences using both qualitative and quantitative method in a single study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

3.2 Research Design

Research designs are conditions for collecting and analysing data, arranged in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in the procedure (Mouton & Marais, 1996; Kothari, 2004). Research design is an intangible structure within which a plan of collecting, measuring and analysing data in research is established. Therefore, the research design should include an outline of piloted research until the data is finally analysed. This study opted for mixed methods, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods. Morse and Richards (2002) affirm that qualitative and quantitative approaches are dissimilar, especially in a way in which knowledge is developed and accessed.

Gravetter and Forzano (2009: 147) describe quantitative research as; “the process of measuring variables for individual participants to obtain scores, usually numerical values that are submitted to statistical analysis for summary and interpretation.” Thus, quantitative research focuses on the numeral side of the research. White (2005: 80) describes qualitative research “as a methodology which deals with data that are principally verbal.” Therefore, qualitative research deals more with people’s perceptions. Consequently, this study used mixed methods to get different views and, therefore, avoid bias. Patton (2001) is adamant that mixed methods strengthen a study through a combination of methods. For this method to work, data should

incorporate both quantitative and qualitative approach. The distinct features tabled below, of both qualitative and quantitative research, were useful to the execution of the research objectives, resulting in a descriptive study with enough data.

Table 1: Characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Qualitative	Quantitative
Focus on understanding and interpreting social interaction	Focuses on testing hypothesis, looking at the cause and effect, as well as making predictions
The type of data collected are words, objects, and images	Collect number and statistics
Specialised findings that are less Generalizable	Usually generalise findings
It is expected for this study to be Subjective	Objectivity in this type of study is usually critical
Researcher's nature of reality is subjective, has many realities	Researcher's nature of reality is objective since it is only solitary
In the final report, a narrative with a contextual description reports and direct quotations from research participants is shown	The final report is statistical with correlation, comparisons of mean and significance of findings

Table 1, as outlined by Johnson and Christensen (2008), Lichtman (2006) and Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) shows that a study using more than one method

has a high chance of uncovering a lot from the topic. Using more than one method assists in avoiding bias in research and attempts to acquire useful answers from the respondents. Research using both qualitative and quantitative approach is not limited. Therefore, this legitimises the use of multiple methods in answering research questions. The structured questionnaire administered, had open and close-ended questions to get both quantitative and qualitative results. Integrating both these approaches was necessary to capture vast views on this study, and how it can be achieved - the numerical value and the attitude of the respondents.

3.2.1 Qualitative method

This research approach in the form of a questionnaire was administered to people from the age of 10 to 50. The respondents had to be speakers of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga, and registered in various social networks that are available in South Africa. The purpose of using a qualitative approach was to gain a detailed understanding of people's knowledge on language use when it comes to social networks. Social networks like Facebook allow people from 10 years of age to be account holders and as speakers of a language, their views are as important. The qualitative approach focuses on understanding a social phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 95) and that is why it was imperative to include it in the study.

Denscombe (2003) argued the benefit of qualitative approach as a prospect of authentic accounts and facts of a phenomenon. In other words, it captures the experiences of the participants by giving views relevant to the study. The study seeks to analyse how social networks can be used to enhance indigenous African languages. Since individuals are active agents in constructing and making sense of the realities that they encounter (Mouton & Marais, 1990), it is important for them to understand this new knowledge, and to comprehend the importance of using indigenous African languages in social networks.

The benefit of using the qualitative approach in this study was that it provided a suitable tool to examine thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) define Thematic Analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Additionally, having a theme as the main key of data analysis helps in reaching practical results in the study. Pavlenko (2007) states that the coding of

narratives is the main analytical step in thematic analysis. That occurs through the emergence of themes, trends, patterns or conceptual categories. In this study, themes were derived from the responses given by the respondents. This offered flexibility, made analysis easier and ensured the quality of the data.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), Thematic Analysis offers the benefit of flexibility which provides a rich and detailed complex account of data. However, Antaki, Billig, Edwards, and Potter (2002) indicate that not having adequate knowledge about Thematic Analysis could limit its flexibility, leaving some of the characters not noticed in some instances. Distinguishing this method assist the users of Thematic Analysis to make active choices about a form of analysis engaged in. This study chose Thematic Analysis because of its flexible nature and the ability to focus on the patterning of meaning across participants.

3.2.2 Quantitative method

The quantitative research approach for the study employed a survey. Three hundred and eighty-four speakers of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga who are registered on various social networks completed the survey. According to Leedy and Ormond (2004), survey research is used for:

Acquiring information about one or more groups of people, perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes or previous experiences by asking respondents' questions and tabulating their answers.

Quantitative questionnaire suited this study because it sought to analyse how indigenous African languages are used in social networks and if they can be promoted.

A questionnaire surveyed 384 respondents. The aim was to find out the perception they had on their languages, and how social networks can assist in promoting them. The researchers used quantitative questionnaire and in having an insight into a huge population through a small sample of that population. Quantitative analysis is a simple and affordable method compared to other methods, and it can compare and analyse various variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2004; Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).

Descriptive analysis transforms raw data into a form that makes it easier to understand, interpret and re-adjust to generate descriptive information (Zikmund, 2003). Best and Kahn (2003) concur that descriptive analysis limits generalisation to a group of individuals observed. Furthermore, Best and Kahn (2003) clarify what is provided in the descriptive analysis of data:

- i. Firstly, estimations and summaries are arranged in tables and graphs to meet objectives.
- ii. Information about the variability or uncertainty in the data.
- iii. Suggestions for unexpected patterns and observations that need to be considered when doing a formal analysis

Descriptive analysis has a character of visualising data and helps describe the elementary feature of data in the study. That is, describing only what the data shows (Best & Kahn, 2003). In this study, graphs were used to indicate descriptive data from the questionnaire.

3.3 Target Population

This study's population included speakers of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga who are registered on social networks. The target population is the totality of participants and events of the study with which the research problem is concerned (Strydom, 2005; Gravetter & Forzano, 2003). The speakers of these languages were relevant and convenient for this study. They speak indigenous African languages, they are registered on social networks and most likely to use indigenous languages in these platforms. The respondents were suitable in answering if indigenous African languages are used in social networks, and how these new media can be used in retaining the integrity of the language. Furthermore, the distinction of who among the respondents used their languages on social networks was justified. The distinctiveness of these languages assisted this study in getting different views on indigenous African languages and their use on social networks.

3.4 Sampling procedure

According to Kumar (2000: 219) sample is a “definite plan for obtaining a tester from a given population.” Brynard and Hanekom (2005: 43) claim that “population sampling simplifies the research, saves time and cuts cost.” In other words, studying the entire population would be difficult, time-consuming and expensive. Studying each person registered on social networks rather than everyone who knew what social network is; was manageable, time and cost effective. This research sample consisted of one hundred and fifty speakers of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga, who are registered on social networks. That is only 20% of respondents per language.

3.4.1 Sampling Technique

The sample of this research was the speakers of isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda and Xitsonga languages. These languages have diverse cultures and values. The study sample of 384 respondents was selected using random sampling according to their first languages. Although these languages are equal, the distribution is not the same. Therefore, the sample size of a language was represented according to how they are distributed in the province. This study used Krejcie and Morgan’s 1970 method to determine the sample language percentage of which, isiZulu 55%, Sepedi 22%, siSwati 6 % Tshivenda 6%, and Xitsonga 11%.

One advantage of using random sampling is its accurate representation of the larger population. The study used the technique to sample different users of social networks. The population of this study was from KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces of South Africa. From the respondents, 50.8% were females and 49.2% were males between the ages of 10 and 50 years took part. The study sampled people of different abilities if they are registered in social networks and speakers of the chosen indigenous African languages.

3.5 Data Collection

Data collection is the accurate and organised collection of relevant information to the study problem using interviews among other methods (Burns and Grove, 1998). Accordingly, data collection is the precise and systematic collection of information that is relevant to the purpose, objectives, questions or hypothesis of the study (Burns and

Grove, 2003). This study sought to establish whether speakers of indigenous African languages use their languages in various social networks. The study opted for mixed methods; that is the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches. A standard and self-administered questionnaire was used for both these approaches. It was available online and completed by respondents between the age of 10 and 50 years who speak isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda and Xitsonga, and are registered on social networks.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The study sample of 384 was randomly selected to fill in a standard questionnaire. The questionnaire had 23 questions that were open and close-ended. The main themes probed:

- i. Whether the respondents understood the perception of social networks and their functions.
- ii. The benefits and challenges they come across when using indigenous African languages on social networks.
- iii. If they think indigenous African languages growth has been redefined by social networks.

The standard questionnaire enclosed a cover letter that defined the purposes of both the questionnaire and the respondent. The respondents were chosen according to the indigenous African language they speak and their subscription to any social network. It took five weeks for all the questionnaires to be filled. All 384 questionnaires that were sent out through email or face to face interactions were completed and analysed. For ensure responses, the researcher sent a reminder email for respondents to return the completed questionnaire. However, questionnaires that were filled through face to face interaction were filled on the spot and returned. This study had three enumerators who aided in the distribution of questionnaires. They were clearly told about the targeted population and the sampling technique to be used in the process. The enumerators were also advised to always carry stationery to ensure that respondents were able to complete the questionnaire. There was no specific targeted number on the gender of the respondents.

Motivated by the primary objective of this study, the respondents were encouraged to use any language of their choice. This provision helped them to communicate freely without distorting their views. Since the questionnaire was not only meant for formerly educated people, the enumerators assisted with translating and simplifying technical terms. The enumerators were based in the three provinces of South Africa i.e. Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and KwaZulu-Natal and were able to reach all speakers of indigenous African languages mentioned above.

