

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING AND PRESERVING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA

Theodore Chinweike Ugwu
Department of Igbo Language
Fct College of Education Zuba, Abuja

Abstract

This study examined the role of social media in promoting and preserving indigenous languages in secondary schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study involved 450 respondents, comprising of 420 secondary school students and 30 teachers from Benue, Niger, and Kogi states. Proportionate and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select schools and participants. Data were collected through interviews and a validated questionnaire, "Exploration of Social Media for the Advancement of Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools (ESMAILSS)." Descriptive statistics were used for analysis. The findings indicate a positive acceptance of indigenous languages in classroom settings, their use as a medium of instruction, and engagement in conversations by both students and teachers. Social media platforms are perceived as effective contributors to language preservation, presenting an opportunity for leveraging them to enhance preservation efforts. Factors influencing the decline of indigenous language usage include students' preference for other languages, insufficient teaching resources, and the influence of Western cultures. Recommendations include integrating social media into the language curriculum, providing teacher training programs, involving local communities, supporting language learning apps, organizing cultural events, and collaborating with social media companies. Implementation of these recommendations can contribute to the advancement and preservation of indigenous languages in secondary schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Keywords: Social Media, Promoting, Preserving, Indigenous Languages, Secondary Schools, North Central Zone, Nigeria

Introduction

In recent years, the global landscape has witnessed a significant surge in the use of social media platforms, becoming a ubiquitous aspect of communication and information dissemination. This digital revolution has impacted various facets of society, including education. Recognizing the pivotal role of indigenous languages in preserving cultural heritage, there is a growing interest in exploring innovative approaches to promote and advance these languages, particularly within the educational context. In contemporary societies, the advent of social media has revolutionized communication, presenting both challenges and opportunities. In the context of education, particularly in secondary schools, the utilization of social media tools holds the potential to contribute to the preservation and advancement of indigenous languages (UNESCO, 2013).

However, the use of standardized language proficiency tests designed specifically for the indigenous languages in question were applied. These tests may include listening, speaking, reading, and writing components (Baker, 2006). Assess students' cultural understanding and sensitivity related to the indigenous community can be done through projects, presentations, or interviews that require students to demonstrate knowledge of cultural practices, history, and values (McCarty, Romero, & Zepeda, 2013). Several studies have been carried out to examine social media impact as potentials for indigenous languages promotion and preservation. Hornberger (2008) conducted a survey to understand the frequency and context of students' language use both inside and outside the classroom. This can include questions about language use at home, with peers, and in community settings. Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar (2010) observe students in various settings, such as classrooms, playgrounds, and community events, to guide their practical language usage. This can provide insights into the application of language skills in real-life situations. Cummins & Early, (2011) posited that most students create language portfolios showcasing their written work, projects, and reflections related to the indigenous language. This can provide a comprehensive view of their language development and engagement.

Apparently, Nigeria, with its rich cultural diversity and numerous indigenous languages, faces the challenge of language erosion and extinction. The North Central zone, comprising states such as Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, F.C.T, Niger, and Plateau, is home to various indigenous languages, each facing the threat of diminishing usage among the younger generation. Secondary schools, as crucial hubs for education and language acquisition,

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

present an opportune space for exploring innovative strategies to promote indigenous languages (Crystal, 2011). The integration of social media into education offers a contemporary approach to language preservation. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp provide interactive spaces for students to engage with their peers, teachers, and community members using their indigenous languages (Warschauer & Matuchniak, 2014). Though, to investigate the extent to which these platforms can be leveraged to enhance language learning, communication, and cultural appreciation becomes paramount important.

In Nigeria, concerns have been raised about the negative impact of cultural interactions through social media on the country's culture and language. Various studies, such as those conducted by Asemah, Ekharefo, and Olaniran (2013) and Ogwo (2016), consistently highlight the transformative influence of the internet, especially in reshaping Nigeria's fundamental values. Recognizing this trend, there has been a growing interest in leveraging social media to promote indigenous languages in Nigeria. Ogwo's (2016) investigation into the social media's role in redefining the core values of the Igala ethnic group in Kogi state revealed that despite the youth's awareness of Igala values, they tended to adopt Western values encountered on social media, dismissing Igala values as outdated. Some researchers argue that social media serves as a tool for Western cultural dominance over developing countries (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), a concern echoed by Okunna (1999) who suggests that developed nations subtly impose their culture through international mass communication, potentially leading to a uniform global culture.

