



Informal Indigenous Language Instruction through the New Media: The Yorùbá Example

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the role of new media platforms in informal learning and the preservation of the Yoruba language among media users in Nigeria. Specifically, it examines users' preferred digital platforms for language learning, the frequency of engagement with Yoruba language content, and perceptions regarding the quality of language used on these platforms. A survey was administered to 193 participants, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Findings reveal that platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, and Instagram are most preferred, with users actively engaging in content consumption for language acquisition. Respondents also reported generally positive perceptions of the quality of Yoruba language online, though some concerns about code-mixing and occasional grammatical errors were noted. The study highlights the significance of new media as both educational tools and cultural repositories, facilitating linguistic competence, cultural knowledge, and informal learning motivation. These findings underscore the potential of digital platforms to support indigenous language preservation, offering practical insights for educators, content creators, and policymakers seeking to enhance Yoruba language learning in digital contexts. The study contributes to the broader discourse on language maintenance, digital literacy, and cultural sustainability in the digital age.

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KEYWORDS:

Yoruba language, new media, informal learning, indigenous language preservation, digital culture, social media platforms.

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INTRODUCTION

Language as a cultural element has been found to have existed for ages due to its consistent and continuous use. Culturally, language serve as a form of identification giving a sense of belongingness. It also aids the preservation of indigenous knowledge, cultural values and traditional wisdom (Onadipe-Shalom, 2024). Despite the functionalities of language, the modern day however has threatened its continuous existence due to the availability of other practices denying the effective use of indigenous languages (Saadu & Oyèwolé, 2025).

Migration and globalization are key components that has reduced the existence and effectiveness of the use and the learning of indigenous languages especially in the formal setting. Formally, learning a language within the four walls of a classroom is effective when there are no interference of external concepts, actions are therefore geared towards reviving the efficient use and learning of indigenous languages (Sanusi, Taiwo, & Shekete, 2025).

In the four walls of a classroom, learning a language is based on rules, a structured curriculum, strict compliance tests and assignments to show the level of accrued knowledge, necessary use of lesson aids among other features. While on the contrary, the informal way of learning presents a more convenient structure enabling learners have a chain of options to choose from depending on their comfort. Learning informal presents the learner with the options of choosing what time suits them best, what they want to learn and may not necessarily be tested on their level of accrued knowledge so far except in instances where the learner seeks a level of mastery of the language.

Learning takes place anywhere and at any time. This means learning is not restricted to the four walls of the classroom. It can also be received informally in our environment, our experiences and access to the new media through the internet. Of all the

aforementioned, new media still stands as the most accessible platform where learning can take place (Raji, Uدورah, & Akinpelu, 2025). From the comfort of one's home, access can be gained to any kind of desired media content, leading to an avenue to learn, and follow trends including ones that portrays culture, language and other intricacies of a cultural society.

The new media are digital platforms serving as avenues where different contents can be created and shared to thousands of people at the same time. Digital platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and WhatsApp serve this purpose (Saidu, 2025). Every language and culture seeks a wider publicity but with the current trends in the new media, Yorùbá language seem to be in a higher terrain (Akinsola, 2025). Contents relating to language, custom, tradition and values are being presented for the audience day in day out (Ayodeji, 2021).

The Yorùbá cultural society is found in the Western part of Africa where the language is used to present other cultural concepts such as music, oral tradition - proverbs, poems and praise poetry, religion, customs and traditions (Akinwumi, 2014). Its continuous use is however threatened by the fast rising compliance to the use of English language as the most recognized global language finding its footing further in the formal setting (Akinsola, 2023). As a result of this, media content creators are arriving to revive its originality by creating different contents on all aspects of Yorùbá especially Yorùbá language to avoid its complete extinction. People thus derive pleasure in it while learning at the same time. Learners are thus being taught the language informally through plays, short stories, music, comedy as presented in the media at their convenience (Akinsola & Adeyinka, 2020; Pinheiro, Oluwaseyi, & Imoh, 2020).

In essence, creating Yorùbá cultural contents that enhances the learning of Yorùbá language is made possible when content creators liaise with the professionally trained educators and elders to get genuine contents to avoid misrepresentation (Akinsola, 2025). This also insures the future of Yorùbá language among other concepts of the culture as it sees to its continuous existence and use (Olabode & Kenechukwu, 2025). In other words, the new media as an informal way of learning Yorùbá language serves as a bridge connecting the Yorùbá community in the diaspora to their root (Sanusi et al., 2025). It creates in them a sense of belongingness, originality and a feeling of being genuinely recognized. Meaning that leaving one's home country and local community does not mean outright abandonment or disqualification from being a member, it only gives the chance to be further recognized.