3.5.2 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires

All data collection methods have advantages and disadvantages. Questionnaires assist the research in collecting a large amount of data feasible (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994; Babbie & Mouton, 2004). However, there is little control over how the questionnaire is completed when the researcher is absent (Cloke et al., 2004). Respondents may choose to limit their answers, leaving a few questionnaires considered good. Therefore, interactions between the researcher and the respondents are significant. It is always necessary to get different views from people when conducting research. This study managed to accomplish this by having 384 respondents to fill in the questionnaire via email and face to face interactions. Relevant responses were reached, and all 384 questionnaires were completed. Although questionnaires are affordable, they are effective in capturing a huge amount of data. In this study, the costs were not significantly reduced because of printing costs.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is conducted to reduce, organize and give meaning to data (Burns & Grove, 2009). Moreover, data collection involves the interpretation of which analysis takes place along the process (Liamputtong, 2010). Since this study used mixed methods descriptive analysis and themes were used to analyse data.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used as a tool for data analysis to run cross tabs, frequencies, and descriptive statistics. Themes were derived from responses from the questionnaire to paint a broader picture. According to Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2005) descriptive method of data analysis “provides a very useful initial examination of the data”. Accordingly, themes are also important because visual data, answers relating to variable measured are explained and

can control the phenomenon, therefore a compilation of all relevant notes of respondents are included (Leedy, 2001; Liamputtong, 2010).

The questionnaire was divided into sections. The first section contained demographic background that included age, gender, and education. The next section was about social networks and languages as well as social networks and language growth. Another section was on themes, on how respondents understand social networks and their functions emerged. Then there was a section on challenges and benefits they come across when using a specific language on social networks as well as if they think social networks have redefined the growth of indigenous African languages.

Cross-tabulation of key variables such as language and background of the respondents were analysed. Upon presentation of the results, diagrams, descriptive themes were applied and they included pie charts and tables which show variations and conclusions.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Study

Validity is the extent to which a task measures what it claims to measure (Gregory, 1992). Reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and therefore yield consistent results (Thanasegaran, n.d). These concepts are concerned with issues to do with evidence, objectivity, truth, actuality, and reason (Winter, 2000). Including validity and reliability is of importance in ensuring frank and replicable research even though a measure is not a requisite in an occurrence of a study. Gregory (1992) illuminates the distinctions between validity and reliability by saying:

A testing instrument can reliably measure something other than the supposed construct, but an unreliable measure cannot be valid. In other words, an instrument must be reliable even though a reliable instrument may not necessarily be valid. This means that reliability on its own cannot be a satisfactory condition for validity.

Studies should emerge and be applied over diverse samples and the collection of validity proof should cover identified areas. To ensure that the study was reliable and valid the methodology used was documented. Using mixed methods assisted in

ensuring the validity and reliability of the study by comparing the results of a quantitative and qualitative approach.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration is understood as rules for distinguishing between right and wrong, a code of professional conduct that distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. McDaniel and Gates (2001: 66) state that “a high standard of ethics and professionalism go hand in hand.” In this research, ethical consideration was divided into two sub-categories as follows below:

3.8.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is one of the important parts of the research process. During data collection, the researcher educated the potential respondents to ensure that they reach an informed decision on whether they wanted to participate in the research or not. They were not pressured into giving consent and were made aware of what their participation entailed. Some questionnaires were emailed, while others were distributed through interactions with the researcher and enumerators. The researcher together with the enumerators assisted the respondents where they did not understand. It helped in reducing the stress, embarrassment or hostile situations that would arise through completing the questionnaire.

3.8.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants are essential elements of ethical research practice. The respondents in this research were assured that the data they provided cannot be traced back to them. That was achieved through changing reported characteristics of participants such as gender or occupations to conceal their identities instead of their names and identity numbers and thereby maintaining the confidentiality of participants.

3.9 Summary of this chapter

Although there were challenges during data collection, the researcher stuck to the designed plan to execute the research. This chapter focused on the research design and methods used to collect data, the target population, and sample procedures. Mixed

method was described and justified. The selection of data collection techniques was elaborated together with validity and reliability as well as the ethical consideration. The benefits and challenges of questionnaires as tools for collecting data were discussed. The following chapter deals with representation and interpretation as well as the research findings obtained from the data that were collected.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data which the researcher collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire that was used in this study led to distinct use of languages on social networks. It included; people's perceptions, challenges and benefits, and redefinition of indigenous African languages on social networks in South Africa. The results were analysed through descriptive and thematic analysis. However, the possibility of missed information during data collection may be discovered during data analysis. Data analysis refers to the systematic gathering, ordering and examining observation to answer a question, search for patterns or otherwise interpret some research findings (Dunn, 2013; Tracy & Blackwell, 2007).

4.2 Data management and analysis

Whyte and Tedds (2011) claim that data management is a process which oversees that data is efficient during a research project. "It involves the breaking up of the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships" (Mouton, 2002: 108). Hitherto analysis, all fieldwork should be completed. Data were collected from speakers of indigenous African languages – isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal provinces, South Africa. Although the questionnaire was written in English, respondents had a choice to use either their mother tongue or English. Where they did not understand, the enumerators were there to give guidance. This study used a structured questionnaire. During the data collection process, most respondents did not understand technical terms like lexicographers, PanSALB, word creation processes and code-mix. The enumerators had to thoroughly explain until the respondents had a clear understanding. A few people understood the technical terms and gave relevant answers and examples without the help of enumerators.

4.3 Descriptive and Cross tabulation analysis

4.3.1 Indigenous African languages

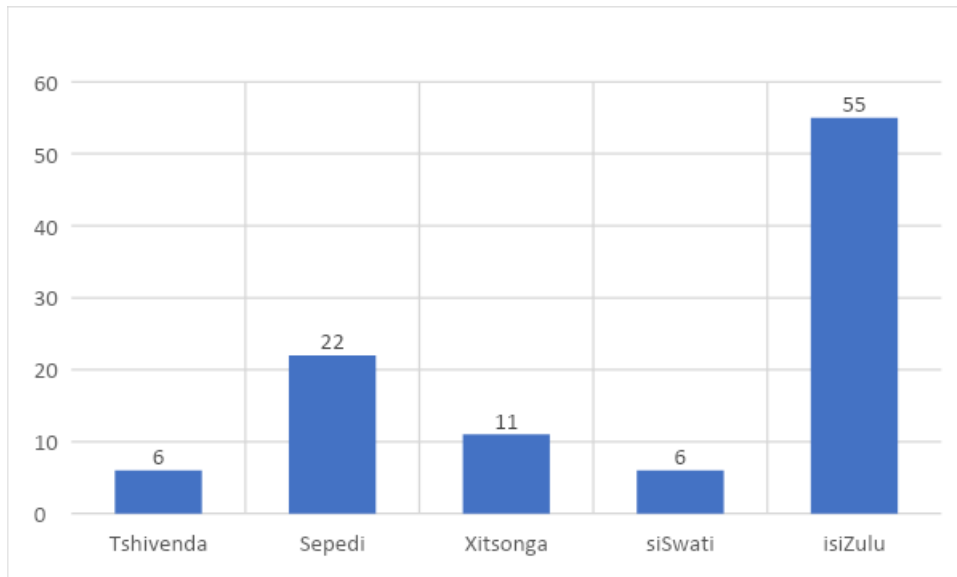


Figure 3: Indigenous African languages

The sample of this study consisted of 384 respondents who spoke different indigenous African languages as presented in Figure 3. From the 384 respondents, dominant languages were represented according to their distribution in the country as per Census conducted in 2011. Accordingly, isiZulu has the majority language speakers with 22.7%. Sepedi is the majority language in Limpopo province and fifth in South Africa with 9.1% speakers. Xitsonga has 4.5% speakers nationwide while siSwati and Tshivenda have a total of 2.6% and 2.4%, respectively (Lehohla, 2012). Therefore, there is no way that these languages can be equally distributed in this study. Tshivenda and siSwati had the lowest distribution resulting with only 6% each of the population that participated in this study. Xitsonga is the second dominant language in Limpopo, however, only 11% of the population were relevant for this study. Sepedi had 22% while isiZulu had the majority input in this study with 55%.