Contrary to the cultural imperialism perspective, Kraidy (2013) asserts that globalization, rather than intentional invasion, is the primary force reshaping cultures. Language, however, remains a significant medium for transmitting cultural values, as emphasized by Sharma (2008) who underscores its importance in various aspects of a nation's existence. The UNESCO's 2012 prediction about the potential extinction of many African languages by 2050, driven by the influence of dominant international languages like English, raises concerns about the preservation of linguistic diversity. Notably, even Igbo, a language belonging to one of Nigeria's major ethnic groups, has been listed as endangered (Azuonye, 2002). Despite these challenges, some argue that adopting foreign languages, such as English, facilitates meaningful interactions among Nigeria's diverse ethnic and linguistic groups, especially in post-colonial countries (Bisong, 2001). Ndolo (2006) suggests that Nigeria's multilingual status influences the content and

audience of mass media, adding complexity to communication due to the country's diverse ethnic composition.

The ease of joining social media platforms, along with the cost-effectiveness, makes them well-suited for promoting individual and group interests, including the preservation of indigenous languages. In countries like India, Indonesia, and South Africa, where many indigenous languages struggle to gain attention in mainstream media, social media has emerged as a viable alternative (Kperogi, 2011; McLachlan, 2016). Users are actively exploring ways to advocate for numerous indigenous languages, some of which researchers predict may face extinction soon (Uwechia, 2016). The internet fosters a type of communication that aligns with free expression in various forms, characterized by openness, decentralized broadcasting, and unexpected interaction. While the inherent openness of the internet exposes it to potential abuses, it also provides opportunities for positive utilization (Castells, 2019). Therefore, this research will explore the current status of indigenous language education in North Central zone secondary schools, identify the challenges faced in language preservation, and assess the potential impact of social media in addressing these challenges. By understanding the dynamics of language usage in the digital age, educators and policymakers can formulate effective strategies to integrate social media tools into the curriculum, ensuring the continued relevance and vibrancy of indigenous languages.

Problem Statement

Despite the rich linguistic diversity in Nigeria, indigenous languages face numerous challenges, including a decline in daily usage among the younger generation. Secondary schools, being critical institutions for language acquisition, struggle to maintain the relevance and vitality of indigenous languages within their educational frameworks. The advent of social media presents a potential solution to address this issue, but it also introduces several challenges that need careful examination. Indigenous languages often receive limited attention within the formal education system. The curriculum may prioritize official languages, leading to a neglect of indigenous languages. This lack of integration hinders the natural transmission of these languages to younger generations. The equitable access to digital tools and the internet is not uniform across regions and socio-economic strata in Nigeria. Issues related to the digital divide may impede the widespread adoption of social media for language promotion in secondary schools in the study area. The pervasive influence of global languages on social media platforms may overshadow the promotion of indigenous languages.

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

English and other dominant languages might continue to dominate online spaces, potentially marginalizing indigenous languages in the digital realm.

There is a dearth of established pedagogical frameworks for integrating social media into language education. Effective strategies for utilizing these platforms to teach and promote indigenous languages in secondary schools need to be developed. The diverse cultural context in Nigeria necessitates a careful consideration of cultural sensitivities and appropriateness when using social media for language promotion. Balancing modernity with cultural preservation poses a challenge in designing effective language promotion initiatives. Addressing these problems is crucial for harnessing the potential of social media in advancing indigenous languages in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria.

Justification of the Study

The study was anchored on the pressing need to address the decline and potential extinction of indigenous languages, particularly within the context of secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria. The study aims to contribute to the preservation of the diverse cultural identities represented by indigenous languages in the North Central zone. Understanding how social media can play a role in this preservation is crucial for maintaining cultural richness. Also threat of language erosion and extinction is a global concern. By focusing on the North Central zone, the study seeks to address a specific regional challenge and contribute valuable insights that can be applied to other areas facing similar challenge. Secondary schools are pivotal institutions for language acquisition and development. Investigating the integration of social media in these educational settings provides practical insights for educators and policymakers to enhance language learning experiences.

