A Survey of Language Use by Speakers of Minor Nigerian Languages in the Social Media Spaces

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Abstract

This study presents a sociolinguistic survey of language use by native speakers of minor Nigerian languages on two social media platforms, viz., Facebook and Twitter. Social contexts that are characterised linguistically by the use of more than one language create room for interlocutors to make linguistic choices. Given that social media serves as one of the major means of communication in today's society, with some of its users being bilingual or multilingual, this opens up the possibility for users to make choices on the basis of some parameters. The goal of this study is therefore, among other things, to examine whether or not the choice of a minor Nigerian language is often made during communication on social media platforms and the factors that influence their extent of use. Data for the study was elicited from 120 L1 speakers of minor Nigerian languages who are users of Facebook and/or Twitter. The instrument for eliciting the data is a 21-item, self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was subjected to test-retest to ensure internal consistency. Presentation and analysis of data were done using descriptive frequency. The study found that Nigerian minor languages are underrepresented in the social media space. Even in intra-ethnic communication, speakers prefer English over their mother tongue. This is similar to having the English language take over the home domain, as is the case with most minor Nigerian languages.

Keywords: Minor language, Social media, Facebook, Nigeria, Communication, Twitter

1. Introduction

Social contexts that are characterised linguistically by the possibility of using more than one language open up the possibility for interlocutors to make language choices (Genemo, 2021; de Groot, 2019). One of these contexts is

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social media, a computer-mediated platform that can be used to build social relations among people who share similar personal and career interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections. The platform is mainly internet-based (Haythornthwaite, 2005; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Obar and Widman, 2015; Amichai-Hamburger and Hayat, 2017). Social media network sites have their origin in the potential for computer networking to facilitate improved forms of computer-mediated social interaction (Hiltz and Turoff, 1993; Hauben et al., 1997; Boyd and Ellison 2008). These sites let people connect with other people. Given that humans are social animals, the need to connect is a major drive in men's activities. Even our most basic needs, such as food and safety, have always been met by humans through interaction, cooperation, and attachment. As a result, new platforms for human social interactions emerge on a regular basis, one of which is social networking sites. Emerging studies have shown that social networking sites have helped users establish and enhance relationships and contacts, have an up-to-date view of happenings around the globe, facilitate speedy dissemination of information, etc.

Nigerians are among those who use social media. A report from the Terragon Group (2013) shows that Nigeria has the largest population of netizens (internet users) in Africa and the eleventh largest in the world, with a total internet population of 48, 366, 179. This figure represents 28.4% of the total population of the country. The average Nigerian netizen spends not less than 3 hours per day surfing the internet. News/information seeking and social networking are the two topmost online activities in Nigeria, while Facebook, 2go, and Twitter are the most frequently used social networking sites. According to the report, there are at least 9 million social media users in Nigeria, with 83% of them active.

The activities on social media often involve the use of language (Baron, 2008). Thus, social media is a domain of language use. This domain offers the possibility of making a choice of what language to use depending on the number of languages at one's command and the context. Linguistic choices are often made by individuals in different social situations when their command of linguistic varieties includes the capacity to use more than one language efficiently. Thus, choice suggests that there are viable options from which one can weigh a number of possibilities, select among them, and think

of one as preferable. According to Genemo (2021:7), "scholars have identified a number of factors which they believe influence language choice and language use in ethnic minority settings. These are as follows: domain, interlocutors, and topic". Thus, choices are often driven by some factors.

The purpose of this study is to look into the factors that influence how much minor Nigerian languages are used in online social networks. Nigeria is a complex multi-lingual polity. It has approximately 522 indigenous languages (see Crozier and Blench, 1992; Blench, 2014), besides foreign languages such as English, French, Arabic, and Pidgin. The Nigerian language policy as well as most studies on the linguistic situation in Nigeria classify the indigenous languages of Nigeria into two groups on the basis of the relative number of speakers. These are major languages and minor (non-major) languages. The former includes Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo, while the other 519 languages are considered minor languages (Ufomata, 1999). Although there are varying classifications, this distinction between major and minor is used in this study for convenience. The work is divided into five sections, namely introduction (§ 1), literature review (§ 2), methodology ((§ 3), data presentation/discussion ((§ 4) and conclusion (§ 5).