4.3.2 Age of the respondents

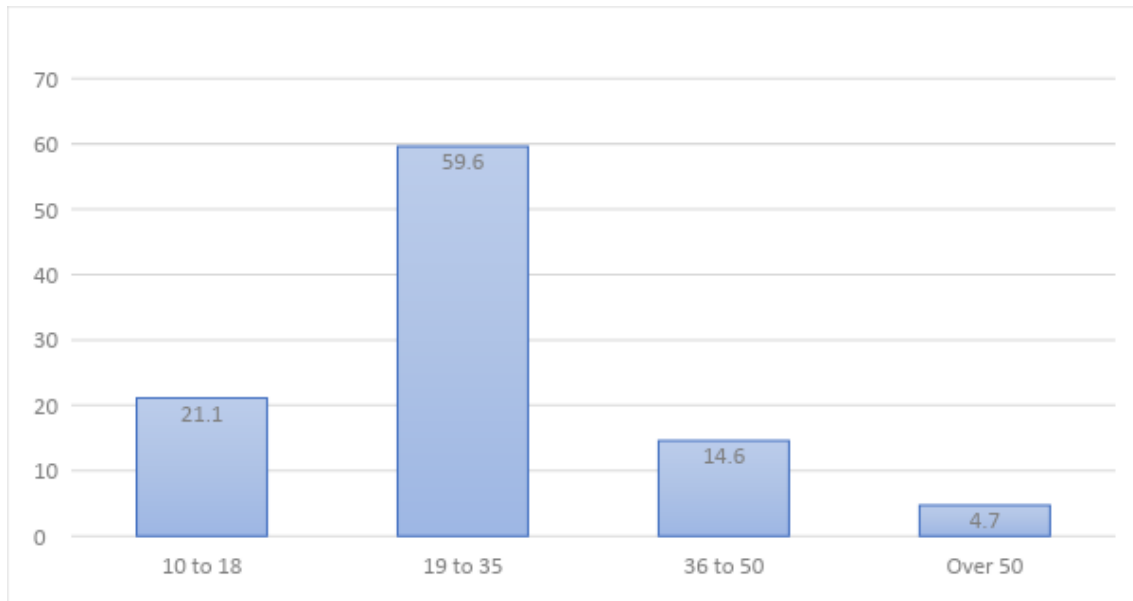


Figure 4: Age of the respondents

In this study, the majority of respondents were between the ages of 19 to 35 with 59.6%, followed by 21.1% respondents who were between 10 to 18 years. 14.6% of the respondents were between the ages of 36 to 50 and, lastly, 4.7% of the respondents who were over the age of 50. See Figure 4.

4.3.3 Gender of the respondents

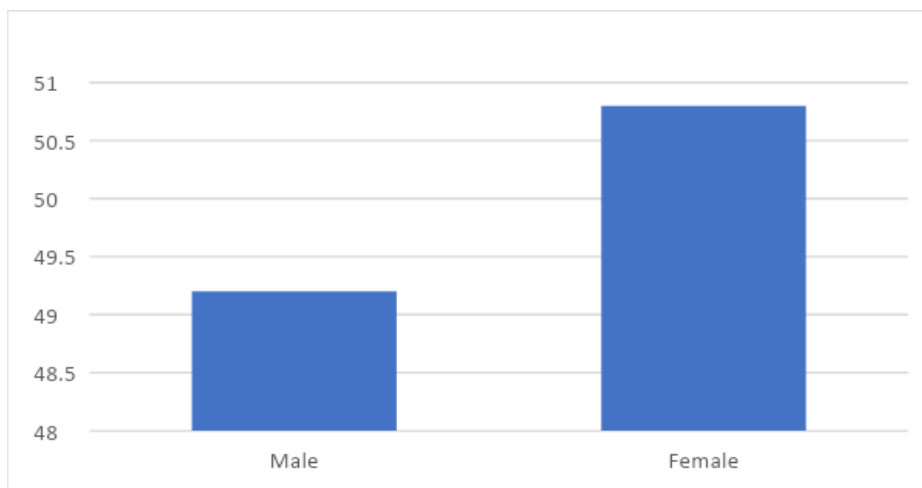


Figure 5: Gender of the respondents

From the 384 respondents that took part in this study, 189 (that is 49.2%) were males while 195 were females and they constituted 50.8% as indicated by Figure 5.

4.3.4 Educational background

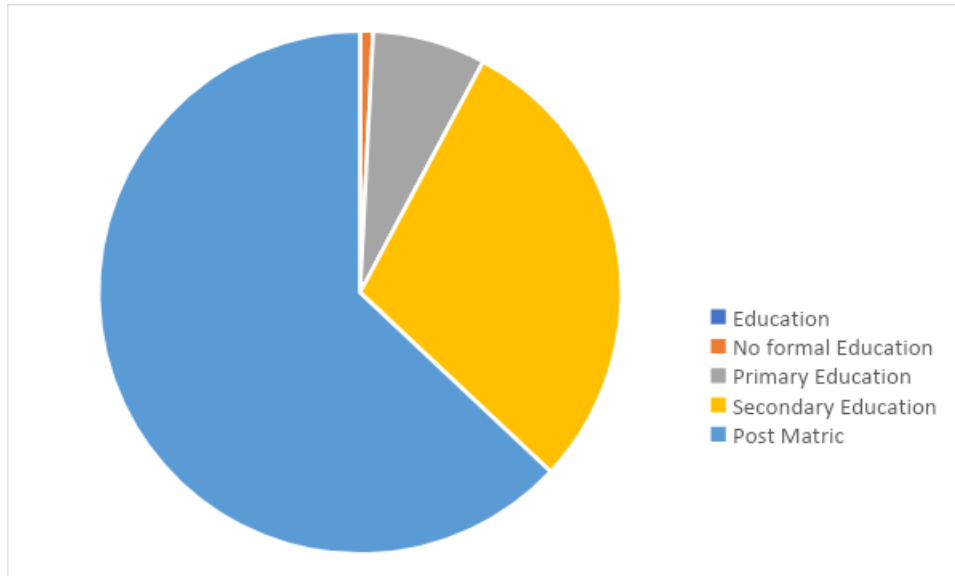


Figure 6: Educational background of the respondents

The descriptive analysis of the educational background of the respondents is elaborated in figure 6. 0.8% of the respondents did not have formal education, while 7% had primary education. Respondents with secondary education constituted 29.2% while 63% of the respondents had post-matric education.

4.3.5 Mother tongue and social networks

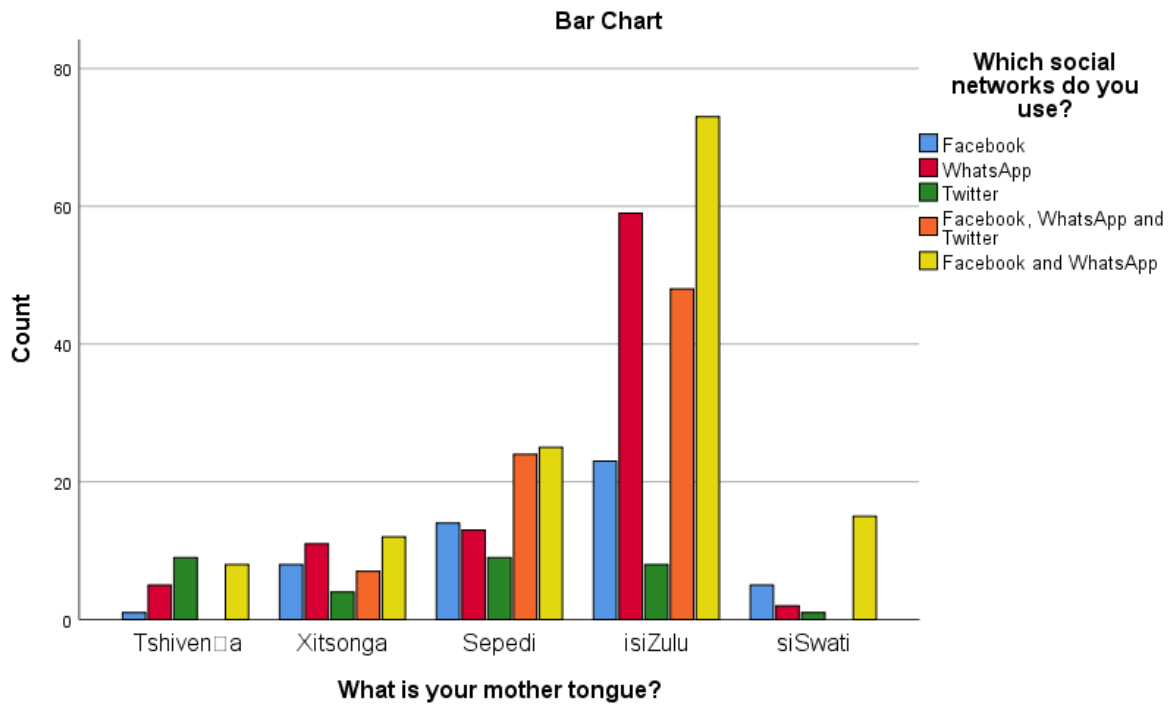


Figure 7: Mother tongue and social networks

Figure 7 illustrated the social networks used by the population of this study. The 23 Tshivenda respondents used various social networks. One used Facebook, 5 used WhatsApp, and 9 used Twitter while 8 used both Facebook and WhatsApp.

From the 42 Xitsonga respondents, 8 were registered on Facebook, 11 used on WhatsApp, 4 used Twitter while 7 used both Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, leaving 12 that used Facebook and WhatsApp.

Sepedi had 85 respondents from which 14 used Facebook, 13 used WhatsApp, and 9 used Twitter while 24 used both Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. The remaining 25 Sepedi respondents used Facebook and WhatsApp.

Most of the isiZulu respondents used Facebook and WhatsApp. While 59 respondents used WhatsApp only and 48 respondents used Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter. Twenty-three of isiZulu respondents used Facebook and 8 used Twitter.

From 23 siSwati respondents, 15 used Facebook and WhatsApp while 5 used Facebook, 2 used WhatsApp, and 1 used Twitter.

4.3.6 Mother tongue and language choice on social networks

Table 2: Mother tongue and language choice

		Do you use one language or code-mix when using social networks?		
		One language	Code mix	Total
What is your mother tongue?	Tshivenda	2	21	23
	Xitsonga	10	32	42
	Sepedi	23	62	85
	isiZulu	40	171	211
	siSwati	5	18	23
Total		80	304	384

The possible values for “*language choice on social networks*” are listed in Table 2. However, the values for “*indigenous African languages*” are listed on the left side of the same table. Out of 384 respondents, 304 constituting 21 Tshivenda speakers, 32 Xitsonga speakers, 62 Sepedi speakers, 171 isiZulu and 18 siSwati speakers preferred to code-mix between English and their mother tongue when using social networks. On the contrary, 80 respondents consisting of 2 Tshivenda speakers, 10 speakers of Xitsonga, 23 Sepedi speakers, 40 isiZulu and 5 siSwati speakers rather use one language when using social networks.