Also, the younger generation often drives trend in technology adoption, including social media. Understanding how indigenous languages can be promoted through social media in secondary schools is essential for engaging youth in language preservation efforts and ensuring the transmission of linguistic and cultural knowledge. In the era of digital communication, social media platforms offer unique opportunities for language revitalization. The study seeks to explore and understand the dynamics of utilizing digital tools and aligning them with the evolving communication landscape. However, the findings from this research can inform educational policies and curriculum development. Policymakers can use the insights gained to create initiatives that support the integration of social media for the advancement of indigenous languages in

secondary school settings. As the world becomes more interconnected, the study contributes to the global conversation on language preservation and the role of social media in this context. Lessons learned from the North Central zone can potentially be applied in other regions facing similar linguistic challenges. By justifying the study in these terms, it becomes evident that the research has broader implications for cultural heritage, education, and societal well-being, making it a valuable endeavour with potential far-reaching benefits.

Literature Review

Various definitions of social media have been presented by authors and researchers. According to Hudson and Roberts (2012), social media can be defined as "a form of electronic communication that allows user-generated interaction between the media's creator and the user." This interaction involves users creating profiles, connecting with friends, facilitating comments, making posts, and exploring various other platforms. Distinguishing between social media and social networking, Hudson and Roberts (cited in Cavico, Mujtaba, Muffler, & Samuel, 2013) explained that "social media" refers to the means through which communications are transmitted, while "social networking" pertains to the functional tools employed for information-sharing. The slight difference in these terms adds another layer to the complexity of understanding and defining the scope of social media. Social media platforms contribute to the documentation and archiving of indigenous languages. Through various multimedia formats such as videos, audio recordings, and written posts; social media becomes a repository of linguistic resources. This digital archive not only aids in preserving linguistic nuances but also serves as a valuable resource for future generations and researchers interested in the study of indigenous languages (Krauss, 2012).

Research by Crystal (2011) has highlighted the crucial link between social media and language revitalization efforts. Social media provides a dynamic space for communities to actively engage in the preservation of their indigenous languages (Ogwo, 2010). The interactive nature of these platforms facilitates user-generated content, allowing individuals to share, communicate, and create linguistic resources. Users can post content, share stories, and engage in discussions, creating a virtual environment where the language is actively used and celebrated. However, the impact of social media on language preservation is not without challenges. Apparently, the need for careful consideration of the authenticity of language use on social media, as informal or non-standard forms may become prevalent; because of the dominance of global languages on social

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

media platforms may pose a threat to the visibility and usage of indigenous languages (Dwyer & Heller, 2012).

In the context of secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria, the integration of social media into language education can be a transformative strategy. By incorporating social media tools into language learning curricula; educators can leverage the appeal of these platforms to engage students actively. The creation of language-focused social media groups, interactive language challenges, and collaborative projects can provide students with a space to use and appreciate their indigenous languages in a contemporary context. Government policies and support are crucial in harnessing the potential of social media for language preservation in educational settings. Adequate infrastructure, digital literacy programs, and initiatives that promote the use of indigenous languages on social media platforms can significantly contribute to the success of language preservation efforts in secondary schools (UNESCO, 2013). Preserving indigenous languages faces a myriad of challenges, encompassing societal, educational, and technological dimensions. Indigenous communities often experience language shift, where younger generations prefer using dominant languages over their native tongues (Fishman, 2011).