2. Literature review

According to Ajepe and Ademowo (2016), there is continued dominance of the English language over Nigerian languages in most domains of language use in Nigeria. Although the extent of dominance varies from one Nigerian language to another, it has implications for the vitality level of these languages. It has been reported that in most cases, members of language communities often abandon their original vernacular language in favour of the English language (Ebo, 2022; Babarinde and Nwosu, 2019). Languages function in different domains. Speakers whose linguistic command includes the capability to use more than one language efficiently in a given domain often make linguistic choices about the language to use. According to Duan (2004: 23), the first choice that participants in an intercultural encounter face is that of the language (or languages) in which the interaction is to be conducted. In some intra-cultural encounters, speakers also make choices, thereby shifting from their mother tongue to another language. This suggests that when interlocutors in a conversation share more than one language in common, an effort is made, consciously or unconsciously, to make a choice

of language in different domains and language situations. However, such choices are determined by a number of factors, such as the domain of language use, setting, speaker, addressee, subject, topic, language attitude, etc.

Studies have shown that most speakers of minor languages in Nigeria often opt for English in most intercultural as well as intracultural communication, despite the fact that their languages are often thought of as endangered. Although it is not always the case that minor languages are endangered, the majority of these languages are, and this is true of Nigeria (Batibo, 2005). Mbagwu and Obiamalu (2009) also note that minority languages in all countries have received scant attention in the literature. They further note that in this globalisation era, the world's countless minor languages will be neglected in turn for a common world language. The emergence of social network sites is one of the main areas of globalization, and it is seen by Santos and Martin (2005) as the modus operandi of the new generation.

It has also been noted in some studies that social media sites offer places and platforms to regenerate and revive endangered languages (Evas, 2014; Fitzgerald, 2015). For instance, Jongbloed-Faber et al. (2016) undertook research on the language use of Frisian bilingual teenagers on social media from 2013 until 2015. More than 2000 teenagers, ages 14–18, filled out a questionnaire about their language use, language preference, language attitude, and language proficiency. The result of the study shows that, on social media, Frisian is mainly used by L1 speakers, 87% of whom use it to some extent. This finding suggests that social networking sites can offer chances for minority languages to increase their vitality.

The internet also aids language revitalization by enabling speakers who may be separated by space to maintain virtual contact through email, chat, and instant messaging platforms (Crystal, 2004). If a minority language speaker moved away from their community in the past, the chances of them continuing to speak that language would have been greatly reduced because s/he would have been cut off from others who shared the same mother tongue as him/her. However, with advances in technology, s/he can now stay in touch in all kinds of ways irrespective of the distances. Evas (2014), however, notes that:

> as the world becomes increasingly globalised and reliant on technology, English has been reinforced once again as the lingua franca. The technological infrastructure that now dominates our working and private lives is overwhelmingly in English, which means minority languages are under threat more than ever. But it might also be true that technology could help us bring minority languages to a wider audience. If we work out how to play the game right, we could use it to help bolster linguistic diversity rather than damage it.

Thus, social media may serve both to help invigorate a minority language or threaten it (Cunliffe, 2007), depending on whether the language has a representation on the internet or not. Information from the Indigenous Tweets blog shows that "the big three" have active use and representation on Twitter. The data cached in the blog shows that there are 450219 tweets in Hausa, 211631 in Igbo, and 293881 in Yoruba. There is, however, no information on the number of tweets in other Nigerian languages other than the three major ones. The "big three" also have natural language support interfaces such as automated translation, keyboard support, etc., unlike the minor languages. Although these do not necessarily suggest that Nigerian minority languages have no active representation on social media (or otherwise), they open up the need to investigate their use in the social media space.