4.3.7 Social networks plays a role in word creation and mother tongue

Table 3: Word creation and mother tongue

		Do you think social networks play a role in the creation of new words?		Total
		Yes	No	
What is your mother tongue?	Tshivenda	21	2	23
	Xitsonga	37	5	42
	Sepedi	72	13	85
	isiZulu	176	35	211
	siSwati	22	1	23
Total		328	56	384

The possible values for “*social networks which play a role in the creation of innovative words*” are listed in Table 3. “*Indigenous African languages*” that are also mother tongues of the respondents are listed on the left side of the mentioned table. As presented in Table 3, most of the respondents agreed that social networks play a role in new word creation. From 384 respondents, 328 respondents made up of 21 Tshivenda speakers, 37 Xitsonga speakers, 72 speakers of Sepedi, 176 isiZulu speakers and 22 speakers of siSwati agreed that social networks play a role in the creation of new words. Fifty-six of the respondents comprising 2 speakers of Tshivenda, 5 Xitsonga speakers, 13 Sepedi speakers, 1 siSwati and 35 isiZulu respondents disagreed that new words are created through social networks (See Table 3).

Table 4: Social networks play a role in word creation and mother tongue

Marked effect significant $P = 0.05$

Chi-square	3.531
Probability value (p)	0.473
Degree of freedom (Df)	4

The probability value (p) is higher than 0.05. This implies that a statistical relationship between the mother tongue and new word creation through social networks is not significant. Therefore, the mother tongue does not have any impact on the use of social networks. These variables are not statistically related (Chi square =3.531; Df = 4 and $P = 0.473$).

4.3.8 Educational background and social networks make information searching easier

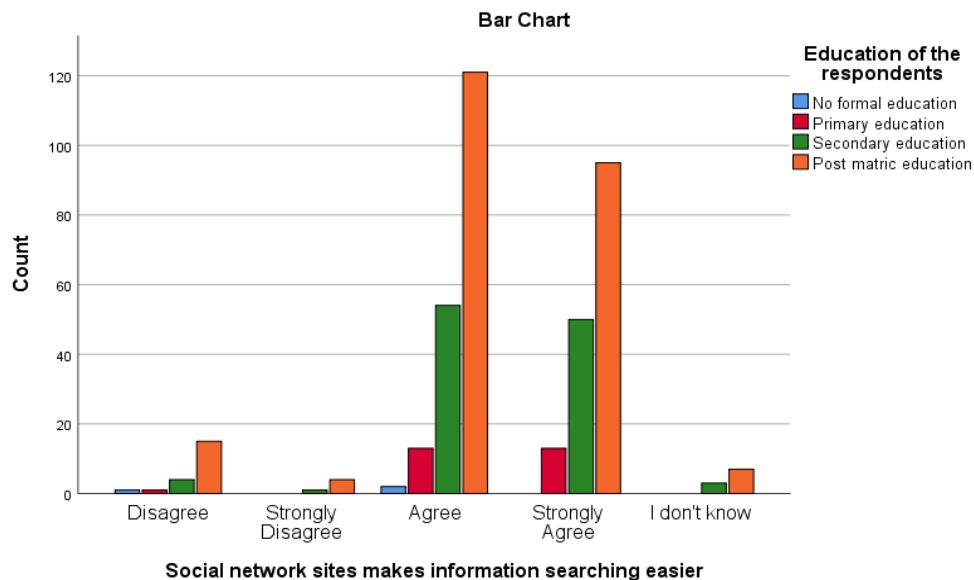


Figure 8: Social networks and educational background

Figure 8 represents the thoughts of respondents according to their educational background. The researcher wanted to know the different views from an educational

background and social networking sites which made information searching much easier. From the 21 respondents that disagreed, 15 respondents had post-matric education, while 4 had secondary education. Respondents with no formal education and primary education had 1 respondent each disagreeing that social networks make information searching easier.

Five respondents that had secondary and post-matric education strongly agreed that social networks are better searching engines. Out of one hundred and ninety respondents who agreed that social networking sites make information easier, constituted 121 respondents who have obtained post-matric education, 54 respondents had secondary education, while 13 respondents had primary education and 2 had no formal education. However, the 3 respondents with secondary education, and 7 respondents who have obtained post-matric education, did not know if getting information through social networks is easier or not.

Table 5: Educational background and social networks make information searching easier

Marked effect significant $p = 0.05$

Chi-square	9.348
P	0.673
Df	12

Table 5 shows the probability value (p) of higher than 0.05. This suggests the statistical relationship between educations of the respondents and searching of information on social networks being easy is not substantial. Chi square = 9.348; Df = 12 and P = 0.673 show non-statistical relation between these variables. Therefore, education does not determine if social networks makes information searching easier in any way.

4.3.9 Mother tongue and social networks are for any speaker

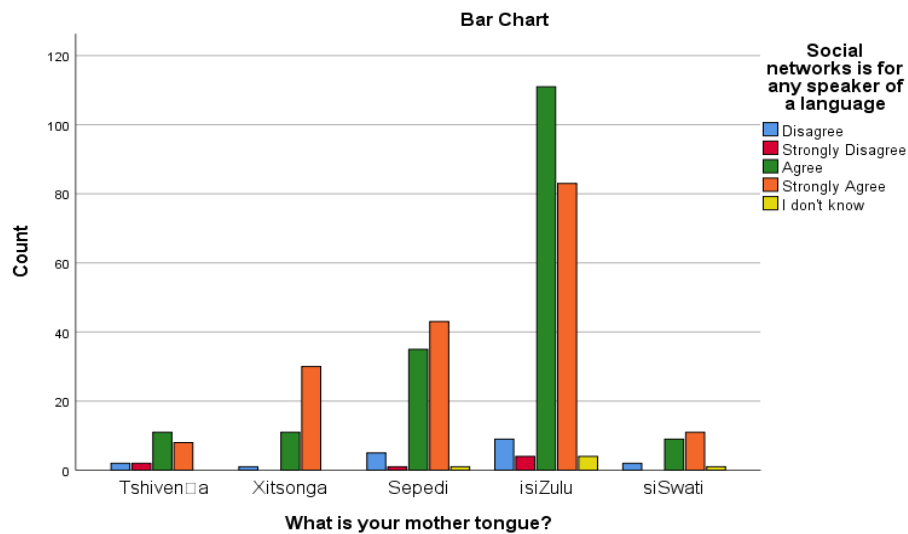


Figure 9: Social network for any language speaker

The possible value for “*what is your mother tongue*” is at the bottom of figure 9, whereas the values for “*social networks are for any speaker of a language*” are listed on the right side of the figure. Tshivenda accumulated 23 respondents from which 1 respondent disagreed, 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 12 respondents agreed, 7 respondents strongly agreed and only 2 respondents did not know if social networks are for any speaker of a language.

However, from the 42 Xitsonga respondents, 1 respondent disagreed, 25 respondents agreed, 15 respondents strongly agreed, and 1 respondent did not know if social networks can accommodate any speaker of a language.

Furthermore, nine respondents whose mother tongue is Sepedi disagreed, 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 35 respondents agreed, 37 respondents strongly agreed and only 3 respondents do not know if social networks are for any speaker of a language.

From 211 isiZulu speakers, 12 respondents disagreed, 8 respondents strongly disagreed, 119 respondents agreed, 51 respondents strongly agreed, and 20 respondents did not know if social networks can be accessed by any speaker of a language.

SiSwati had 23 respondents from which 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 10 respondents agreed, and 12 respondents strongly agreed that social networks do not require a specific language.

Table 6: Mother tongue and social network is for any speaker

Marked effect significant $p = 0.05$

Chi-square	29.332
P	0.022
Df	16

Table 6 presents the notion for mother tongue and social network is for any speaker. The probability value (p) is less than 0.05. This indicates that the relationship between mother tongue and social networks is for any speaker of a language is significant. There is statistical relation between Chi-square = 29.332; Df = 16 and P= 0.022. Therefore, any language can be used in social networks.

4.3.10 Mother tongue and government role

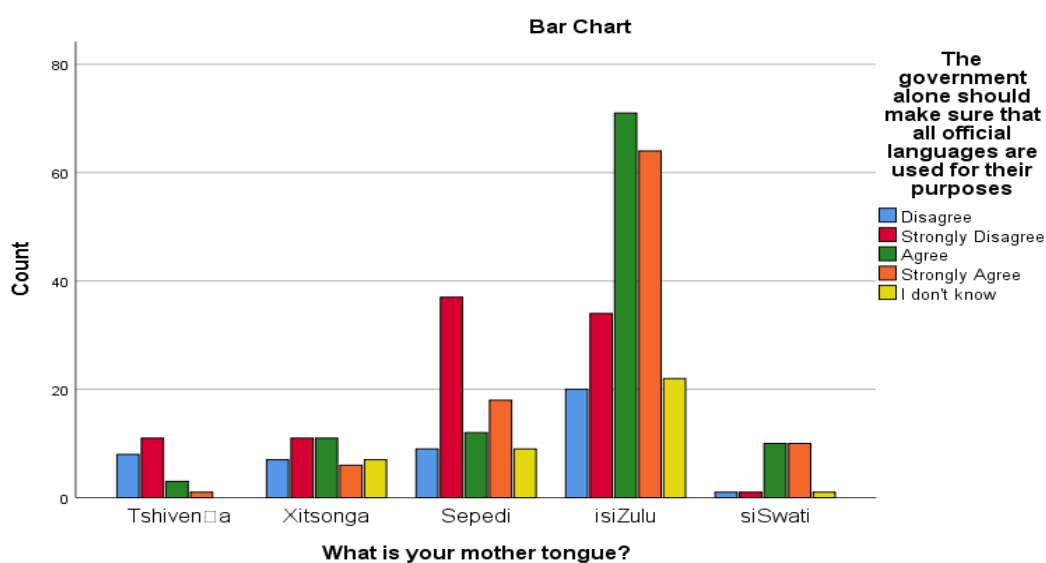


Figure 10: Mother tongue and government role

Figure 10 represents the views of different indigenous African language speakers on what they think is the role of the government when it comes to language use. From Tshivenda respondents, 8 respondents disagreed, 11 respondents strongly disagreed, 3 respondents agreed, and 1 respondent strongly agreed that the government should make sure that all official languages are used accordingly.