Societal and economic factors contribute to the decline of indigenous languages, as proficiency in a global language is often seen as more advantageous. Many indigenous languages lack comprehensive documentation, making it challenging to preserve and revitalize them (Grenoble & Whaley, 2016). Incomplete language documentation hinders efforts to create educational materials and resources for language revitalization. Inadequate support for indigenous language education within formal educational systems contributes to language erosion (Reyhner, 2012). Insufficient funding, trained teachers, and appropriate curricular materials hinder language instruction. The pervasive influence of global media and communication in dominant languages can marginalize indigenous languages, reducing their everyday use (Grenoble & Whaley, 2016). Globalized media tends to favor widely spoken languages, leading to the dominance of those languages in various spheres. Limited access to and use of technology within indigenous communities may impede efforts to leverage digital tools for language preservation (McCarty, 2011). The digital divide exacerbates disparities in accessing language resources, online education, and multimedia content. Shifts in communication patterns within families may result in a breakdown in intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages. When elders and youth struggle to communicate in the native language; opportunities for language transmission diminishes.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the role of social media in promoting and preserving indigenous languages within secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria. The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the current status of Indigenous language usage patterns in secondary schools within the North Central zone of Nigeria.
2. To investigate the role of social media in language preservation and promotion in the North Central zone of Nigeria.
3. Identify factors influencing the decline of indigenous language usage in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria.
4. Explore the perceived benefits associated with integrating social media into language preservation initiatives in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study will address the following research questions:

1. What is the current status of indigenous language usage among students in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria?
2. How are social media platforms currently used for the promotion and preservation of indigenous languages in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria?
3. What are the factors influencing the decline of indigenous language usage in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria?
4. What are the perceived benefits associated with the use of social media for language preservation in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria?

Methodology

This study employed descriptive survey design for the exploring the use of social media for the advancement of indigenous languages in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria. The study was targeted and conducted within the North Central Zone of Nigeria which includes the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau states. The research was carried out in three states namely; Benue, Niger and Kogi respectively. The study population consists of 8,481 teachers and secondary schools students in both private and public schools in Benue state educational zone, 9,623 teachers and secondary schools students in both private and public schools in Kwara state educational zone and 11,220 teachers and secondary

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

schools students in both private and public schools in Kogi state educational zone respectively to make up a total of 29,024 from the 3 states, all together forming the population under investigation. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 4 public and 4 private secondary schools in each state. This was done to justify adequate representation of schools to be used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the teachers in the sampled schools, while simple random sampling technique was used to select secondary school students across the public and private school in Benue, Kwara and Kogi state educational zone. The sample size consisted of 420 secondary school students and 30 teachers making a total of 450 respondents for the conduct of the study. To carry out this study effectively, the researcher conducted interviews with the respondents and designed a questionnaire titled "Exploration of Social Media for the Advancement of Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools (ESMAILSS). The questionnaire serves to gather information from the secondary school students and teachers in the study area. In order to establish the face and content validity of the ESMailSS, the study was validated by two experts in the Department of Linguistics, University of Abuja. A pilot test was conducted to determine the reliability of ESMailSS with three (3) research assistants who assisted the researcher in the field. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores. At the end of the pilot test, the researcher went to the field to carry out the research. After the administration of the questionnaire and interview the results below were the findings.

Results:

Research Question one: To assess the current status of Indigenous language usage patterns in secondary schools within the North Central zone of Nigeria.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Students and Teachers the Current Status of Indigenous Language Usage Patterns in Secondary Schools

S/n	Items	STUDENTS			TEACHERS		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	The use of Indigenous languages is actively encouraged and promoted in classroom settings.	3.12	1.60	Accepted	3.27	1.68	Accepted
2	Indigenous languages are frequently used as a medium of instruction in secondary schools.	3.15	1.66	Accepted	3.22	1.69	Accepted

3	Teachers and students often engage in conversations and discussions in Indigenous languages.	3.23	1.74	Accepted	3.32	1.71	Accepted
4	There are adequate resources and materials available to support the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages.	2.01	1.18	Rejected	2.10	1.23	Rejected

In table 1; items 1 to 3 suggest that both students and teachers generally accepted the active encouragement and promotion of indigenous languages in classroom settings; frequent use as a medium of instruction, and engagement in conversations in these languages. However, item 4 indicates that there is a rejection regarding the availability of adequate resources and materials for teaching and learning indigenous languages. This suggests a potential area for improvement in terms of providing adequate resources to support the teaching and learning of indigenous languages in secondary schools.

Research Question 2: To investigate the role of social media in language preservation and promotion in the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Students and Teachers on the role of Social Media in Language Preservation and Promotion.N450

S/n	Items	STUDENTS			TEACHERS		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Social media platforms effectively contribute to the preservation of Indigenous languages.	3.14	1.66	Accepted	3.21	1.45	Accepted
2	The use of social media has positively impacted the perception of Indigenous languages.	3.01	1.53	Accepted	3.10	1.58	Accepted
3	Social media initiatives have led to increased awareness and interest in Indigenous languages.	3.05	1.56	Accepted	3.02	3.04	Accepted
4	Indigenous language content on social media is engaging and attracts a wide audience.	3.45	1.61	Accepted	3.26	1.57	Accepted

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

Table 2 presents the mean and standard deviation of responses from both students and teachers regarding the role of social media in language preservation and promotion in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Both students and teachers agree to the research question. The mean values for each item are above 3.0, indicating a generally positive perception. The decision "Accepted" indicates that the respondents generally support the notion that social media contributes positively to language preservation and promotion. The standard deviations, while varying, suggest a generally consistent response among participants. These findings suggest a potential avenue for leveraging social media to enhance language preservation efforts. Educational institutions and language advocates can explore further initiatives on social media to engage a wider audience and foster positive perceptions of Indigenous languages.

Research Question 3: Identify factors influencing the decline of indigenous language usage in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Students and Teachers on the Factors Influencing the Decline of Indigenous Language Usage in Secondary Schools

S/n	Items	STUDENTS			TEACHERS		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Students prefer using other languages over Indigenous languages in their daily communication.	3.57	1.55	Accepted	3.41	1.64	Accepted
2	Insufficient teaching resources and materials contribute to the decline of Indigenous language usage.	3.10	1.71	Accepted	3.23	1.52	Accepted
3	There is a lack of emphasis on the importance of Indigenous languages in the curriculum.	3.25	1.64	Accepted	3.58	1.79	Accepted
4	The influence of Western cultures and languages has led to a diminished value placed on Indigenous languages	3.53	1.57	Accepted	3.21	1.53	Accepted

The table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation of responses from both students and teachers regarding the factors influencing the decline of indigenous language usage in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria. Both students and teachers agree to the research question. The mean values for each item are relatively high, indicating a significant perceived impact of these factors on the decline of indigenous language usage. The standard deviations, while varying, suggest a generally consistent response among participants. These findings highlight specific areas that need attention to address the decline of indigenous language usage, such as promoting the importance of indigenous languages in the curriculum and providing sufficient teaching resources. Addressing the influence of Western cultures may involve incorporating strategies to instill pride and value in indigenous languages.

Research Question 4: Explore the perceived benefits associated with integrating social media into language preservation initiatives in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria.

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Students and Teachers on the Perceived Benefits Associated with Integrating Social Media Into Language Preservation Initiatives in Secondary Schools
N450

S/ n	Items	STUDENTS			TEACHERS		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Integrating social media enhances the visibility and recognition of Indigenous languages.	3.47	1.49	Accepted	3.41	1.64	Accepted
2	Social media platforms provide opportunities for wider dissemination of Indigenous language content.	3.15	1.76	Accepted	3.23	1.52	Accepted
3	Increased engagement on social media positively impacts the preservation of Indigenous languages.	3.27	1.65	Accepted	3.58	1.79	Accepted
4	Teachers and students perceive social media as a valuable tool for promoting language preservation initiatives in schools.	3.33	1.67	Accepted	3.21	1.53	Accepted

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

Table 4 shows the Mean and Standard Deviation of responses from both students and teachers regarding the perceived benefits associated with integrating social media into language preservation initiatives in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria. The respondents generally perceive several benefits associated with integrating social media into language preservation initiatives in secondary schools in the North Central zone of Nigeria. The mean values for each item are above 3, indicating a positive perception of the benefits of using social media for language preservation. Standard deviations, while varying; suggest a generally consistent response among participants. The positive perceptions indicate that integrating social media can enhance the visibility, dissemination, and engagement related to indigenous languages in schools. Educators may consider incorporating social media into language preservation initiatives to capitalize on these perceived benefits.

Discussion

The findings presented in research question 1 provide valuable insights into the current status of indigenous language usage patterns in secondary schools within the North Central zone of Nigeria. Items 1 to 3 indicate a positive acceptance among both students and teachers regarding the active encouragement and promotion of indigenous languages in classroom settings, their frequent use as a medium of instruction, and engagement in conversations in these languages. This is in support of the study of UNESCO, (2013) that says that in the education context, the utilization of social media tools holds the potential to contribute to the preservation and advancement of indigenous languages.

The findings presented in research question 2 discuss the role of social media in language preservation and promotion both students and teachers generally agree that social media platforms effectively contribute to the preservation of indigenous languages. The findings suggest a potential avenue for leveraging social media to enhance language preservation efforts, as both students and teachers support the idea that social media positively impacts the perception of indigenous languages. This finding is in line with the study of Ogwo (2010) who posited that social media provides a dynamic space for communities to actively engage in the preservation of their indigenous languages.

The findings presented in research question 3 discuss the factors influencing the decline of indigenous language usage in secondary schools. Both students and teachers agree that factors such as students preferring other languages, insufficient teaching resources, a lack of emphasis on the importance of indigenous languages in the curriculum, and the influence of Western cultures

contribute to the decline of indigenous language usage. The findings highlight specific areas that need attention to address the decline of indigenous language usage, including promoting the importance of indigenous languages in the curriculum and providing sufficient teaching resources. The study of Dwyer & Heller, (2012) is in corroboration with the findings of this study that, the need for careful consideration of the authenticity of language use on social media, as informal or non-standard forms may become prevalent; because of the dominance of global languages on social media platforms may pose a threat to the visibility and usage of indigenous languages.

The findings presented in research question 4 affirmed that the respondents generally perceive several benefits associated with integrating social media into language preservation initiatives in secondary schools. Positive perceptions include enhanced visibility and recognition of indigenous languages, wider dissemination of indigenous language content, increased engagement on social media positively impacting language preservation, and both teachers and students seeing social media as a valuable tool for promoting language preservation initiatives. Educators may consider incorporating social media into language preservation initiatives to capitalize on these perceived benefits. The finding of this study concurred with the study of Crystal, (2011) who confirmed that secondary schools is a crucial hubs for education and language acquisition, present an opportune space for exploring innovative strategies to promote indigenous languages.

Conclusion

The role of social media in promoting and preserving indigenous languages in secondary schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria is significant, through various social media platforms, students have the opportunity to engage with their indigenous languages in new and dynamic ways. This engagement contributes to the revitalization and preservation of these languages, which is crucial for cultural identity and diversity. Social media platforms offer a space for students to share, learn, and celebrate their indigenous languages. The interactive nature of social media allows for the creation and dissemination of language-related content, including videos, audio clips, and written materials. This not only facilitates language learning but also fosters a sense of community among students interested in preserving their cultural heritage. Also, social media provides a platform for collaboration between students, teachers, and language experts. This collaborative effort can lead to the development of online resources, language learning apps, and educational content tailored to the specific needs of

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

students in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Such resources can complement traditional classroom teaching methods and enhance language acquisition.

Recommendations:

The study recommended the following;

1. Education authorities should consider integrating social media into the formal language curriculum. This can be achieved by incorporating online language learning modules, encouraging the use of language-related social media groups, and assigning projects that involve the creation of digital content in indigenous languages.
2. The government should provide training programs for teachers to equip them with the skills needed to effectively leverage social media for language promotion. This includes understanding various social media platforms, creating engaging content, and managing online communities.
3. Encourage the involvement of local communities in language preservation efforts through social media. Establish and promote online forums where community members, students, and educators can collaborate, share ideas, and contribute to language revitalization initiatives.
4. Support the development of language learning apps tailored to the indigenous languages of the North Central Zone. These apps can make language learning more accessible and engaging for students, allowing them to practice and reinforce their language skills outside the classroom.
5. Organize online cultural events, challenges, and competitions that celebrate indigenous languages. This can create a sense of pride and motivation among students, fostering a positive attitude towards language preservation.
6. Collaborate with social media companies to create language-friendly features, filters, or tools that specifically cater to the linguistic and cultural needs of the North Central Zone. This collaboration can enhance the overall language learning experience on social media platforms.

References

- Asemah, E., Ekharefo, D. and Olaniran, S. (2013). Nigeria's core values and the use of social media to promote cultural values. *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education*, 9(4), 12-28.

Azuonye, C., (2002). Igbo as an endangered language. Africana Studies Faculty Publication Series. Paper 17. http://scholarworks.umb.edu/africana_faculty_pubs/17.

Baker, C., (2006). Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. *Multilingual Matters*.

Bisong, C. (1995). Language choice and cultural imperialism: A Nigerian perspective. *ELT Journal* 49(2): 122-132

Casteslls, C. (2019). Development, social transformation and globalization. In KavoosMahannak (Ed) *Analysing social transformation, Capstrans working paper no 1 wollongongcapstrans* (online) available at <http://www.Capatgrans.edu.au/pubs/castles.pdf>. Retrieved 10/2/24.

Cavico, F., Mujtaba, B., Muffer, S., & Samuel, M. (2013). Social media and employment-at-will: Tort law and practical considerations for employees, managers and organizations. *New Media and Mass Communication*. 11, 25-41

Cummins, J., & Early, M. (2011). Identity Texts: The Collaborative Creation of Power in Multilingual Schools. *TESOL Quarterly*. 45 (2). 257–278.

Crystal, D. (2011). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dwyer, L & Heller, M. (2012). *Threat of social media platforms on the use of indigenous languages*. 123-201). Cambridge University Press.

Fishman, J. A. (2011). Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages. *Multilingual Matters*.

Grenoble, L. A., & Whaley, L. J. (2016). *Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hornberger, N. H. (2008). *Can Schools Save Indigenous Languages? Policy and Practice on Four Continents*. Palgrave Macmillan.

The Role of Social Media in Promoting and Preserving Indigenous Languages in Secondary Schools in the North Central Zone of Nigeria

- Hudson, C., & Roberts, K. (2012). Drafting and implementing an effective social media policy. *Texas Wesleyan Law Review*, 18, 767-794.
- Kaplan, A. & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenge and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*. 53. 59-68
- Kperogi, F. (2011). Webs of resistance: The citizen online journalism of the Nigerian digital diaspora. *Communication Dissertations*. 27.
- Kraidy, M. (2013). Globalization of culture through the media. In J. R. Schement (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Communication and Information*. 2. (359-363).
- Krauss, M. (2012). The world's languages in crisis. *Language*. 68.
- McCarty, T. L., Romero, M., & Zepeda, O. (2013). Reclaiming the Gift: Indigenous Youth Counter-narratives on Native Language Loss and Revitalization. *American Indian Quarterly*. 30 (1). (28-48).
- McCarty, T. L. (2011). Ethical Considerations for Educational Research in Indigenous Communities. In D. M. Moss, N. M. Ngunjiri, & K. L. Patton (Eds.), *Decolonizing Research in Cross-Cultural Contexts: Critical Personal Narratives*. (pp. 17-33). Routledge.
- Ndolo, I. (2006). *Mass media systems and society*. Enugu-Nigeria. RhyceKerex Publishers
- Ogwo, C. (2010). Social media and the redefinition of Igala core values: A study of Igala Youth. Ph.D. Seminar Paper Presented to the Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, August, 2016.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T., & Dunbar, R. (2010). Indigenous Children's Education as Linguistic Genocide and a Crime Against Humanity? A Global View. *GálduČála: Journal of Indigenous Peoples Rights*. 1. (1-53).
- Sharma, N. (2012). Impact of social media on English language: A review. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*. <http://ijellh.com/impact-social-media-english-language-review>. Retrieved. 15/1/24

Reyhner, J. (2012). Maintaining and Restoring Indigenous Languages. In N. Hornberger (Ed.), *Indigenous Literacies in the Americas: Language Planning from the Bottom Up* (pp. 37-52). Mouton de Gruyter.

UNESCO,(2013).*Language Vitality and Endangerment*.<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/endangered-languages/language-vitality-and-endangerment/>Retieved. 3/2/24

Uwechia, C. (2016). *UNESCO, and Endangered Igbo Language* (1).www.nigeriatoday.org. Retrieved. 29/1/24

Warschauer, M., &Matuchniak, T. (2014). New Technology and Digital Worlds: Analyzing Evidence of Equity in Access, Use, and Outcomes. *Review of Research in Education*.34(1), 179–225.