3. Methodology

This study employs data elicited from 120 informants using a 21-item, self-structured questionnaire and from six (6) ethno-linguistic Facebook groups. The informants were randomly selected from twenty-four (24) minor Nigerian languages, four languages from each of the six regions of Nigeria in Uwechue (1971:xxxiv). Uwechue's (et al.) region represents a somewhat "fairer" distribution of the landmass and linguistic resources of the country, as may be clearly seen in Figure 1 below. The languages of the respondents are shown in Table 1. Although some of the languages chosen are spoken across regions, this has not been taken into consideration. The only factor considered is the relative number of speakers of each language selected within a region; languages with a higher population of speakers were considered.

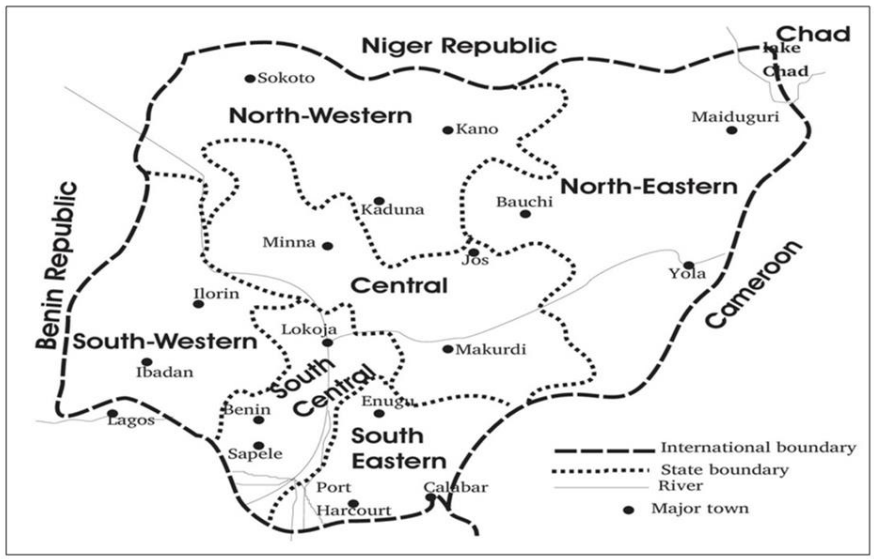

Figure 1: Language Distribution of Nigeria

Table 1. Overview of languages surveyed in the study

S/N	Region	Languages chosen for the administration of questionnaire	Language for data in Facebook groups
1.	South-Western	Ebirra, Egun, Ogori, Owe	Awori
2.	South-Central	Bini, Urhobo,	Igalla
3.	South-Eastern	Aduge, Ibibio, Efik	Ijaw
4.	North-Western	Cicipu, C'lela, Fulfude, Zarma	Ngizim
5.	North-Eastern	Gwari, Jukun, Saya, Tula,	Kanuri
6.	Central	Eggon, Mwaghavul, Tiv, Tyap	Berom

The questionnaires were administered and retrieved at two locations: ninety (90) in Benin and eighty (80) in Jos, between 2016 and 2019. The informants were selected on the basis of the following inclusion criteria[1]:

1. respondent's mother tongue must be a Minor Nigerian language;
2. respondent must have some proficiency in their mother tongue in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing; and
3. respondent must be a Facebook and/or twitter user[2].

The questionnaires were further subjected to a test-retest reliability test in order to examine the reliability and consistency of the responses. This was done by re-administering the test on 30 of the respondents 6 months after the first test in Benin. The result shows no significant change in the responses elicited in the two tests.

As already noted, the study also employed data elicited through data mining. Data were mined from six ethno-linguistic Facebook groups, one from each of Uwechue's (1971) six proposed regions. Posts such as updates, comments, replies, reactions, and picture uploads made in the selected ethno-linguistic Facebook groups within a one-year period (February 2017–January 2018) were counted in order to examine the number of posts made using the mother tongue (relative to the total number of posts made) and the number of likes on posts made using the mother tongue (relative to the total number of likes made). The ethno-linguistic Facebook groups used in the study are:

(a) South-Western (Awori): Awori Parapo
(b) South-Central (Igala): Igala Language
(c) South-Eastern (Ijaw): Ijaw Language Clinic
(d) North-Western (Ngizim): Ngizim Development Forum
(e) North-Eastern (Kanuri): Proudly Kanuri
(f) Central (Berom): Proudly Berom

The discussion of the data is premised on Fishman's domain analysis. This framework, which is based on the famous question of "Who speaks what

[1] The distributions of the respondents along such variables as age, gender level of proficiency in their mother tongue, level of usage of mother tongue in some domains, time spent online and online activities are shown in appendix II.

[2] These two social network sites are chosen given that these are the two most widely used social networking sites in most countries of the world (See Santos and Martin, 2015: 37).

language to whom and when?" is useful for both description and explanation of the distribution and use of language in domains (Genemo, 2021). According to Fishman, one language is more likely to be appropriate in some specific contexts than another. Thus, domain analysis is the study of language use by relating respondents' self-reported language behaviours and attitudes to sociological indices in the groups being studied.

4. Data presentation and analysis

Writing a minor language is a model of endangered language documentation and revitalization that is beneficial and has the participation of the language community. According to Quinn (2014), it makes the language visible, which can reclaim territory for the language, from signposts to social media. Social media engagements bring about the need to use language, especially in its written form. Netizens may use any language of their choice. In the following discussion, we will look at how speakers of minor Nigerian languages use social media. It seeks to investigate whether or not minor Nigerian languages have sufficient presence in online social media, bearing in mind that the poor representation in modern technology is a signal of language loss (Kioko, 2004). It also examined what language is most frequently used by speakers of minor Nigerian languages in Facebook and Twitter updates and chats, as well as the factors underlying such choices.

Table 2. Mother tongue usage in Nigerian minor Ethno-linguistic Facebook groups

No	Variables	Values
1	total number of posts/comments/replies made	5,616
2	number of updates/comments/replies in the mother tongue	2,106
3	percentage of updates/comments/replies in the mother tongue	37.5%
4	total number of likes on updates/comments/replies	7,422
5	number (and percentage) of likes on updates/comments/replies made in the mother tongue	42%

The data in Table 2 is a report of observations of posts, comments, and replies made in the six Nigerian ethno-linguistic Facebook groups. The total counts of updates, comments, and replies in the various mother tongues relative to the total number of posts in these groups during the period observed show

that only 37.5% of the posts were in the mother tongue. In some of the Ethno-linguistic groups from Northern Nigeria, the Hausa language is used. This perhaps is because this is the language of wider communication in Northern Nigeria. However, most of the posts were in the English language. The result also shows that 42% of the positive reactions to posts and updates were for posts made in the mother tongue. Reactions are Facebook's line-up of emoji that allow you to react to posts with different animated emotions such as "like," "love," "sad," "angry," etc. They give users a more nuanced way of expressing their sentiments about posts (Russell, 2017). According to Teehan (2016), the reaction's design is based on two key principles: (i) reactions should be universally understood, and (ii) reactions should be widely used and expressive (should allow people to express themselves in ways they would in real life). Implicitly, a more positive reaction to posts done in the mother tongue may indicate a positive attitude towards the language and help promote posts made in the mother tongue. In what follows, we present data from the questionnaires.

Table 3. Most frequently used language on Facebook/Twitter by speakers of minor Nigerian languages and why

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
English	69	57.5%
Major Nigerian Language	0	0
Pidgin	51	42.5%
Others	0	0
auto-correct support	21	17.5%
Ease of writing	38	31.7%
appropriate keyboard	13	10.8%
Audience Maximization	42	35%
Others	6	5%

The result in Table 3 shows the most frequently used languages and why. According to the findings, English is the language most frequently used by speakers of Nigerian minor languages in tweets and status updates, as well as comments and replies on Facebook. In fact, it is shown that only English and Nigerian Pidgin are the most frequently used languages, with English having 69 respondents, which represents 57.5%, while Nigerian Pidgin has 51 respondents, representing 42.5%. Other languages such as major Nigerian

languages, Arabic, among others may be used (as will be shown later), but they are not the most frequently used.

With respect to the factor underlying the choice of English or Nigerian Pidgin as the most frequently used language on social media by speakers of minor Nigerian languages, The result of respondents' motivation for choosing the most frequently used language on Facebook updates, tweets, and replies shows that 35% of the respondents chose audience maximisation as the factor that informed their choice of the language they frequently use in making posts or tweets, while 31.7% chose ease of writing. Thus, target audience and writing proficiency are the major factors that inform respondents' choice of English over their mother tongue with respect to language use on social media.

Table 4. Mother tongue usage in status updates on Facebook/Twitter

	No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
How often?	1	I do not	99	82.5%
	2	All the time	0	0
	3	Often	6	5%
	4	Now and then	15	12.5%
Do you code-mix?	1	Not at all	9	42.9%
	2	All the time	2	9.5%
	3	Often	0	0
	4	Now and then	10	47.6%
Do you translate?	1	No	18	85.7%
	2	Yes	3	14.3%

Table 5. Reasons for not using mother tongue for status updates on Facebook/Twitter?

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not all my friends understand it	34	34.3%
2	I find writing it difficult and I do not want to make mistakes	31	31.3%
3	There is no appropriate keyboard for my language	3	3%
4	There is no auto-correct support	5	5.1%
5	I find writing in English easier	26	26.3%

The possibility that native speakers of Nigerian minor languages use their mother tongues in digital contexts is very slim. As already noted in Table 3, only English and Nigerian Pidgin are the most frequently used languages in Facebook updates and tweets. The result in Table 4 further shows that 99 respondents (representing 82.5% of the respondents) do not use their mother tongue for status updates or tweets at all. Only 21 people, representing 17.5% of the respondents, use their mother tongue for updates, with 5% using it often and 12.5% using it now and then. Of the 21 respondents who use their mother tongue for status updates, 42.9% do not code-mix or code-switch in such posts, 9.5% do so all the time, and 47.6% do now and then. It is also shown that only 14.3% of those who use their mother tongue for updates translate their posts, while 85.7% do not.

The 99 respondents which do not posts/tweets using their mother tongue also indicated the reason for which they do not make posts/tweets using their mother tongue. The result, as presented in Table 5 above, shows that 34.3% of respondents who do not use their mother tongue for updates do so in order to reach a larger audience, while 31.3% do so because they find it difficult to write in their language. Those who find writing English easier are 26.3%. These are the three major reasons given in the responses.

Table 6. Do you use your mother tongue for chats on Facebook? If yes, how often?

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	No	75	62.5%
2	All the time	0	0
3	Often	11	9.2%
4	Now and then	34	28.3%

Table 6 shows the results on the use of Nigerian minority languages by respondents in private chats with people of the same ethno-linguistic group. The result shows that the majority of the respondents (62.5%) do not use their mother tongue for private chats. It is further observed from the responses given that the age range "less than 20" barely uses their mother tongue for chatting on social media. This may not be unconnected with the fact that the majority of the respondents in this group are barely proficient with respect to writing in the language.

4.1 Attitude towards the use of mother tongue in social media

This study also looks at respondents' attitudes toward using their mother tongue on social media. Given that attitudes cannot be studied directly, the assessment of language attitudes requires asking such questions about other aspects of life. Areas probed into include reactions to requests for translation of posts made in the mother tongue (since most minor Nigerian languages do not have auto-translate support), respondents' assessments of people's reactions to posts and tweets, their own assessments of reactions to updates and tweets made in the mother tongue, and the extents to which respondents read posts and tweets made in their mother tongue (by others). The results of these questions are shown in Tables 7–10 below.

Table 7. Have you been told to translate your posts? If yes, what best describes your feelings?

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	I have not been told to translate	5	23.8%
2	felt happy and translated	2	9.5%
3	Indifference	8	38.2%
4	angry over such request	4	19%
5	Discouraged	2	9.5%

Table 8. Respondents' assessment of people's reaction to the posts/tweets they made using their mother tongue?

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly opposed	0	0%
2	Opposed	1	4.8%
3	Indifferent	1	4.8%
4	Accept	13	61.9%
5	Strongly accept	6	28.5%

Table 9. Self-assessment of reaction to updates/tweets made in mother tongue

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly opposed	2	1.7%
2	Opposed	9	7.5%

3	Indifferent	10	8.3%
4	Accept	78	65%
5	Strongly accept	21	17.5%

Table 10. Extent to which respondents read posts/tweets made in their mother tongue

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not at all	22	18.3%
2	Now and then	29	21.2%
3	Indifferent	10	8.3%
4	Often	45	37.5%
5	All the time	14	11.7%

In Table 7, it is observed that 16 out of the 21 respondents who use their mother tongue for status updates have been told to translate such posts into English, while 5 (representing 23.8%) have not been told to translate their posts. Of the 16 who were told to translate their posts, only 2 did, 8 felt indifferent, 4 were angry, and 2 were discouraged. The request for translation indicates interest in the message contained in the posts and tweets. Implicitly, the fact that 76.2% of the respondents were requested to translate the posts they made in their mother tongue suggests some evidence of a positive attitude towards posts made in the mother tongue, the reactions from the respondents notwithstanding.

Table 8 also shows some positive attitudes among respondents regarding people's reactions to posts and tweets made in their mother tongue. This is because 90.4% indicate positive acceptance of such posts, while only 4.8% oppose them. It is the same as the results in Tables 9–10. In the respondents' self-assessment of the reactions of all respondents to posts made in the mother tongue (Table 9), 82.5% of respondents noted that there is a positive reception of such posts, while only 9.2% indicated that there is a negative reception (with 8.3% indicating indifference). While in Table 10, respondents' responses on whether or not they like to read posts made using their mother tongue show that most respondents read contents created on Facebook and Twitter using their mother tongue.

5. Conclusion

Some social contexts allow for the use of more than one linguistic code. This is even more so when the linguistic command of the interlocutors includes the capability to use more than one language efficiently. Such context creates an avenue for interlocutors to make choices. This is the case with language use on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. This study sought to examine the place of Nigerian minority languages on social media. The aim was to investigate the extent to which Nigerian minor languages are used on Facebook and Twitter and the factors that determine such extent of use. It drew evidence from data collected through a questionnaire and data mining. Responses from 120 respondents, all of whom are speakers of Nigerian minor languages, and data mined from 24 ethno-linguistic Facebook groups are examined in line with the objectives of the study.

The data shows that minor Nigerian languages are inadequately represented on the internet, especially on social media. This is clearly evident in the data in Table 2, in which only 37.5% of the total number of posts, tweets, and replies made in the mother tongue in six ethno-linguistic Facebook groups were done in the mother tongue. This is further corroborated by the number of respondents that make use of their mother tongue in social media updates relative to those who do not, as shown in Table 3. Given that all respondents are proficient in their mother tongue to some degree, especially in terms of reading and writing, one would expect that the majority of the respondents would use their languages for updates. One possible implication of this underrepresentation is the possible absence of texts for Natural Language Processing (NLP). In most NLP tasks, language data are extracted from social media posts/tweets (Evas, 2014; Měchura, 2015).

It was also found from the study that there is a positive attitude towards the use of Nigerian minor languages by their speakers. However, there is no corresponding relationship between this positive attitude and the usage of the languages on Facebook or Twitter. In Kioko (2004), four signals of language loss are identified, one of which is poor representation in modern technology. Implicitly, Nigerian minor languages may be classified as "unviable" given their inability to feature prominently in the new media.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your age range?: [Less than 20 years]; [20-30 years]; [31-40 years]; [above 40]
2. What is your gender?: [male], [female]
3. What language is your mother tongue? _____
4. How proficient are you in the language?

	Not at all	With difficulty	Reasonably well	Very well
Listening				
Speaking				
Reading				
Writing				

5. If you are proficient in the language, how often do you use it:

	All the time	Often	Now & then	Not at all
With your parents				
With your friends				
With your siblings				
In telephone conversation				
In sending SMS				

6. Do you use Facebook and/or Twitter? [Yes], [No]
7. If yes, how many hours a day do you spend on Facebook/Twitter (on the average)? [Less than an hour], [1 – 2 hours], [3 – 4 hours], [above 4]
8. What do you use Facebook/Twitter for? (Tick as much as applicable) [status update], [upload pictures], [chat with friends], [reply/comment on posts], [react to posts], [share posts], [read through posts], [others]
9. What language do you frequently use on Facebook/Twitter? [English], [Yoruba], [Hausa], [Igbo], [Mother tongue], [Pidgin], [Arabic], [Others]

10. What informed your choice of the language? (tick as much as applicable) [Ease of writing in the language], [appropriate keyboard], [target audience], [auto-correct support], [others (specify)] _____
11. Do you use your mother tongue for status updates on Facebook/Twitter? [Yes] [No]
12. If yes, how often do you use it for status updates? [All the time], [Often], [Now and then], [once in a blue moon]
13. Do you mix your mother tongue with another language in status updates? If yes, with what language? [I don't mix], [I mix with English], [I mix with Pidgin], [I mix with other languages]
14. If yes, do you translate the posts? [Yes], [No]
15. Do you use your mother tongue for chats on Facebook? [Yes] [No]
16. If yes, how often do you use it for chats? [All the time], [Often], [Now and then], [Never]
17. If no, why?- (Tick as much as applicable) [Not all my friends understand it], [I find writing it difficult], [I find writing in _____ (specify language) easier than writing in my mother tongue]
18. Have you been told to translate a post you made using your MT? if yes, what best describes your feelings at such request? [felt happy and translated], [indifference], [angry over such request], [discouraged], [not applicable]
19. What best describes people's reaction to such posts made in the mother tongue? [Strongly oppose], [Oppose], [Neutral], [Accept], [Strongly accept]
20. What best describes your reaction to such posts made in the mother tongue? [Strongly oppose], [Oppose], [Neutral], [Accept], [Strongly accept]
21. How often do you read posts made on Facebook/Twitter with your mother tongue? [not at all], [now & then], [often], [all the time]

APPENDIX II: DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to age and gender

	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Less than 20 years	21	17.5%
2	20-30	47	39.2%

3	31-40	42	35%
4	Above 40	10	8.3%
1	Male	60	50%
2	Female	60	50%

Table 2. Level of proficiency of respondents in their mother tongue

No	Variable	With difficulty	Reasonably well	Very well
1	Listening	20 (16.7%)	60 (50%)	40 (33.3%)
2	Speaking	26(21.7%)	62 (51.7%)	32 (26.6%)
3	Reading	40(33.3%)	50 (41.7%)	30 (25%)
4	Writing	45 (37.5%)	45 (37.5%)	30 (25%)

Table 3. Level of usage of mother tongue in pre-determined domain

No	Variable	All the time	Often	Now & then	Not at all
1	Parents	20 (16.7%)	49 (40.8%)	43 (35.8%)	8 (6.7%)
2	Friends	12 (10%)	15 (12.5%)	82 (68.3%)	11 (9.2%)
3	Siblings	20 (16.7%)	47 (32.2%)	70 (58.3%)	31 (25.8%)
4	telephone conversation	0 (0%)	5 (4.2%)	30 (25%)	45 (37.5%)
5	sending SMS	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	120 (100%)

Table 4. Time spent online by respondents

No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Less than an hour	05	4.2%
2	1 – 2 hours	13	10.8%
3	3 – 5 hours	20	16.7%
4	More than 5 hours	82	68.3%

Table 5. Online activities of respondents on Facebook/Twitter

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (Relative to number of respondents)

1	status update/tweet	118	98.3%
2	upload pictures	102	85%
3	chat with friends	102	85%
4	reply/comment on posts	105	87.5%
5	react to posts	82	68.3%
6	share posts/retweet	100	83.3%
7	read through posts/tweets	120	100%