However, from Xitsonga respondents, 7 respondents disagreed, 11 respondents strongly disagreed, 11 respondents agreed, 6 respondents strongly agreed, and 7 respondents did not know if the government should have sole responsibility for language promotion.

Nine of Sepedi respondents disagreed, 37 respondents strongly disagreed, 12 respondents agreed, 18 respondents strongly agreed, and 9 respondents do not know if only the government should be responsible for language promotion.

From the isiZulu respondents, 22 of them did not know, 64 respondents strongly agreed, 71 respondents agreed, 34 respondents strongly disagreed, and 20 respondents disagreed that the government alone should make sure that all official languages are used for the purpose.

From 23 siSwati respondents, 1 respondent disagreed, 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 10 respondents agreed, 10 respondents strongly agreed, and 1 respondent do not know if the government alone should be responsible for official language use.

Table 7: Mother tongue and government role

Marked effect significant $p = 0.05$

Chi-square	62.482
P	0.000
Df	16

The probability value (p) is less than 0.05. This indicates that the relationship between mother tongue and government alone should ensure that all languages are used for their

purposes is significant. There is statistical relation between Chi-square = 62.482; Df = 16 and P = 0.000 as indicated in Table 7. Therefore, it is not only on the government to make sure that all official languages are used accordingly, but the speakers as well.

4.3.11 Social networks and PanSALB

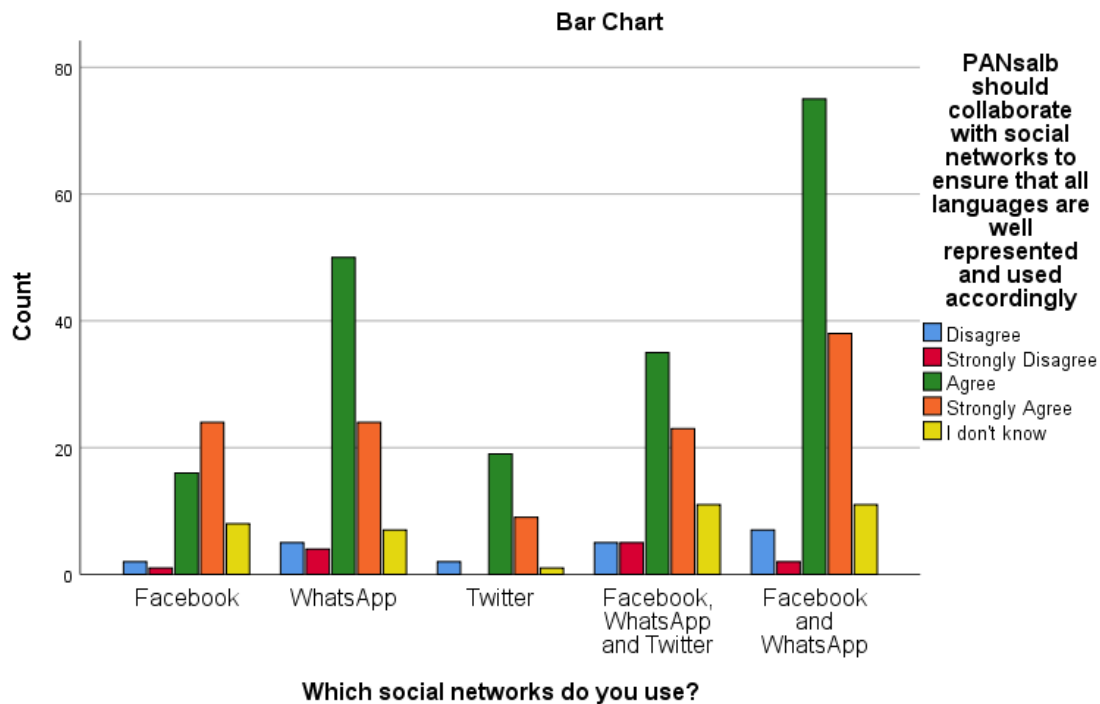


Figure 11: Social networks and PanSALB

The values of “social networks” used by respondents are listed in figure 11. On the right side, is the list of the values of “PanSALB on how it should collaborate with social networks to ensure that all languages are well represented and used accordingly.” From the users of Facebook 2 disagreed, 1 strongly disagreed, 16 agreed, 24 strongly agreed and 8 did not know if PanSALB and social networks should collaborate to track language use.

From WhatsApp users 5 disagreed, 4 strongly disagreed, 50 agreed, 24 strongly agreed and 7 did not know if PanSALB and social networks collaborated in ensuring that all languages are used accordingly to be effective.

From 31 respondents using Twitter, 2 disagreed, 9 strongly agreed and 1 did not know how social networks and PanSALB collaboration can ensure that all languages are used accordingly.

Five users of Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter disagreed, 5 strongly disagreed, 35 agreed, 23 strongly agreed and 11 did not know if PanSALB and social networks should collaborate to track language use.

However, 7 Facebook and WhatsApp users disagreed, 2 strongly disagreed, 75 agreed, 38 strongly agreed and 11 did not know how PanSALB and social networks collaborated in ensuring that all languages are used accordingly to be effective.

Table 8: Social networks and PanSALB

Marked effect significant $p = 0.05$

Chi-square	22.527
P	0.127
Df	16

The probability value (p) is above 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between social networks and PanSALB collaborating for the purpose of language representation and use. There is no statistical relationship between Chi-square = 22.527, $P = 0.127$ and $Df = 16$ (Table 8). Therefore, there is no efficiency between PanSALB collaborating with social networks for a good representation of languages.

4.3.12 Language enhancement through social networks

Figure 12 below represents the views of different indigenous African language speakers on how social networks enhance languages. From Tshivenda respondents, 1 disagreed, 1 strongly disagreed, 12 agreed, 7 strongly agreed and 2 did not know if language can be enhanced through social networks.

However, from Xitsonga respondents, 1 strongly disagreed, 25 agreed, 15 strongly agreed and 1 did not know if social networks can enhance languages.

Nine of Sepedi respondents disagreed, 1 strongly disagreed, 35 agreed, 37 strongly agreed and 3 did not know if language can be enhanced through social networks.

From the isiZulu respondents 20 did not know, 51 strongly agreed, 119 agreed, 8 strongly disagreed and 13 disagreed that social networks can enhance languages.

From 23 siSwati respondents, 1 strongly disagreed, 10 agreed, 12 strongly agreed that social networks can enhance languages.

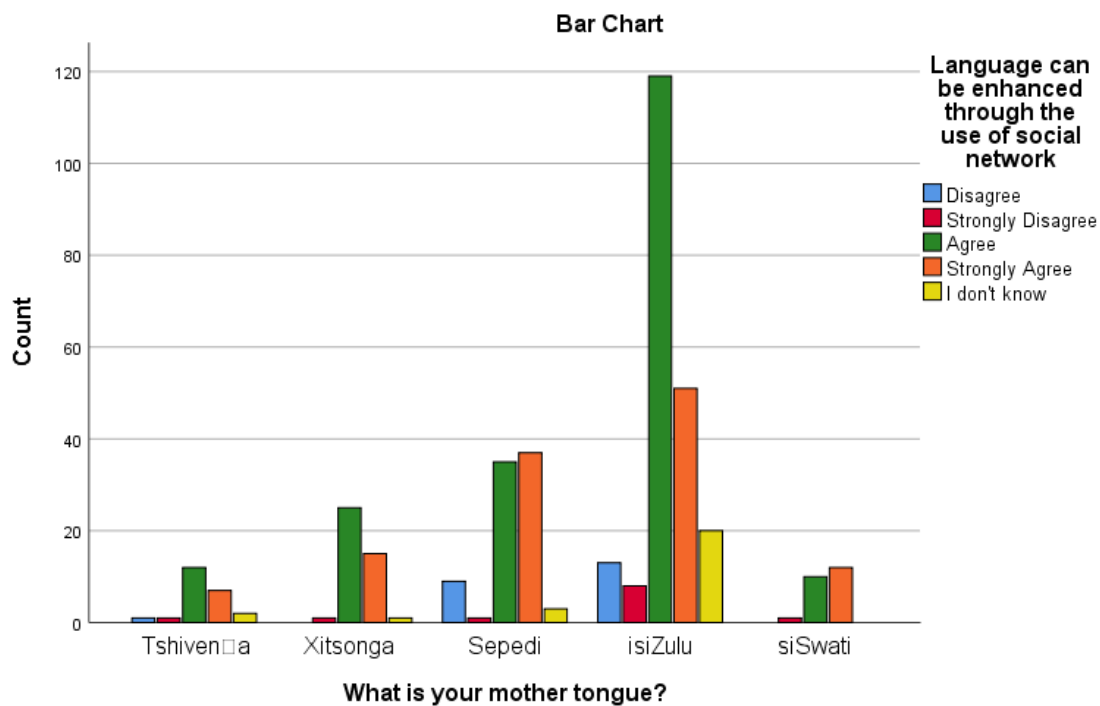


Figure 12: Mother tongue and language enhancement

Table 9: Language enhancement through social networks

Marked effect significant $p = 0.05$

Chi-square	29.332
P	0.022
Df	16

Table 9 represents the Chi-square from which the probability value (p) is below 0.05. This indicates the relationship between the mother tongue and language enhancement. Thus, language can be enhanced through social networks. There is a statistical relation between Chi-square = 29.332; $P= 0.022$ and $Df = 16$. Therefore, indigenous African languages can be enhanced through social networks.