Learning through the New Media platforms is an informal way of learning, it allows learning at one's convenience and this creates more opportunities for any age range and social status to learn Yorùbá language without having to follow strict rules of learning in a formal school setting (Kolawole & Kenechukwu, 2025). A reasonable number of studies have been carried out on the use and advantages of new media, however not much studies have concentrated on new media as an informal mode of learning indigenous languages.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing global interest in indigenous language preservation, the Yoruba language faces challenges in sustaining its usage among younger generations, particularly in urban contexts where English and other global languages dominate both formal education and social interaction. Traditional media, such as radio and television, have historically supported Yoruba language learning and cultural transmission, but their reach and appeal among youths are increasingly limited. Meanwhile, new media platforms—social networking sites, video-sharing apps, and mobile learning applications—offer novel opportunities for informal language learning and cultural engagement, yet there is limited empirical evidence on how Yoruba media users interact with these platforms, their preferred modes of engagement, and their perceptions of language quality. Without understanding these dynamics, efforts to harness digital technologies for Yoruba language learning and preservation risk being ineffective or misaligned with learners' needs. This study, therefore, addresses the critical gap by investigating which new media platforms are most preferred for learning Yoruba, how frequently users engage with Yoruba language content online, and how they perceive the quality of Yoruba language presented on these platforms. By doing so, it aims to inform strategies for enhancing digital-based indigenous language education and sustaining cultural heritage in the digital age.

Research Objectives

The study was aimed at:

- i. Identifying which media platform Yoruba media users prefer in self-learning the Yoruba language;
- ii. Assessing how often Yoruba media users visit the new media to learn the Yoruba language informally; and
- iii. Understanding the perception of Yoruba media users about the quality of the Yoruba language used in the new media.

Research Questions

The study answered the following questions:

1. Which new media platform do Yoruba media users prefer in self-learning the Yoruba language?
2. How often do Yoruba media users visit the new media to learn the Yoruba language informally?
3. What is the perception of Yoruba media users about the quality of the Yoruba language used in the new media?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it highlights the critical role of new media in the promotion and preservation of the Yoruba language, offering empirical insights into learners' preferences, usage patterns, and perceptions of content quality. By identifying the most effective platforms and content types for informal language learning, the research provides practical guidance for educators, curriculum developers, and digital content creators seeking to support indigenous language education. The findings underscore how digital tools can complement formal education, creating flexible, learner-centered opportunities that resonate with contemporary youth engagement patterns (Akinsola, 2025; Sanusi, Taiwo, & Shekete, 2025). Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive digital content, which integrates local language and heritage into formats that are appealing and accessible to diverse audiences.

In addition, the study has broader cultural and sociolinguistic significance. It demonstrates that digital platforms are not merely tools for entertainment or social interaction but are also powerful vehicles for sustaining linguistic heritage and fostering cultural pride. By showing that users actively engage with Yoruba language content online and perceive it as valuable for learning, the research contributes to discourses on language maintenance, digital literacy, and cultural hybridization in the digital age (Olabode & Kenechukwu, 2025; Ayodeji, 2021; Raji, Uدورah, & Akinpelu, 2025). The study also provides a foundation for future interventions aimed at improving the quality and reach of Yoruba language content on new media, ensuring that the language remains vibrant and relevant in contemporary socio-digital contexts.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the role of new media platforms in informal Yorùbá language learning. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of data from a relatively large population in order to describe existing conditions, preferences, behaviours, and perceptions as they naturally occur, without manipulation of variables. The survey approach was particularly suitable for capturing media users' self-reported platform preferences, frequency of engagement, and perceptions of language quality within informal digital learning environments.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised Yorùbá media users in Nigeria who actively engage with new media platforms such as YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and other digital platforms where Yorùbá language content is produced and consumed. This population includes youths and adults who use new media for entertainment, communication, cultural engagement, and informal learning purposes.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 193 respondents participated in the study. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, which allowed the researcher to deliberately target individuals who met the key inclusion criteria—namely, active use of new media platforms and prior exposure to Yorùbá language content online. This sampling technique was considered appropriate given the study's focus on informal learning contexts and digitally active users, who are best positioned to provide relevant and informed responses to the research questions.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was divided into sections corresponding to the research objectives and questions. The items were designed to elicit information on respondents' preferred new media platforms for learning Yorùbá, frequency of engagement with Yorùbá language content online, and perceptions of the quality of Yorùbá language used on new media platforms.