4.3.13 Social networks for metalexigraphy

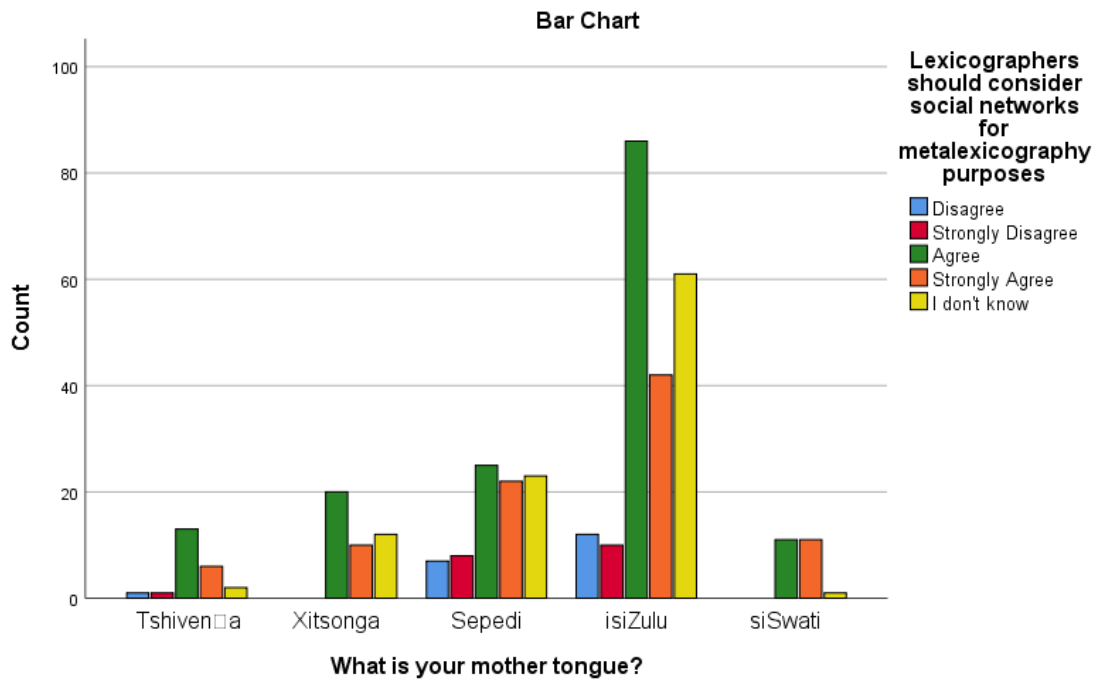


Figure 13: Social networks for metalexigraphy

The values of “*mother tongue*” are below the graph while the values of “*lexicographers should consider social networks for metalexigraphy purposes*” are on the left (see figure 13) From 23 Tshivenda respondents, 1 disagreed, 1 strongly disagreed, 13 agreed, 6 strongly agreed and 2 did not know if lexicographers should use social networks for metalexigraphy purposes. However, from Xitsonga respondents, 20 agreed, 10 strongly agreed and 12 did not know. Seven of Sepedi respondents disagreed, 8 strongly disagreed, 25 agreed, 22 strongly agreed and 23 did not know. From the isiZulu respondents 61 did not know, 42 strongly agreed, 86 agreed, 10 strongly disagreed and 12 disagreed that social networks should be considered for metalexigraphy purposes. From 23 siSwati respondents 11 agreed, 11 strongly agreed and did not know if social networks should be considered for metalexigraphy purposes.

Table 10: Social networks for metalexigraphy purposes

Marked effect significant $p = 0.05$

Chi-square	31.410
P	0.012
Df	16

The probability value (p) is below 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between “*mother tongue*” and “*lexicographers should consider social networks for metalexigraphy purposes*” is significant. There is a statistical relation between Chi-square =31.410; P = 0.012 and Df = 16 (Table 10). Lexicographers should consider social networks for metalexigraphy purposes.

4.4 Thematic Analysis

This study opted for mixed methods. For qualitative analysis, the thematic approach was carried out to address research questions 2 and 3. There are three main themes identified with subthemes under each one of them. The themes were presented as follows:

- i. Perception of indigenous African language on social networks.
- ii. Benefits and challenges of language choice on social networks.
- iii. Redefinition of indigenous African languages on social networks.

4.4.1 Perception of indigenous African languages on social networks

4.4.1.1 The attitude of speakers

Respondents of this study were registered on social networks. Most of them had been using social networks for more than 10 years although a few have been registered for only a year. When it comes to language choice on social networks, respondents preferred using English rather than their own indigenous African languages. The reason being, they understood and communicated better in English than their languages. *“I use English because it is easy to understand.”* Some respondents further called English a language of opportunity – *“I use English because of the opportunities that come with knowing it.”* There are respondents who used more than one language on social networks in order to accommodate people who speak different languages. *“There are no restrictions when you are communicating with people with whom you do not share a language.”* Although there are respondents who claimed to use one language, most of them code mix.

4.4.1.2 The experience of the respondents

With most of the respondents associating themselves with English, websites like www.africa.com that are in indigenous African languages are set to doom. A lot of the respondents have not accessed websites that are in indigenous African languages - *“Are there websites that are in Sepedi? I have never seen one.”* Those who have accessed these websites feel that they do not have relevant information - *“The website I accessed with Tshivenda content is more like a dictionary, it is good for those learning a language.”* However, there are respondents who use such websites for research purposes. *“There are indigenous African language websites that have misspelled words and misleading contents.”* In terms of social networks and indigenous African languages, one of the respondents expressed in the excerpt below felt that social networks do not recognise their languages – *“when I type using siSwati, I get spelling lines although the spelling is correct.”*

4.4.2 Benefits and challenges of language choice on social networks

4.4.2.1 Benefits

The benefit of multilingualism is the ability to accommodate different people. Although some respondents prefer using indigenous African languages, there are some who prefer code-mixing between English and indigenous African languages. *“I use Sepedi, English, and Xitsonga because there are other people who do not understand English, so we use both our home languages and English to communicate.”* Nevertheless, the respondents who use indigenous African languages on social networks claim they can have a clear conversation without spelling mistakes and word restrictions - *“you are not restricted in terms of choosing words because you speak the same language every day.”* Respondents who use indigenous African languages on social network feel that the more they use their languages on social networks, the more they become fluent and that leads to language growth *“my language grows every time I teach someone who doesn’t know or understand Zulu and thanks to a software called Swift key, I am able to choose my language and write correctly.”* Using both English and indigenous African languages allow them to grow in their own respect.

There are respondents who use English only on social networks. They claim to learn unfamiliar words and to accommodate people of diverse cultures *“I can tell people to stop using indigenous African languages on the social network in order to accommodate people with whom you do not share a language.”* Respondents using English only feel that the more they use this language the more they can communicate fluently. Additionally, they gave an impression of how using English on social networks is not time-consuming because of the dictionary and autocorrect application when texting. *“I do not have to complete a word because the dictionary gives me options that I can choose from.”* The respondents further claim that using short-clipped or abbreviated words that are usually in English, is economical and keeps conversations moving fast and smoothly. *“Social networks are meant to be the fastest way to convey messages and isiZulu has long words.”*

4.4.2.2 Challenges

In terms of challenges, when using English and indigenous African languages in social networks, most respondents did not have challenges with grammar and spellings. They

switch to a language they can write. However, the barriers of not having diacritics in languages like Sepedi and Tshivenda limit the respondents from using their languages fully. *“Tshivenda’s alphabets are different and that makes me write sentences that might not make sense to someone who is still learning the language.”* Respondents who use English only on social networks face challenges of spellings, limitation of words and using grammar incorrectly *“Social networks limit language growth because most people are no longer able to spell well.”* Other respondents feel that fellow speakers of indigenous African languages take them for granted because they have opted for English over their own languages. *“... Others undermine and see me as someone who is full of herself.”* Using shortened sentences causes confusion, *“some people just abbreviate things that do not make sense.”* Some respondents mentioned that they prefer using shortened sentences and sometimes forget to adjust when they are in professional settings. Subsequently, they use English dictionaries for spellings and meanings of words.

4.4.3 Redefining indigenous African languages

Language evolves and is always redefined, which is fundamental for its growth. If that was not the case, people would still be using ancient languages. Word creation occurs through acronyms, word clipping and prefixes among others. However, this study will use the examples given by the respondents.

4.4.3.1 Acronyms and Abbreviations

Respondents prefer shorthand communication. That is the shortened form of words or phrases (Table 11). They feel that it is time-efficient and straight forward – *“I usually cut the words short to make the conversation short and simple.”* Shorthand words are found in any language.

Table 11: Abbreviation and Acronyms

Abbreviation/ Acronym	Complete word	Word use
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LOL	<i>Laugh out loud</i>	<i>Lol</i> is used when a person is laughing
YOLO	<i>You only live once</i>	People use <i>yolo</i> when they are about to do things they have never done before
CKK	<i>S'khokho</i>	<i>S'khokho</i> is an isiZulu word that means "friend" – <i>S'khokho sami</i> : My friend
OMG	<i>Oh my God/Gosh</i>	People use this abbreviation when they are in awe
SJB	<i>Seja bana</i>	<i>Seja bana</i> is a Sepedi word. It is referred to a man who is in a relationship with multiple women
TBT	<i>Throwback</i> <i>Thursday</i>	Thursdays are usually days wherein people post things that happened months or years back. It can be a thought of the past or a picture
TMI	<i>Too much information</i>	Is used when someone start disclosing their private matters with people who do not care to listen

4.4.3.2 Verbing

There are respondents who insist that writing a sentence in a conventional way (Subject, verb, and object) takes time and is costly. Instead, they use a method called verbing – changing some parts of speech, typically noun into verbs. *"I simply cannot write*

more than 20 words when one word can convey a message. It takes time and is too expensive.”

1. Gwede Mantashe is a South African politician and currently serves as the chairperson of the African National Congress (ANC). He is known for not making sense in his speeches. When someone is not making sense, she/he is “*gwedemantashing*.” *“gwede + mantashe + -ing*

Respondent’s example: *“I cannot understand what he is saying, he is gwedemantashing.”*

2. Agrizzi is a former chief operating officer (COO) of Bosasa Operation (Pvt) LTD. He is one of the people who testified before the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into State capture. Agrizzi is known for name dropping high officials who received bribes from Bosasa operations. *“agrizzi+ -ing”*

Respondent’s example: *“I feel like agrizzing on someone.”*

3. Facebooking is an act of communicating with people on Facebook websites. *“facebook+ -ing”*

Respondent’s example: *“She was facebooking her friends yesterday”*

4. Uber is a transportation network company that offers taxicab among other services. *“Uber +- ing”*

Respondent’s example: *“We will be uberizing to Moses Mabhida stadium on Saturday.”*

5. Google is a search engine on the internet.

Respondent’s example: instead of saying Martha used Google to search for a pie recipe, the respondent claimed that by just saying *“She Googled the pie recipe”* the message is clear. In other words, Google - is an alternative for *“search”*

6. Friday is the 6th day of the week and the last of workweek. *“Friday+-ing”*

Respondent’s example: Fridaying means hanging out with friends or family on a Friday. *“Out and about! Fridaying with lovies”*

4.4.3.3 Redefinition of words and phrases

Table 12 shows words that the respondents felt have been redefined. These words once meant something, but now have a different meaning altogether. The respondents gave examples in a form of a word and social networks definition, see below.

Table 12: Words redefinition

Word	Oxford Dictionary meaning	Social networks meaning
Lit	Past and past participle tense of light	It describes an event that was fun <i>“the party was lit”</i>
Levels	Level is a position on a scale of amount, quantity, extent, or quality	It means an event that was well organised. Usually when it is used, there is no need to use lots of words. <i>“Levels of this party mchana”</i> Equivalent: “This party is well organised my friend.”
Bitch	Bitch is a female dog	This word is used by girls referring to their girlfriends. <i>“I’m going to town with my bitches.”</i> Equivalent: I’m going to town with my friends.”
Swag	Swag is a piece of fabric clipped to hang in a drooping curve	It now means being stylish. <i>“That lady has swag”</i> Equivalent: That lady is stylish.

#	Hash is used as a symbol on a phone keypad or computer keyboard	Hash makes it easy for other people to find themes or messages that are trending. #ojewakeng
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Redefinition of words can also be found in indigenous African languages; and below are the examples the respondents gave:

1. *Phyaya* is a Sepedi term that is used on the social networks to give praise to a beautiful item – be it a person is dressed well or delicious food.

In a sentence: “*Roko ya gago e ya phyaya.*”

Equivalent: “Your dress is beautiful.”

2. *Siṭisa* is a Tshivenda word that originally is used when the porridge is no longer edible or fit for human consumption, however on social networks; this word is used when someone is faced with difficulty.

In a sentence: “*Khoso i do vha siṭisa.*”

Equivalent: “This subject will give you sleepless nights.”

3. *Dololo* is a South African street word that means “nothing.” This word can be used in all languages.

In a Xitsonga sentence: “*Vana lava va dya swinene mara vatswari va vona dololo ku xava swa kudya.*”

Equivalent: “These children eat a lot, but their parents do not buy food.”

In a siSwati sentence: “*Umyeni wami utsi ufuna kunginika R2500 ngiyotsenga igrocery, kodwa dololo skathi.*”

Equivalent: “My husband says he wants to give me R2500 just for groceries, but I do not have time.”

In an English sentence: “*We went to church, but the priest was dololo.*”

Equivalent: “We went to church, but the priest was not there.”

4. *Cava* is a South African street word, associated with Nguni languages that means “to look at.” It is used by people when they are bragging and they usually code mix when they use this term.

In a sentence: “*Cava the shoes.*”

Equivalent: “Look at those shoes.”

4.4.3.4 Word Clipping

Clipping of words is a common form of word creation. Clipped words are words that are shortened for mutual use. Below is a list of English and indigenous African languages clipped words and phrases from the respondents answers.

1. The word battery changes into *B3*

In a sentence: “*My b3 is low.*”

2. Instead of a person saying “*mtwana wa sekhaya*” meaning “brother or sister”, he can say “*Mtase.*”

In a sentence: *Ncese mtase.*”

Equivalent: “*I am sorry my brother.*”

3. *Munghana* is a Xitsonga word for friend. In social networks, it can be written as “*munghi*”

In a sentence: *Kunjhani ka munghi wa mina?*

Equivalent: How are you my friend?

4. *Phaṭhutshedzo* is a Tshivenda name for both males and females. There is a conventional clipping (Fore clipping) for this name *Phaṭhu*, however in social networks, it is still long so, *Pha2* is convenient.

4.4.3.5 Contraction

Words can also be created through a contraction, wherein letters are omitted and replaced by an apostrophe, examples from respondents are listed below.

siSwati: Ngiyakuthandza – Ng'yakuthandza

Equivalent: I love you

isiZulu: Inja yami - Njayam'

Direct translation: My dog

Equivalent: My friend

4.4.3.6 New words

There are words that have been created by social networks. Respondents explained how they have learnt some words on social networks that they did not know before. *“Social networks do create words; it can be through combining words or just having a word you have never seen before.”*

A term like *“sugar daddy”* has been changed to *“blesser”* or *“mkhulu bae.”* A sugar baby has been altered to *“blessee”*

1. *“Bae”* means someone you are in a relationship with.

In a sentence: *“I am having lunch with bae”*

2. *“Baecation”* is a trip you take with your lover.

In a sentence: *“I just came back from a baecation”*

3. *“People’s bae”* is a hero, someone who is loved by many people.

In a sentence: *“Madiba was a people’s bae.”*

4. *“Issa”* is a combination of it, is and a

In a sentence: *“Issa party!”*

5. Slay Queens and Slay kings are people who dress in expensive clothes, hair and are always clean but, do not work or have trust funds. They are perceived as people who do not know anything (Beauty with no brains).

In a sentence: *"I hate going out with slay queens"*

4.5 Summary of this chapter

This chapter outlined the research findings. This study applied both the descriptive and cross-tabulation analysis because of the quantitative data that were collected. Furthermore, the thematic approach was used to unearth innovative words used in social networks. The data were presented and arranged in themes that were discovered by the research objectives. The research findings have similarities with some of the findings reported in chapter two's literature review. The summary, recommendations, and conclusions are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter revisited the aim and objectives of the study that were mentioned in chapter one in order to discuss their achievement within this study. The key purpose of this study was to analyse how indigenous African languages can be promoted through social networks in South Africa. It drew its conclusion from the findings in chapter four.

5.2 Summary of the study

Analysing the use and promotion of indigenous African language remains relevant to community, policy makers and the broader societies. The advent of social networks and other communication platforms have resulted in the broader use of indigenous African languages and they offer an opportunity for work creation, language development and promotion. Although regulatory bodies are trying to match up with the pace of words created and used on social networks there is need to understand how these networks promote different indigenous languages in South Africa.

This study sought to contribute to this unsettled literature by using a mixed methodology to analyse the promotion of indigenous African languages in South Africa using social networks. In analysing the primary objective, the study answered three research questions that were analysed using the qualitative and quantitative approaches. The Thematic Analysis was used to develop themes that emerged from the respondents, to analyse the qualitative approach. The quantitative method of cross-tabulation statistical approach was used to test the relationship between different variables.

Chapter one introduced and gave a background of the study. Problem statement was indicated, and the purpose of the study was discussed wherein the objectives that accomplished the aim of the study were shown together with the research questions. Terms were defined, and the status of indigenous African languages in South Africa was briefly discussed.

Chapter two focused on the literature review. The literature was based on studies of corpus and status planning and how social networks can play a role in language

promotion. Uses and Gratification and Social Network Theories were discussed, language was briefly analysed. The literature review was aligned with the objectives of various scholars who opined that speakers of a specific language are liable to using and finding comfort in their languages for it to grow.

Chapter three focused on the research design and methods used to collect data, the target population and sample procedures. Mixed methods were described and justified. The choice of data collection techniques was elaborated together with validity and reliability as well as the ethical consideration. The choice of data collection tool was justified.