All questionnaire items were structured on a four-point Likert scale of *Strongly Agree (4)*, *Agree (3)*, *Disagree (2)*, and *Strongly Disagree (1)*. The Likert format was chosen because it allows respondents to express varying degrees of agreement while eliminating a neutral option, thereby encouraging more decisive responses.

Validity of the Instrument

To ensure content and face validity, the questionnaire items were carefully aligned with the study's objectives and research questions. Draft copies of the instrument were reviewed by experts in language education and media studies to assess the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. Their suggestions informed minor revisions in wording and item sequencing to enhance clarity and ensure that the instrument adequately captured constructs related to informal learning, media usage, and language quality.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established through a pilot test conducted among a small group of Yorùbá media users who were not part of the main study. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.76, that was considered acceptable for social science research. This indicated that the items consistently measured the constructs under investigation.

Procedure for Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered primarily through online platforms, including social media channels and digital communication networks, in order to reach respondents who actively use new media. This approach was consistent with the digital orientation of the study and enabled wider geographical coverage. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents completed the questionnaire at their convenience.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarise respondents' responses to each item, while mean scores and standard deviations were computed to determine the level of agreement and variability. A decision threshold mean of 2.50 was adopted for interpreting results: mean scores equal to or above 2.50 were regarded as accepted, while mean scores below 2.50 were considered rejected. Weighted mean scores were also computed for each research question to provide an overall assessment of respondents' views.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Respondents were adequately informed about the purpose of the research, and their consent was obtained prior to participation. No personal identifying information was collected, and all responses were treated with confidentiality. The study was conducted solely for academic purposes, and participants retained the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: Which new media platform do Yoruba media users prefer in self-learning the Yoruba language?

Table 1

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	St. D.
1	I prefer YouTube for learning Yoruba language informally.	127 (65.8%)	46 (23.8%)	10 (5.2%)	10 (5.2%)	3.50	0.82
2	I prefer Facebook for accessing Yoruba language learning content.	123 (63.7%)	33 (17.1%)	31 (16.1%)	6 (3.1%)	3.41	0.87
3	I prefer WhatsApp groups or broadcasts for learning Yoruba language.	100 (51.8%)	81 (42.0%)	2 (1.0%)	10 (5.2%)	3.40	0.76
4	I prefer TikTok for learning Yoruba words, expressions, and pronunciation.	67 (34.7%)	42 (21.8%)	61 (31.6%)	11 (5.7%)	2.73	1.18
5	I prefer Instagram for Yoruba language learning through short videos and posts.	96 (49.7%)	77 (39.9%)	9 (4.7%)	11 (5.7%)	3.34	0.81
6	I prefer X (formerly Twitter) for reading and learning Yoruba language usage.	93 (48.2%)	90 (46.6%)	4 (2.1%)	6 (3.1%)	3.40	0.69
7	I prefer podcasts and audio platforms for learning spoken Yoruba.	114 (59.1%)	20 (10.4%)	18 (9.3%)	41 (21.2%)	3.07	1.24
8	I prefer language-learning mobile apps that support Yoruba language.	69 (35.8%)	62 (32.1%)	41 (21.2%)	21 (10.9%)	2.93	1.00
9	I prefer platforms that combine audio, video, and text for learning Yoruba.	142 (73.6%)	35 (18.1%)	4 (2.1%)	12 (6.2%)	3.59	0.81
10	Overall, social media platforms are more useful than traditional media for learning Yoruba language.	97 (50.3%)	87 (45.1%)	4 (2.1%)	5 (2.6%)	3.43	0.67
Weighted Mean= 3.28; Threshold=2.50							

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that Yoruba media users show a generally high preference for new media platforms in self-learning the Yoruba language. All the items recorded mean scores above the decision threshold of 2.50, with an overall weighted mean of 3.28, signifying strong acceptance. Notably, platforms that combine multimedia features—such as audio, video, and text—received the highest level of endorsement ($\bar{x} = 3.59$), followed closely by YouTube ($\bar{x} = 3.50$) and the overall usefulness of social media over traditional media ($\bar{x} = 3.43$). These findings suggest that visually rich and interactive platforms are particularly effective for informal language learning. Although TikTok ($\bar{x} = 2.73$) and mobile language-learning apps ($\bar{x} = 2.93$) recorded comparatively lower means, they still met the acceptance threshold, indicating moderate preference. Overall, the table demonstrates that Yoruba media users actively embrace diverse new media platforms—especially those offering multimodal content—as viable tools for informal Yoruba language learning.

Research Question 2: How often do Yoruba media users visit the new media to learn the Yoruba language informally?

Table 2

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	St. D.
1	I visit new media platforms daily to learn Yoruba language content.	132 (68.4%)	51 (26.4%)	4 (2.1%)	6 (3.1%)	3.60	0.69
2	I frequently watch or listen to Yoruba language lessons online.	101 (52.3%)	46 (23.8%)	36 (18.7%)	10 (5.2%)	3.23	0.93
3	I regularly follow Yoruba language educators or content creators online.	108 (56.0%)	73 (37.8%)	11 (5.7%)	1 (0.5%)	3.49	0.63
4	I often engage with Yoruba language posts by liking, commenting, or sharing.	82 (42.5%)	36 (18.7%)	57 (29.5%)	18 (9.3%)	2.94	1.05
5	I spend considerable time on new media learning Yoruba language informally.	79 (40.9%)	71 (36.8%)	35 (18.1%)	8 (4.1%)	3.15	0.86
6	I use new media to learn Yoruba language more than once a week.	127 (65.8%)	38 (19.7%)	20 (10.4%)	8 (4.1%)	3.47	0.84
7	I revisit saved Yoruba language content for revision.	89 (46.1%)	82 (42.5%)	18 (9.3%)	4 (2.1%)	3.33	0.73
8	I intentionally search for Yoruba language learning materials on new media.	114 (59.1%)	49 (25.4%)	24 (12.4%)	6 (3.1%)	3.40	0.82
9	I rely on new media regularly to improve my Yoruba speaking skills.	90 (46.6%)	28 (14.5%)	24 (12.4%)	51 (26.4%)	2.81	1.27
10	Learning Yoruba language through new media is part of my routine.	92 (47.7%)	35 (18.1%)	60 (31.1%)	6 (3.1%)	3.10	0.95
Weighted Mean=3.25; Threshold=2.50							

Table 2 reveals that Yoruba media users frequently visit new media platforms to learn the Yoruba language informally. The overall weighted mean of 3.25 exceeds the threshold of 2.50, indicating a high level of engagement. Items relating to daily usage ($\bar{x} = 3.60$), regular following of Yoruba language educators ($\bar{x} = 3.49$), and using new media more than once a week ($\bar{x} = 3.47$) attracted particularly strong agreement, reflecting habitual and sustained use. Furthermore, respondents indicated intentional learning behaviours such as searching for Yoruba language materials ($\bar{x} = 3.40$) and revisiting saved content for revision ($\bar{x} = 3.33$). Although reliance on new media to improve speaking skills recorded a relatively lower mean ($\bar{x} = 2.81$), it still met the acceptance criterion, suggesting cautious but positive reliance. Taken together, the findings underscore that informal Yoruba language learning through new media is not occasional but embedded in the regular routines of many users.

Research Question 3: What is the perception of Yoruba media users about the quality of the Yoruba language used in the new media?

Table 3

S/N	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	St. D.
1	The Yoruba language used on new media is generally accurate.	139 (72.0%)	48 (24.9%)	—	6 (3.1%)	3.66	0.64
2	Pronunciation of Yoruba words on new media is mostly correct.	126 (65.3%)	61 (31.6%)	6 (3.1%)	—	3.62	0.55
3	Tone marks are properly used in Yoruba language content online.	70 (36.3%)	41 (21.2%)	75 (38.9%)	7 (3.6%)	2.90	0.94
4	Yoruba language used on new media reflects standard Yoruba usage.	103 (53.4%)	70 (36.3%)	—	20 (10.4%)	3.33	0.92
5	Code-mixing with English reduces the quality of Yoruba language on new media.	119 (61.7%)	68 (35.2%)	—	6 (3.1%)	3.55	0.66
6	Some Yoruba language content online contains grammatical errors.	109 (56.5%)	59 (30.6%)	25 (13.0%)	—	3.44	0.71
7	New media helps improve my understanding of correct Yoruba language usage.	119 (61.7%)	35 (18.1%)	20 (10.4%)	19 (9.8%)	3.32	1.01
8	Yoruba language used by influencers online sets a good example for learners.	125 (64.8%)	57 (29.5%)	5 (2.6%)	6 (3.1%)	3.56	0.70
9	Informal Yoruba language used on social media affects language correctness.	125 (64.8%)	62 (32.1%)	3 (1.6%)	3 (1.6%)	3.60	0.61
10	Overall, the quality of Yoruba language on new media is satisfactory for learning.	95 (49.2%)	45 (23.3%)	26 (13.5%)	27 (14.0%)	3.08	1.09
Weighted Mean= 3.40; Threshold=2.50							

As shown in Table X, respondents generally hold positive perceptions of the quality of Yoruba language used on new media platforms. The table produced the highest overall weighted mean of 3.40, indicating strong acceptance of most quality-related items. Respondents largely agreed that Yoruba language usage on new media is accurate ($\bar{x} = 3.66$), that pronunciation is mostly correct ($\bar{x} = 3.62$), and that influencers often provide good language models for learners ($\bar{x} = 3.56$). However, concerns were also evident, particularly regarding the improper use of tone marks ($\bar{x} = 2.90$) and the presence of grammatical errors in some content ($\bar{x} = 3.44$). Additionally, the perceived negative impact of code-mixing and informal usage on language correctness attracted strong agreement, highlighting tensions between communicative convenience and linguistic standardisation. Overall, the findings suggest that while new media provides largely acceptable and pedagogically useful Yoruba language input, issues of linguistic accuracy and standard usage remain areas requiring improvement.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from Research Question 1 reveal a strong preference for new media platforms—particularly multimedia-rich platforms such as YouTube, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), and hybrid audio-visual-text platforms—for informal Yoruba language learning. This preference aligns with Akinsola's (2023) earlier observation that younger Yoruba audiences increasingly gravitate toward media forms that combine accessibility, entertainment, and educational value, often at the expense of traditional mass media. The prominence of YouTube in particular supports Raji, Uدورah, and Akinpelu's (2025) findings that YouTube performances provide visually engaging, linguistically accessible, and culturally resonant content capable of sustaining indigenous language transmission, especially among younger users.

The strong endorsement of platforms that integrate audio, video, and text reinforces cognitive film and multimodal learning perspectives advanced by Akinsola (2025), which argue that language acquisition is enhanced when learners process linguistic input through multiple sensory channels. In this context, the appeal of YouTube, Instagram, and WhatsApp voice notes suggests that learners value pronunciation modelling, contextualised usage, and visual cues that support meaning-making in Yoruba language learning. This mirrors global findings in digital language education that multimodal environments facilitate deeper engagement and retention (Kress, 2010; Mayer, 2009).

At the same time, the comparatively lower—but still accepted—preference for TikTok and mobile language-learning applications suggests a tension between entertainment-driven content and pedagogically structured learning. While TikTok's short-form videos support micro-learning and rapid exposure to vocabulary and expressions, their fragmented nature may limit sustained linguistic depth, a concern echoed by Akinwumi (2014) in his analysis of postmodern Yoruba storytelling in new media spaces. Thus, while users embrace diverse platforms, they appear to privilege those that balance entertainment with instructional clarity.

The results for Research Question 2 indicate that Yoruba media users engage with new media platforms frequently and deliberately for informal language learning. High mean scores for daily visits, regular following of Yoruba content creators, and routine engagement suggest that new media learning is embedded within users' everyday digital practices rather than being episodic or incidental. This finding strongly corroborates Onadipe-Shalom's (2024) argument that social media has become a living linguistic ecosystem where Yoruba language use is continually rehearsed, negotiated, and revitalised.

The habitual nature of engagement also reflects what Sanusi, Taiwo, and Shekete (2025) describe as “digital gratification,” whereby users derive linguistic, cultural, and affective satisfaction from consuming and interacting with Yoruba language content online. This is particularly evident among diaspora communities, for whom new media functions as both a linguistic classroom and a cultural homeland. Such sustained engagement supports Saidu's (2025) broader claim that new media now rivals—and in many contexts surpasses—traditional media in promoting African language maintenance.

However, the relatively lower reliance on new media for improving spoken Yoruba skills highlights an important nuance. While users frequently consume and interact with content, speaking proficiency may require more interactive, dialogic, and feedback-driven environments than most social media platforms currently provide. This limitation echoes Saadu and Oyèwolé's (2025) call for more intentional technological integration in Yoruba language education, particularly tools that support oral practice, corrective feedback, and tone accuracy.

Findings from Research Question 3 reveal generally positive perceptions of the quality of Yoruba language used on new media, particularly regarding accuracy, pronunciation, and the pedagogical influence of online content creators. These results resonate with Olabode and Kenechukwu's (2025) conclusion that media platforms have become effective instruments for preserving and promoting Yoruba culture, especially when content creators consciously model linguistic correctness.

Nevertheless, respondents also expressed concern over persistent challenges, notably improper tone marking, grammatical inconsistencies, and excessive code-mixing with English. These concerns echo longstanding debates in Yoruba linguistics and media studies about standardisation versus communicative flexibility. Akinwumi (2014) and Pinheiro, Oluwaseyi, and Imoh (2020) caution that while new media democratise language production, they also dilute normative linguistic conventions, particularly in orthography and tonal accuracy.

Interestingly, strong agreement that code-mixing negatively affects language quality does not necessarily imply outright rejection of hybridity. Rather, it reflects what Akinsola (2025) conceptualises as “aesthetics of cultural hybridisation,” where users are critically aware of the economic, performative, and identity-driven motivations behind mixed-language usage. This awareness suggests that learners are not passive recipients of digital language content but active evaluators who distinguish between entertainment value and pedagogical reliability.

The finding that informal Yoruba usage affects language correctness further reinforces the need for balance between accessibility and standardisation. While informal registers enhance participation and relevance, excessive deviation from standard forms may hinder learners seeking accurate models. This tension aligns with Kolawole and Kenechukwu's (2025) observation that media influence on Yoruba culture is both empowering and problematic, depending on content regulation and audience literacy.

Taken together, the findings affirm that new media constitutes a powerful informal learning space for Yoruba language acquisition, cultural transmission, and identity negotiation. The results support Akinsola and Adeyinka's (2020) earlier conclusion that media preferences significantly shape cultural knowledge acquisition, extending this argument into the digital sphere. New media platforms do not merely replicate traditional learning modes; they transform them by enabling participatory, user-generated, and translocal language practices.

However, the findings also underscore the need for strategic interventions to improve linguistic quality, particularly in tone marking, grammatical accuracy, and oral proficiency development. Without such interventions, the long-term pedagogical potential of new media may be undermined by unchecked informality. This study therefore aligns with broader calls in African language scholarship for intentional digital language planning, content curation, and collaboration between educators, linguists, and media practitioners (Fishman, 1991; Crystal, 2000).

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the role of new media in the informal learning of the Yoruba language by examining users' platform preferences, frequency of engagement, and perceptions of the quality of Yoruba language content available online. The findings demonstrate that new media has become a dominant and influential space for Yoruba language learning, use, and cultural transmission, particularly among digitally active populations. Overall, the study confirms that new media platforms are not merely supplementary tools but central sites for indigenous language maintenance and revitalisation in contemporary Yoruba society.

The study revealed a strong preference for multimedia-rich platforms such as YouTube, WhatsApp, and hybrid audio-visual-text platforms, indicating that learners value interactive, accessible, and context-driven modes of language exposure. These platforms support pronunciation modelling, contextualised usage, and learner engagement, which are essential for informal language acquisition. Furthermore, the high frequency of engagement observed suggests that Yoruba language learning through new media is embedded in users' everyday digital routines rather than occurring sporadically. This sustained interaction underscores the pedagogical potential of new media as an informal learning environment that complements formal language education.

In terms of language quality, respondents generally perceived Yoruba language content on new media as accurate and useful for learning, particularly in relation to pronunciation and general language usage. However, concerns were raised regarding inconsistent tone marking, grammatical inaccuracies, excessive code-mixing, and the impact of informal registers on language correctness. These concerns highlight the dual nature of new media as both an enabling and challenging space for indigenous language development—one that democratises access and participation while simultaneously complicating issues of standardisation and linguistic accuracy. Taken together, the findings suggest that while new media offers significant opportunities for Yoruba language revitalisation, its effectiveness depends on intentional content creation, linguistic awareness, and pedagogical sensitivity. The study therefore underscores the need for collaboration among educators, linguists, content creators, and policy stakeholders to harness new media more strategically for indigenous language learning. By addressing quality concerns while preserving the participatory and engaging nature of digital platforms, new media can serve as a sustainable pathway for promoting Yoruba language competence, cultural continuity, and intergenerational transmission in the digital age.

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