Chapter four outlined the research findings. This study applied both the descriptive and cross-tabulation analysis because of the quantitative data that was collected. Furthermore, the thematic approach was also applied to unearth new words commonly used in various social networks. The data was presented and arranged in themes that were revealed by this research's objectives. The research findings have similarities with some of the findings reported in chapter two, literature review.

In chapter five, the findings of the study that answered the research questions were discussed. The findings showed that every African indigenous language speaker is liable to the promotion of their respective language using social networks. Furthermore, key policy recommendations were made to regulatory bodies, communities and users of languages. Thereafter, the study concluded that indigenous African languages can be promoted through social networks.

5.3 Research design and Methods

Instead of using one research method, this study opted for mixed methods that included quantitative and qualitative approach. A quantitative approach is formal, objective and a systematic process wherein numerical data were utilised to get information about the study investigated. However, a qualitative approach is subjective, and it produces data that is rich and detailed which contributes to the thorough understanding of this context. Three hundred and eighty-four respondents who spoke isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga were part of this study. Data were analysed using both descriptive and thematic approaches.

The respondents used social networks for school purposes, to be generally sociable, searching for a job, meet people and make business connections. Therefore, language is always used. Although most of the respondents preferred using English, they code-mix when they engage on social media networks. It was found that respondents code-mix because of their interactions with speakers of different languages. Respondents also prefer using clipped words and English allows them to clip words easier than indigenous African languages.

5.4 Summary interpretations of findings

A larger sample size yielded more reliable data with respondents aged 19 to 35 with a large percentage of those being females (50.8%). The sample consisted of respondents with post-matric education located in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. The entire sample was found to be registered (100%) on social network sites. This study discovered that information can be searched much easier on social networks, and respondents across different age groups agreed that social networks create new words. Although many of the respondents use English on social networks, they agreed that a speaker of any language can use these platforms.

Again, social networks users do not solely use their indigenous African languages but code-mix between the language of choice and English. For some of the respondents, joining social networks is mainly for academic and business purposes. However, for the majority, it is mainly for maintaining friendships. Some social networks users do not think that PanSALB's collaboration with social networks will ensure that all languages are represented and used accordingly on social networks. It is, nonetheless, significant for lexicographers to consider social networks for metalexicography purposes.

Respondents are of the view that languages can be enhanced through social networks. South African Constitution [chapter 1, section 6(2)] indicates that the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance use of indigenous African languages. The South African government has good language policies, however, with regards to implementation, it has failed dismally. Therefore, the respondents felt that the government, together with the speakers of the language are both liable to making sure that the status of the languages is elevated.

The different social networks used by respondents allow users to exchange views using a language. Chapter 1, section 3 6(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, recognises eleven official languages, however, many of the respondents prefer using English over their indigenous African languages on social networks and browsing the internet because of the detailed information they can access. Therefore, websites that support indigenous African languages like <https://nso.oxforddictionaries.com> may be set to doom. Insufficient and irrelevant information in these websites pushes the speakers of indigenous African languages to use English based websites. Indigenous African language speakers together with lexicographers should consider increasingly blogging and using their mother tongues on social networks. Once people become familiar with websites that have well-researched content, they might never look back into English based websites.

In terms of benefits and challenges, respondents chose a language they knew to avoid humiliations when it comes to wrong spellings, miscommunications, and mispronunciations of words. Furthermore, respondents felt that their language choice must accommodate the people they chat with. Their choice of language helps in language promotion because the more it is used, the more they become familiar and fluent in it.

Social networks have redefined English and indigenous African languages. Words like *levels* and *sitisa* have new meanings, as reported in Chapter 4. Respondents attested that the shorter the word, the quicker the conversation, which is the main purpose of social networks. Eminent people's characters also form part of redefining languages. This happens by merely constructing a sentence using a name instead of following the sentence construction rule. For instance, the name *Agrizzi* may be associated with name dropping.

5.5 Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to analyse the promotion of indigenous African languages through social networks in South Africa. The first research question was, "Do social networks play a role in the promotion of indigenous African languages in South Africa?" This question was answered sufficiently. Social networks play a role in the promotion of indigenous African languages. Factors such as spellings and meaning of a

word play a role in language development. On social networks, words are created or redefined to have a new meaning altogether for example; a word like “*bitch*” is now associated with friendship. Language development through social networks can also be found in indigenous African languages – A Tshivenda word “*sita*” (rot in English) can now be associated with difficulty.

The second question was; “How is the use of siSwati, isiZulu, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga different from one another on social networks?” This question was also answered. The respondents showed diversity in language choice when browsing social networks. Most respondents either code-mix between their indigenous African languages and English or use English. “*Code-mixing helps to make a conversation clearer when talking to a person who does not understand one of the languages*”. The use of indigenous African languages on social networks in South Africa is not different, the speakers always try by all means to accommodate each other since South Africa is a multilingual country.

The third question was; “Can social networks be used as a tool for possible promotion of siSwati, isiZulu, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga languages?” Social networks can be used as a tool for possible promotion of indigenous African languages. When people chat, language is used and learnt, words are created (*bae - lover*) and new meanings are formed (*lit – fun*). The internet stores information, and it makes it easier for information to be accessed by different speakers of a language.

Based on the statistical analysis of the sample, most of the respondents were between the ages of 19 and 35 and mostly made up of females. Post-matric education respondents were the majority sample in the study and used social networks for academic and business purposes, maintaining relationships and being generally sociable. WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter are mostly used. Themes were created wherein perceptions of indigenous African language speakers were explored regarding the efficiency of social networks as a tool for language promotion. From the literature review, it was learnt that social networks have proven to be a tool for revitalisation and promotion of indigenous languages.

Moreover, the results of this study show that indigenous African languages interviewed can be promoted through social networks, which confirms what the literature says. It was also found that for these languages to gain status, the government, equally has the

responsibility to use these indigenous African languages both in formal and informal settings and not only social networks statements to that effect. Although social networks users prefer to code-mix between English and indigenous African languages, words can be created through social networks, and that is one of the aspects of language growth. Social networks proved to offer a conducive environment wherein people are free to express themselves, making it easy for language learning that will result in language promotion. The results of this study prompt language policy makers, terminographers, different indigenous languages language boards, and PanSALB to explore other avenues for their research purposes, specifically social networks since speakers of indigenous African languages, which in this case are isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga spend most of their times.

5.6 Recommendations

This study analysed the promotion of indigenous African languages through social networks, wherein the preferred languages were isiZulu, siSwati, Sepedi, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga therefore, from the findings and conclusions drawn

- i. The government should play its role in promotion of indigenous African languages. Their choice of language during speeches should address the masses. People who do not understand English should be catered for. Therefore, the government should implement language policies and explore different channels of communication, in this case, is social networks.
- ii. Further, policy measures should include interventions that are focused on enhancing the inclusive use of all indigenous African languages to enable sharing knowledge and broader community participation.
- iii. The speakers of indigenous African languages should consider using their languages on social networks, especially in cases where they speak the same language. They may however code-mix when they communicate with speakers of other languages. That way, a language is taught which may result in its growth. The speakers of these languages should also familiarise and integrate words created or redefined through social networks in their daily conversations

- iv. Websites that are in indigenous African languages need to be updated and relevant information should be included to encourage speakers of indigenous African languages to use them.

5.7 Contributions to the study

Studies focusing on indigenous African language promotion through social networks are rare. However, ever since the prominence of social networks around the year 2000, many indigenous languages have been revitalised. This study has presented a new route that scholars should explore. There should not be a specific way of language promotion especially in developing indigenous African languages. However, different tools that can be implemented to carry such a duty should be revisited. This study contributes along with few studies conducted that aim to establish the use of social networks as a tool for promotion of indigenous African languages. Future studies can compare the promotion of different indigenous languages across the borders, and suggest ways in which policy makers can improve their use. There is also need to trace the global use of words that are created on social networks.

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Health Economics research. 2, 1-43

ANNEXURE A: STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

Analysing the promotion of African indigenous languages through social networks

I am a master's student in the Department of General Linguistics and Modern Languages, University of Zululand. The aim of this study is to analyse how social networks can be a tool of promoting African indigenous languages, looking at the use and recognised social use. I, therefore, kindly ask that you complete the following questionnaire about your language choice and use in various social networks. This questionnaire will not take more than 30 minutes of your time.

The information collected will be used for academic purposes only; therefore, do not include your name and/or your contact details on the questionnaire. Your response in this questionnaire is highly valuable. Respondents are guaranteed anonymity, and; participation in this study is voluntary.

THANK YOU

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

1. Age of respondents

From 10 to 18	From 19 to 35	From 36 to 50	Over 50
1	2	3	4

2. Gender of respondents

Female	Male
1	2

3. Educational background of respondents

Primary education	Secondary education	High school education	University education
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SOCIAL NETWORKS AND LANGUAGE

1. Are you registered on social networking sites?

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2. How long have you been using social networks?

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3. Which social networks do you use?

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11. What are the benefits of using the chosen language?

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.....
12. Do you use one language, or do you code-mix when using social networks?

language	·mix
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SOCIAL NETWORKS AND LANGUAGE GROWTH

1. Do you think social networks play a role in the creation of new words?

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2. How, if possible, please give examples

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3. Do you find websites you access that are in indigenous African languages useful?

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6. Lexicographers should consider social networks for metalexigraphy (research) purposes

7. Indigenous African languages are considered on social networks by their speakers

8. Is there anything else you would like to add on this survey concerning social networks and indigenous African languages?

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THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION