Maastricht University

Frisian on social media

Citation for published version (APA):

Jongbloed-Faber, L. (2021). *Frisian on social media: the vitality of minority languages in a multilingual online world*. [Doctoral Thesis, Maastricht University]. LOT. https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20210903lj

Document status and date:
Published: 01/01/2021

DOI:
10.26481/dis.20210903lj

Document Version:
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Please check the document version of this publication:

• A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
• The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
• The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

Link to publication

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FRISIAN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Vitality of Minority Languages
in a Multilingual Online World

Published by
LOT
Kloveniersburgwal 48
1012 CX Amsterdam
The Netherlands

phone: +31 20 525 2461

e-mail: lot@uva.nl
http://www.lotschool.nl

Cover illustration: Erika van Zwetselaar

ISBN: 978-94-6093-380-6
DOI: https://dx.medra.org/10.48273/LOT0596
NUR: 616

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FRISIAN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Vitality of Minority Languages in a Multilingual Online World

DISSERTATION

to obtain the degree of Doctor at Maastricht University,
on the authority of the Rector Magnificus, Prof. dr. Rianne M. Letschert
in accordance with the decision of the Board of Deans,
to be defended in public on Friday 3 September 2021 at 14:00 hours

by

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This dissertation is the result of a PhD research project co-funded by Maastricht University and Fryske Akademy.

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Acknowledgements - Foarwurd

For years, Frisian was ‘just’ my mother tongue: the language in which I could express myself best, the language I preferred to speak with family and friends, and the language of the brass bands I played in. Only when I was expecting Femke, and I was looking for information on raising children in multiple languages because we wanted to give Swedish a role in her upbringing, I found out that Frisian is also a full-fledged language, and that my longing to become truly multilingual had been a reality from my childhood on. In the end, in 2013, my journey into the world of professional Frisian began. First on a project basis as a researcher at Mercator and the Fryske Akademy, and at the end of 2015 as a PhD candidate at Maastricht University and the Fryske Akademy.

The past few years have been an enrichment of my life. I can finally write in Frisian, something that I had unfortunately never learned in school. I now send WhatsApp messages in Frisian to all my Frisian-speaking friends and family, I could no longer do it differently; I tweet in Frisian, I post my updates on Facebook in Frisian, and I have even written whole reports in Frisian. I have also met a lot of special people. Some contacts have become friends for life. I am very grateful for that. Together we reflect on how we can support small languages such as Welsh, Irish, and Cherokee – and their speakers – with our research, by passing on our knowledge to those language communities about how to overcome the social and technological barriers there are to using those small languages in daily life and in the digital world. A reduction in linguistic diversity, just like a reduction in biodiversity, means a decrease in wellbeing – and I think we must do everything we can to turn the tide.

My PhD position would never have existed, and I would never have finished my doctoral work, without the support of my supervisors Leonie Cornips, Hans Van de Velde, and Edwin Klinkenberg. Tige tank, ’nen hielen dikke merci[1] for your support during this roller coaster ride. I am very grateful for your guidance and encouragement. A special thanks to all researchers with whom I wrote papers, some of which are now included in this dissertation. Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity. I loved working together with you, Sarah, Daniel, Paul, Jolie, Cor, and of course my supervisors. I believe the work we have done is very important and shows the way forward for minority languages such as Frisian. Diolch Daniel, mae eich cefnogaeth a'ch cyfeillgarwch yn amhrisiadwy.[2] Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the assessment committee: Sally Wyatt, Unn Røyneland, Susan Schreibman, and Jos Swanenberg. I am very honoured you agreed to read and evaluate my dissertation. I also feel very privileged that Helen Kelly-Holmes and Joana Duarte agreed to be part of my defence committee.

[1] Thank you very much in Frisian and in Limburgish (Maastricht dialect).

[2] Thanks Daniel, your support and friendship are invaluable.

I would also like to thank all secondary and vocational schools in Fryslân that participated in the research. Thank you, teachers, for including the questionnaire in your classes. Your enthusiasm was heart-warming. And thank you, Frisian teenagers who participated in the research and took the time to fill in the very long questionnaire! The information you provided is crucial for this dissertation, and the insights obtained can further strengthen the Frisian language in the digital era. Ek Emiel fan De Hûnekop wol ik betankje. Bjusterbaarlik dat ik jim muzyk, optredens en sosjalemediaposts brûke mocht en dat wy tegearre praat hawwe oer hoe'tsto taal brûkst en wat it Frysk foar dy betsjut.[3]

Leave Dirk-Jan, Femke and Selma: tankjewol foar jim geduld en stipe. Ik bin krekt lykas jim ferskriklik bliid dat it boek einlings ôf is. No is der wer mear tiid om cakejes te bakken en te tsjillen. Tankjewol heit en mem, foar jim stipe en fertrouwen yn my. Tankjewol oan al myn freondinnen en kollega's by de FA en de UM, en de bestjoersleden fan de Stichting Nederlandse Dialecten. Yn it bysûnder wol ik Anne, Annewiep, Ankie, Anneke, Annika, BethAnne, Brenda, Daan, Daniel, Derek, Dolf, Dong, Evelyn, Hindrik, Jelske, Jeremy, Jolie, Kim, Liesje, Lotte, Marten, Marit, Mettje, Minke, Mirjam, Nantke, Niamh, Nika, Pia, Reina, Rolf, Ron, Ruth, Sarah, Saskia, Te Taka, Theo, Wenche, Yfke en Yne betankje foar jim stipe, en foar alle praatsjes, kuiertochten en moaie reizen dy't wy tegearre makke hawwe.[4] Thanks to all academics and language activists I have met over the years, both in Ljouwert, elsewhere in the Netherlands, abroad in Wales, Malta, Spain, Ireland, South-Africa, Denmark and Hungary, and online. We have created wonderful memories together.

I would also like to highlight Erika van Zwetselaar's contribution to this dissertation. She designed the beautiful front page and the figures in the introduction, conclusions, impact chapter, and summary. Thank you so much!

Finally, a special note to my paranymphs, Yfke and Mirjam. Yfke, who I met almost 25 years ago at the University of Groningen when we both followed a course in media research; and Mirjam. Wêr hie it Frysk west sûnder dy?[5] With your support I started this journey and I can end it now. Tankjewol.

[3] I also want to thank Emiel from De Hûnekop. Fantastic that you allowed me to use your music, performances and social media posts and that we talked together about how you use language and what Frisian means to you.

[4] Dear Dirk-Jan, Femke and Selma: thank you very much for your patience and support. I am as happy as you are that the book is finally ready. Now there will be more time to bake cupcakes and relax again. Thanks very much mum and dad, for your support and confidence in me. Thanks to all my friends and colleagues at the Fryske Akademy and Maastricht University, and the board members of the Stichting Nederlandse Dialecten. A special thanks to Anne, Ankie, Anneke, Brenda, Daan, Daniel, Derek, Evelyn, Hindrik, Jelske, Jeremy, Kim, Liesje, Lotte, Maarten, Marit, Mettje, Minke, Mirjam, Nantke, Niamh, Nika, Pia, Roger, Rolf, Reina, Ron, Ruth, Saskia, Te Taka, Wenche, Yfke and Yne for your support, for all talks we had, and all walks and beautiful trips we made together.

[5] Where would Frisian be without you?

1. Introduction

During the last decade, social media have become an indispensable vehicle for daily communication. While technology and an internet connection make it possible to communicate with anyone in the world at any time, people use social media also to be in touch with close friends and relatives. Importantly, the current COVID-19 pandemic has further increased the share of digital communication and online experience. For minority languages such as Frisian, the Internet and social media are seen as both a threat and an opportunity. On the one hand, unlimited opportunities have become available on the Internet for distributing, consuming and preserving content in any language (Cunliffe & Herring 2005:131). On the other hand, only a dozen languages dominate the Internet (W^3Techs 2020). In particular the online position of languages that mainly have a spoken tradition may be at stake. Therefore, the main research question addressed in this dissertation is:

What is the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages?

In order to address this question, I investigate the use of Frisian as a minority language on social media as a case study. In addition, I compare the online use of Frisian to (i) offline practices, and (ii) the online use of Dutch and three other minority languages on social media, i.e. Limburgish, Welsh and Irish. To be able to develop a more specific argument on my central research question, I divided it into the following five sub-questions:

1. **When and how often is Frisian used on social media?**
2. **Which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media?**
3. **How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of the majority language Dutch?**
4. **How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of other minority languages?**
5. **How are local identities associated with Fryslân constructed in online and offline practices?**

The structure of this introduction is as follows. In Section 1.1, I introduce Frisian as a minority language in the Netherlands. Section 1.2 presents the social media under investigation in this dissertation. Next, in Section 1.3, I discuss the challenges and opportunities that arise for minority languages on social media. Finally, Section 1.4 provides an outline of the dissertation.

1.1 Frisian

Frisian[6] is the official second language in the province of Fryslân in the Netherlands, after Dutch, the national language. The province of Fryslân has almost 650,000 inhabitants, two thirds of which live in the countryside and one third in one of the four biggest cities (Provinsje Fryslân 2020). Frisian is the first language for 48% of the inhabitants, while another 13% were raised in Frisian in combination with another language, mainly Dutch (Klinkenberg et al. 2018). In general, Frisian is spoken more in the countryside than in cities (Gorter & Jonkman 1995; Klinkenberg et al. 2018). Over the past centuries, Dutch managed to acquire a dominant position in education and many other domains in Fryslân. Most individuals learn Frisian as a first language at home, but develop their literacy skills through Dutch in educational contexts (Günther-Van der Meij 2018:15).

The majority of the inhabitants is able to understand Frisian (very) well (84%), 64 percent can speak it (very) well, but only 16 percent indicate that they can write it (very) well (Provinsje Fryslân 2020:7-8). In the home domain, 43 percent speak Frisian with their partner and 45 percent speak Frisian with their children (Provinsje Fryslân 2020:7-8). People's attitudes in Fryslân towards Frisian are mixed: while most Frisian speakers take a positive stance towards Frisian and its use, a minority of the province's population does not favour its use (usually those not speaking Frisian) (Gorter et al. 2001; Klinkenberg et al. 2018).

According to the UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (Moseley 2010), Frisian is vulnerable. In 1998, Frisian was recognised as a regional or minority language under parts II and III of the European Charter for Regional and Minority languages (ECRML), which obliges the Dutch government to protect and promote Frisian in all fields of public life, such as education, public administration and services, and the media. Particularly the position of Frisian in primary education, however, is still vulnerable and in need of further improvement (Council of Europe 2020).

In the ECRML, regional or minority languages are defined as "languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants" (Council of Europe 1992: article 1 of the Charter). In this dissertation, in order to explore how (a)typical the use of Frisian is on social media, I will compare its use with the use of three other regional or minority languages on social media, namely Irish, Welsh and Limburgish. According to the ECRML, Irish, Welsh and Frisian are minority languages recognised under parts II and III of the Charter, while Limburgish is recognised under part II only. As a consequence, and unlike Frisian in Fryslân, Limburgish does not have official status in the province of Limburg (Council of Europe 1992). Irish is the

[6] Frisian is the name commonly used to refer to West Frisian, the variety of Frisian spoken in the Netherlands (Tiersma 1999).

first official language of Ireland, despite a much stronger societal position of English in that country. Welsh is an official national language in Wales next to English.

In this dissertation, I will use the term 'minority language'[7] to refer to languages such as Frisian because this concept well reflects the unequal power relations between speakers of a majority and minority language, which often includes a difference in status between (speakers of) the majority and minority language as well (Gardner & Lambert 1972; Kircher & Fox 2019). For speakers of minority languages, there are often less opportunities to use their language in all domains, in particular in 'official' domains, such as in communication with public authorities, in education and in court. Although in theory the ECRML ensures equal rights for the use of minority languages in official domains, in practice this may not be the case in many situations. As a consequence, many speakers of minority languages do not have access to (the same quality of) education in their minority language, and they may even face inferior literacy in their minority language in comparison to the majority language. This in turn can have a negative impact on the use of the minority language in writing, also on social media.

1.2 Social media

Social media connect people, irrespective of place and time, provided that one has (infrastructural and financial) access to technical equipment and an Internet connection (Wang et al. 2014). Obviously, social media have significantly changed the way people interact. The emergence of these media has had a profound effect on people's linguistic and communicative habits, as well as on social groups and networks actually created through social media (Seargeant & Tagg 2014:2). As boundaries in space and time have largely disappeared in the online world, a term often used is 'context collapse': the coming together of a diverse group of people in an online network that would never meet simultaneously in an offline situation (Marwick & boyd 2011).

Social media are online platforms on which content is created through participation and interaction (Seargeant & Tagg 2014:2). Interaction on social media is aimed at (mainly informal) information exchange, usually with the emphasis/focus on personal exchanges (Page et al. 2014:13). The maintenance of the network itself has often become more important than the exchange of information (Miller 2008:398). This is called 'phatic communication': communication that serves to strengthen personal bonds instead of communicating ideas (Malinowski 1923, in Zappavigna 2014). In other words, users sometimes merely want to inform their contacts that they are still there (Zappavigna 2014). For social media users it is not just important what they share, but also how they do this and which feedback they expect to

[7] When comparing Frisian and Limburgish (see Chapter 3), I will use the term regional language to refer to both Limburgish and Frisian, as I do not want to stress the difference in official recognition.

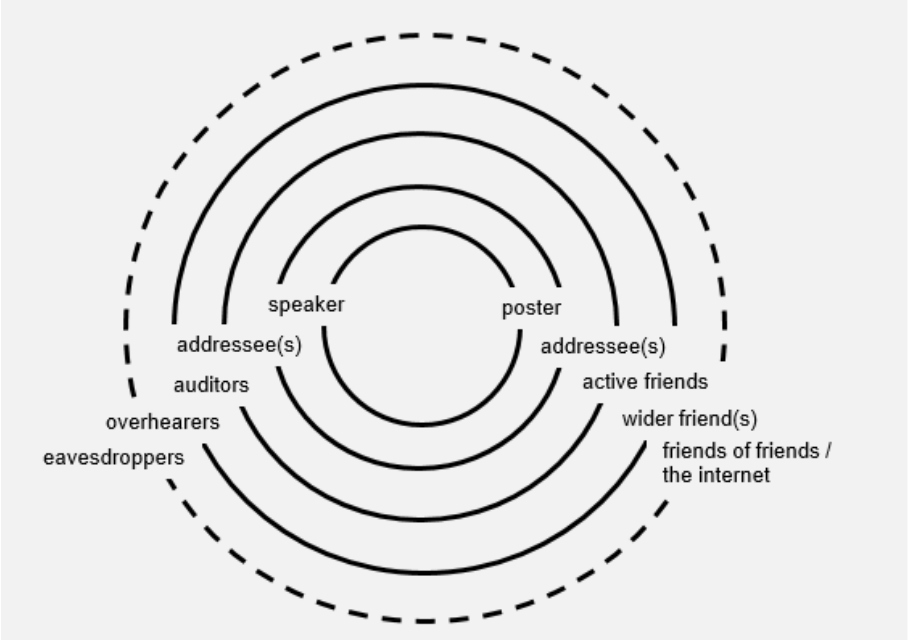
get from their audience. Feedback on a previous social media post[8] might influence future posts. A successful post with positive feedback in a certain language may motivate social media users to select this language for their next post again (Androutsopoulos 2014b).

A large segment of our activities in everyday life has become "digital by default". It turns out to be more and more challenging to not use digital technologies in interaction with public authorities and commercial organisations (Henwood & Wyatt 2019), as well as in building and maintaining social relationships (Hepp et al. 2013:174-176). Social media play a highly important role in this so-called mediatisation of daily life. As we still know little about the use of minority languages on social media, while social media in part have taken over the role of spoken communication, research is needed to find out how social media affect the use of minority languages and their vitality.

The audience design model (Bell 1984; 1991; 2001) has already been used by several scholars to explain the role of the audience on Facebook (e.g., Androutsopoulos 2014a; Seargeant et al. 2012; Tagg & Seargeant 2014) and Twitter (Johnson 2013). Allan Bell developed the audience design model to account for style shifting within speakers and proposed that stylistic variation is a response to the style of the (expected) audience (Bell 1991:105). The audience design model was inspired by the observation that in New Zealand radio anchors varied their pronunciation when reading the news for different radio stations. Bell's model encompasses both interpersonal and mass communication, making it an attractive model for the study of social media. He acknowledges that not all style shifting is a result of being responsive to one's audience (audience design), but that the speaker can also take the initiative by diverging from the audience's style. This is called 'referee design'. Both audience and referee design are parts of the audience design model. Bell distinguished multiple audience roles that have a different impact on the speaker's stylistic choices. Figure 1.1 below shows the audience design model as adapted to Facebook posts.

[8] A post is a piece of writing, image or other item of content published online, typically on a blog or social media website or application (Oxford Languages and Google, accessed online on 8 October 2020).

Figure 1.1 Bell's audience design model adapted to Facebook posts



Adapted from Bell (1984:159), Seargeant et al. (2012:515) and Tagg & Seargeant (2014:172)

The speaker/poster is the first person. (S)he adapts his/her speech to the addressee (second person), who is known, ratified and addressed by the speaker. There are also other audience members, third persons, who are not directly addressed. Of these, the auditors (active friends) are known and ratified, while overhearers (wider friends) are only known. Finally, eavesdroppers (friends of friends, or the anonymous internet community) are audience members of which the speaker is totally unaware.

In most situations, the addressee will have a stronger influence on the speaker's linguistic variation than an auditor (the active friends). In their turn, the auditors (the active friends) will have a stronger influence than an overhearer (wider friends). Bell (1984:175) even expects a "geometric ordering of audience effects". In mass communication, the regular hierarchy of audience roles may be inverted, however. For instance, during a radio interview, the expected (predominantly unknown and heterogeneous) audience of the radio show may have more influence on a presenter's speech style than the immediate addressee (the interviewee). Even overhearers, such as the radio station's management, may affect the presenter's style (Bell 1984:177).

Responsive style shifting or audience design generally results in convergence to the (expected) speech of the audience. However, in referee design or initiative style shifting, the speaker diverges her/his style from the audience and thereby redefines the relationship with the addressee. As

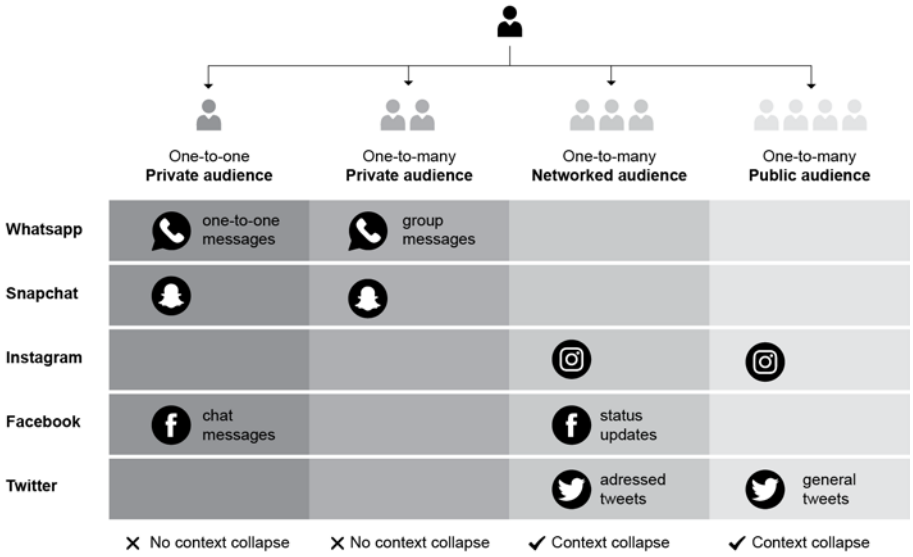
pointed out by Bell, "(A)ny theory of style needs to encompass both monolingual and multilingual repertoires – that is, all the shifts a speaker may make within her linguistic repertoire" (Bell 2001:145). In case of bilingual language choice as between Frisian and Dutch, for example, he even expects a larger influence of peripheral audience members than in monolingual style shift (Bell 1984:176).

Strategies that may be used on social media to design one's audience are: tagging (e.g., using the @ followed by a username), language style and/or choice, content and (privacy) settings (Tagg and Seargeant 2014:167). Moreover, people can target *and* (re-)shape their audience through linguistic practices (Adroutsopoulos 2014a; Tagg & Seargeant 2014:164; see also Section 1.3). The extent to which people consider their social media posts to be public or private may influence the way they communicate on social media. Although their messages may never be seen by an unintended audience (eavesdroppers), this possibility may well drive individual choices in this context.

As argued by Jannis Androutsopoulos (2014a), all initiating posts are initiative in style, as the poster needs to decide on language style and/or choice each time again, and through these choices the poster designs the audience for that particular post. However, expected feedback, based on earlier experiences, spurs and can even shape future posts (Androutsopoulos 2014b). It is questionable, then, whether each new post is initiative in style. Reactions on social media can be either responsive or initiative in style, because individuals can choose in a response to either follow the language choice in the original post or differ from it (Androutsopoulos 2014a). Bell's referees might in the case of social media rather be a particular part of one's collapsed audience, instead of being an absent referee (Androutsopoulos 2014a). How the expected audience shapes the social media posts of Frisian speakers will be discussed in chapters 3 and 6.

This dissertation centres on an investigation of language use on Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat. I selected these five social media platforms because they were the most popular social media at the time of data collection. Moreover, they all differ from each other, in terms of both their content and their degree of openness, hence type of audience (Page et al. 2014:14). Figure 1.2 shows the social media platforms and type of messages/posts under investigation on a private-public scale.

Figure 1.2 Private-public scale of social media



Most platforms provide different types of messages and offer the user the possibility to differentiate between audience members, such as a chat message addressed to one specific person and a wall post on Facebook accessible to all of one's Facebook connections. The private-public scale of the social media message and the expected audience may affect which language one will choose. The audience will vary from one platform to the next, as well as between different types of messages. The privacy options per platform differ as does the audience. In some cases, the audience consists of a single person or a homogenous group of people, while in other cases the audience is a compilation of family, friends and acquaintances, causing the context to collapse. For example, when one opts for a public profile on Twitter or Instagram, anyone can see one's posts. WhatsApp and Snapchat are more likely to be used with closer friends and family. Messages via these platforms are not accessible without permission from the user. The expected audience may also have an influence on the language chosen in the messages. On social media platforms where a message can reach a wider audience, language choice may thus not be the sole result of the language that individuals are used to speak to each other, but may also be influenced by peripheral audience members (cf. auditors or overhearers in Bell's audience design model). While in private messages on WhatsApp the audience exists of one person only and there is a sole addressee for the writer, in Facebook posts and tweets a wide range of audience members with different roles is present. The following subsections introduce the various social media platforms.

1.2.1 Twitter

Twitter is a microblogging service that allows subscribers to send a short message, a so-called tweet, with a maximum number of characters. Twitter was founded in 2006 and currently has 350 million users worldwide (http://statista.com 2020). A tweet can exist of text, pictures, video's and/or links to other online content. In 2016, the maximum number of characters was extended from 140 to 280. Subscribers can connect to other accounts (persons and/or organisations) by 'following' them. In return, subscribers can also be followed by others ('followers'). Twitter allows for a private or a public setting. Selecting the private setting means that others can only follow the account after the subscriber's consent. In the public setting, anyone can see the tweets, also older ones, and the profile information shared by the subscriber, causing the context to collapse. Because many users have an account that is publicly accessible, Twitter is often used by academics, to analyse among others public opinions, sentiments, and language variation and change (see Dijkstra et al. submitted; Nguyen 2017). Three different types of tweets can be distinguished:

1. Public self-generated tweets: tweets fully composed by the subscriber.
2. Addressed tweets: tweets addressing other Twitter accounts, mentioning other Twitter accounts, usually in the beginning of the tweet (starting with @).
3. Retweets: a tweet of another Twitter account is re-sent by the subscriber. It is possible to retweet this tweet with or without adaptations or additions of the subscriber.

An important feature of Twitter is that subscribers can add hashtags (#) to stress words or topics in their tweet. Hashtags are topic-markers or signifiers that combine the hash character (#) with a keyword, employed to draw attention, promote and inform (Page 2012b; boyd et al. 2010). Hashtags can be considered as metadata, which makes the tweet publicly searchable (Zappavigna 2011). Through the use of hashtags, it is possible to build a community around a specific topic or event. Several applications have the possibility to add a Twitter column with a specific hashtag that shows all tweets including the hashtag. #Frysk #Cymraeg and #Gaeilge are examples of how a language community is created (see Chapter 4).

Because as a rule tweets are easy to access for everyone, tweets in different minority languages can be collected and compared. For this reason, Twitter is extensively discussed as a social media platform in four out of the five chapters below, in order to provide answers to research questions 1, 3, 4 and 5.

1.2.2 Facebook

Facebook is a semi-public social media platform. Founded in 2004, it has 2.7 billion active users worldwide (http://statista.com 2020). In its early stages Facebook was a social medium used by younger age groups, but nowadays many Dutch teenagers have left Facebook and it is predominantly used by adults (Newcom.nl 2020). On Facebook, the public space is limited to ratified 'friends' by the profile owner (Androutsopoulos 2015). With all 'friends', the profile owner usually shares a common denominator such as school, family, hobby, work or domicile. The extent to which the profile owner knows these 'friends' may vary, ranging from being vague acquaintances to best friends or close relatives.

Communication on Facebook can take place in a semi-public setting and in private through sending a Facebook chat message. In the semi-public setting, one can either place a post on one's so-called 'Wall' (status update) or on the Wall of a friend in the form of a comment, in response to someone else's post or a new initiative post. Status updates can become jointly-produced communication when two or more persons contribute to a post by commenting on a status update. One's entire network of 'friends', the audience on Facebook, can overhear the complete conversation (Androutsopoulos 2015). The context collapses on Facebook, and consequently it can be complicated for users to choose a language variety or style. Chapters 2 and 5 address the role of Facebook in order to provide answers to research questions 1, 3 and 5.

1.2.3 WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a free internet-based application that allows for texting and content sharing such as images, audio and video. Founded in 2009, it has over 2 billion users (http://statista.com 2020). Since 2014 it has been owned by Facebook. WhatsApp started as an alternative to SMS text messages, but over the years it developed into a platform that allows sending and receiving a variety of content, and live voice and video calling. In the Netherlands, WhatsApp has been embraced by smartphone owners of all ages and it is by far the most popular social media platform.

On WhatsApp, one can communicate with one other person in private chats, or one can participate in group chats consisting of three to 256 participants. The audience on WhatsApp is private. To send a WhatsApp message, one needs to know the mobile phone number of the chat partner. Group chats can be closed, involving participants who all know each other, such as relatives, friends, classmates, or fellow-members of sports and music clubs. However, sometimes the group chat may be a networked audience, whereby the initiator of the group chat knows all participants, but the participants do not necessarily all know each other. The context never collapses on WhatsApp, however, as the group messages are always organised around one specific context or topic. Some characteristics of WhatsApp, such as the informality, the speed of exchange, the general high

tolerance for typing errors, and the important role of phatic communication next to information exchange, make it a very suitable platform for languages in which literacy may be limited (Felder in print). Chapters 2 and 6 deal with the use of Frisian on WhatsApp in order to address research questions 1, 2 and 3.

1.2.4 Instagram

Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking service owned by Facebook. It was launched in October 2010 and has over 1 billion active users (http://statista.com 2020). Instagram has become a very popular social media platform among teenagers. One can have a public or private profile on Instagram. Instagram is predominantly a platform for sharing polished, well thought out photos (Larsen & Kofoed 2015), allowing posters to keep up appearances. On Instagram, people can like and comment on shared images, and this impacts the content that is being shared and saved on one's Instagram account. Pictures with too few likes may be deleted by the owner. Through adding hashtags, the shared image becomes searchable, as is the case with Twitter. Depending on the privacy settings and the (non)-use of hashtags by the poster, the audience on Instagram can range from small to very large and diverse. The context usually collapses, also in the private setting. Chapter 6 presents an analysis of the use of Frisian on Instagram as a way to answer research questions 1, 2 and 3.

1.2.5 Snapchat

Snapchat was launched in 2011 as a picture sharing mobile app that allows people to exchange messages. In October 2018 a desktop application was added to the social network. Currently, Snapchat has over 400 million users (http://statista.com 2020). The main difference with other social media is that in its original form messages would disappear a few seconds after being seen. Nowadays the feature 'Stories' lets messages disappear after 24 hours. Messages can exist of text, photos and short videos up to 10 seconds. Snapchat has for many teenagers become an important platform to stay in touch with their close friends. It can be considered as a new way of texting, whereby the goal is to maintain close relationships through sharing 'unimportant' or unpolished moments or activities. In contrast to Instagram, the snaps on Snapchat are often a reflection of everyday life. Sharing on Snapchat is about ordinary, unspectacular aspects of daily life with a selected audience of close friends (Larsen & Kofoed 2015; 2016). In most instances (except for (wannabe) celebrities), the context does not collapse. In the Netherlands, Snapchat is predominantly popular with teenagers. The use of Frisian on Snapchat is the focus of Chapter 6 in order to answer research questions 1, 2 and 3.

1.3 Minority languages on social media

Although English is still by far the dominant language on the internet, the early forms of the worldwide web were monolingual English (Kelly-Homes 2019). In the early 2000s, together with the support of non-roman languages (in technical terms non-ASCII scripts), gradually the internet became more multilingual. Still, it mainly featured other major languages next to English. With the emergence of Web 2.0, the internet has become more linguistically diverse and increasingly it became more common also to use minority languages (Kelly-Holmes 2019). So, while in the first phases of the internet a limited group of people decided on the use of languages online, the nature of Web 2.0 and social media enabled peer-to-peer communication and gave ordinary people the opportunity to post their thoughts on the web. This has had a positive impact on the use of minority languages on the internet (Kelly-Holmes 2019).

It should be pointed out here that language practices on social media cannot always be classified as either purely oral interaction or written communication. Many have argued that online language use is somewhere in between speaking and writing, whereby colloquial features are used with or without taking into account existing spelling practices and/or norms (Schlobinski 2005:132). This practice could in fact enhance the use of minority languages, because possible unfamiliarity with spelling norms or the lack of a common written standard might feel less of an obstacle than in formal writing practices.

The world of social media involves a space which is closely intertwined with everyday offline practices. Linguistic features that used to be associated with oral communication show up in social media posts and reflect norms of face-to-face communication (Androutsopoulos 2014b; Stæhr 2015). As a consequence, dialects and regional and minority languages are regularly used in online practices (Vandekerckhove & Nobels 2010:178). Generally, two types of new writing are found online: 'old vernacular' that represents "locally bound ways of speaking that traditionally didn't find their way into public writing" and 'new vernacular', which is the result of typing as fast as you can (Androutsopoulos 2011:154).

The unequal power relations between speakers of the majority and minority language that exists in offline society is usually maintained and (re)produced in online situations: it is perceived to be impolite, conforming to the norms in offline society, to use a minority language when not everyone understands it (cf. initiative style shift of the audience design framework), especially when one is also proficient in the majority language (Cunliffe 2007). It can therefore be considered to be a political statement to choose the minority language instead of the majority language, and pressure is exerted to communicate in the majority language (Androutsopoulos 2015).

Speakers of minority languages with a multilingual audience may hesitate on which language to use. Opting for the minority language may contribute to a sense of localness and intimacy, but its use is also likely to exclude a segment of the audience. An individual who aims to address the largest

potential audience in online practices will opt for using a national language, or a lingua franca, instead of a language that is understood by a small portion of the audience members. The context collapse on social media (Marwick & boyd 2011) may further complicate this issue of language choice.

Extensive research on the use of minority languages on social media has been conducted in Wales. In the early 2010s, Facebook was one of the few domains on the internet where communication took place in Welsh. The language use on Facebook largely reflected offline communication patterns, even though English was also used in status updates by predominantly Welsh-speaking teenagers (Cunliffe et al. 2013:85). Early research on Twitter showed that Welsh was mainly used when directly addressing another bilingual person, while English was used more often in general tweets (Johnson 2013:114). By and large, the Welsh-English bilingual community on Twitter also conformed to the offline practice norms, using Welsh to other speakers of Welsh and using English when monolingual English speakers were present as well (Johnson 2013:116).

There is in fact a duality in social media practices regarding minority languages that render their online use an interesting object of study. Although the unequal power relations between speakers of the majority and minority language and the lack of a common written standard complicate the use of minority languages on social media, the regular incorporation of colloquial features and the disregard of spelling norms may help to encourage the use of minority languages. Consequently, how, when and why minority languages – so far predominantly used in spoken communication – are used on social media is a most relevant topic of research.

In this context, it is possible to identify several important challenges for the online use of minority languages:

1. Mainly spoken languages

Many minority languages are predominantly spoken varieties. Only a small subset of minority languages have a standardized writing system / orthography that is widely known and used by their speakers (e.g. Basque, Catalan or Welsh). Other minority languages do have a standardized orthography, but only a small subset of the speakers have developed literacy skills and, often, the standardized variety does not represent speakers' way of speaking (e.g. Frisian). Finally, many minority languages do not have a single common written script and they strictly exist as a spoken tradition (e.g. many languages outside the Western world).

2. Lack of technological support and technical solutions

Technologies such as predictive texting are often only available for standard and national languages (Cunliffe 2019; Kornai 2013; Lackoff & Moner 2016). Tech companies first develop apps in the languages that forecast highest profits, meaning the languages that have most speakers (European Parliament 2018). Even though in recent years some technologies were developed for minority languages, they are still under-represented in comparison to majority languages (Jones et al. 2019). Keyboards for lesser-

used languages and interfaces in minority languages are not available or launched much later because commercial interests are small (European Parliament 2018). The user experience of these language speakers will most of the time not be as good as that of majority language speakers (Evas & Cunliffe 2016). This is why it will often take more effort to write in minority languages than in majority languages.

Over the last decade, several initiatives in Fryslân gave rise to specific technical solutions for using Frisian online. Various online spelling tools and dictionaries were developed (https://taalweb.frl). There is a plug-in spelling corrector and synonym list available for Microsoft (https://taalhelp.frl). Moreover, two keyboards were developed for smart phones (Gboard and Swiftkey). Finally, crowd sourcing events were deployed to include Frisian on various platforms. Events in 2014 and 2016 resulted in the inclusion of Frisian on Facebook and Google Translate, respectively. Currently, Frisian-speakers are asked to record Frisian sentences in order to include Frisian in Mozilla Common Voice. Most solutions depend on private initiatives and financial support from the provincial government, rather than being the result of automatic inclusion by large tech companies.

3. Audience

The potential audience on social media has a few characteristics that challenge users to share their thoughts in a minority language.

a. **Global reach**: Social media have a reach beyond the local: depending on the privacy settings, anyone with an internet connection may read a person's social media messages. The possibility of addressing a local and a non-local audience simultaneously considerably complicates language choice on social media (Marwick & boyd 2011; Tagg 2015:195).
b. **Uncertainty**: In contrast to many offline situations, on social media, as in the case of mass media, it is often uncertain who will read a post. This may encourage users to select a language which will maximise one's audience.
c. **Interactivity**: On social media, one's audience often consists of individuals with various language backgrounds. The interactivity of social media, and people's drive to write 'successful' posts with a maximum of reactions and likes (Androutsopoulos 2014b), is also likely to influence online language choice.

1.4 Outline of the dissertation

This dissertation[9] is organised as follows. In **Chapter 2** I will address the research questions on how often and when Frisian is used on social media, which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media, how the online use of Frisian differs from offline use, and how the online use of Frisian differs from Dutch. This chapter was first published as "Language use of Frisian Bilingual Teenagers on Social Media" (Jongbloed-Faber, Van de Velde, Van der Meer & Klinkenberg, 2016), which explores the use of Frisian on Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp by Frisian bilingual teenagers between ages 14-18. Over 2,000 teenagers participated in this quantitative research through filling in a questionnaire about language use, social media use, language attitudes and language proficiency. It

Chapter 3 addresses the research questions on how the use of Frisian differs from the use of the majority language Dutch and how the use of Frisian differs from the use of other regional or minority languages on Twitter. This chapter was first published as "Regional languages on Twitter: A comparative study between Frisian and Limburgish" (Jongbloed-Faber, Van Loo & Cornips, 2017), a qualitative research investigation of how the use of Dutch and the regional languages Frisian and Limburgish differ on Twitter through identifying language patterns.

Chapter 4 reports on qualitative research that investigates and compares how the use of Welsh, Irish and Frisian correspond and differ in their respective online communities on Twitter. The chapter was first published as "What can hashtags tell us about minority languages on Twitter? A comparison of #cymraeg, #frysk, and #gaeilge" (McMonagle, Cunliffe, Jongbloed-Faber & Jarvis 2019).

Next, **Chapter 5** examines the relationship between online identity construction and identity work in offline contexts involving the Frisian dialect pop band *De Hûnekop*. This qualitative study compares language practices in songs, a live show, an interview and social media posts. It addresses the research question on how people use Frisian in local identity construction in online and offline practices. This chapter was first published as "Local Identity Construction in Dialect Pop Music: Songs, Narratives, and Social Media Posts" (Jongbloed-Faber, 2018).

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[9] Apart from the introduction and the conclusions, this dissertation comprises four chapters which were edited from published papers. In this dissertation, the changes made to the published papers are of a technical nature only: section, subsection, and table and graph numbers and design were adjusted and one citation style was adopted for consistency in line with that of the dissertation. Furthermore, I moved the references and appendices to the end of the dissertation. In addition, in Chapter 2, I removed the Catalan title, the summary and the keywords used in the original paper. The authors' individual contributions to the co-authored papers are specified at the beginning of each paper. During the research process and scientific output of this study, I adhered to the echtical guidelines prescribed by the Fryske Akademy/KNAW. The present-day guidelines can be found at
https://www.knaw.nl/nl/thematisch/ethiek/wetenschappelijke-integriteit/overzicht

In **Chapter 6** I explore the research questions on how often and when Frisian is used on social media, which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media, how the online use of Frisian differs from offline use, and how the online use of Frisian differs from Dutch by Frisian bilingual teenagers in 2019/2020. As the use of social media has proven to be very volatile, the 2013/2014 study (Chapter 2) was replicated and supplemented with additional questions about the new popular social media with teenagers (Instagram and Snapchat) and questions about audience, audience design and audience awareness. This quantitative research is based on a questionnaire completed by almost 2,000 Frisian teenagers between ages 14-18. The chapter entitled "Unravelling Language Choice Online: Bilingual Teenagers on WhatsApp, Snapchat and Instagram" has been submitted as a chapter to the book *Heritage Languages in the Digital Age: The Case of Autochthonous Languages in Europe* (edited by B. Arendt & G. Reershemius).

Finally, **Chapter 7** presents the conclusions of the dissertation.

2. Language Use of Frisian Bilingual Teenagers on Social Media

This chapter is edited from the following publication:
Jongbloed-Faber, L., Van de Velde, H., Van der Meer, C. & Klinkenberg, E.L. (2016). Language Use of Frisian Bilingual Teenagers on Social Media. *Treballs de Sociolingüística Catalana*, 26, 27-54. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2436/20.2504.01.107

Jongbloed-Faber is the principal investigator for this article. She posed the research questions, designed the questionnaire, recruited and visited the schools, analysed the data and wrote the research paper. Van der Meer and Klinkenberg collaborated in the design of the questionnaire, Klinkenberg assisted with the statistical analysis and Van de Velde, Van der Meer and Klinkenberg assisted in the conception of the paper and gave feedback on different drafts. During the research process and scientific output of this study, we adhered to the ethical guidelines prescribed by the Fryske Akademy/KNAW.

Abstract

This paper explores the use of Frisian, a minority language spoken in the Dutch province of Fryslân, on social media by Frisian teenagers. Frisian is the mother tongue of 54% of the 650,000 inhabitants and is predominantly a spoken language: 64% of the Frisian population can speak it well, while only 12% indicate that they can write it well. However, in recent years Frisian contributions have frequently shown up on social media, an important development as active use on the Internet is essential for a language to survive into the next century. In this study, more than 2,000 Frisian teenagers aged between 14 and 18 years filled in a questionnaire about their language use, language preferences, language attitudes and language proficiency. Results show that, on social media, Frisian is mainly used by mother tongue speakers, 87% of whom use it to some extent. The study indicates that the teenagers' peer group, language attitudes, and writing proficiency are reliable explanatory factors for the use or non-use of Frisian on social media. Although teenagers do not always follow its official spelling rules, Frisian has conquered a presence on social media. Social media thus seem to have introduced Frisian into the written domain for an extended group of people, which is a positive sign of the vitality of the Frisian language.

2.1 Introduction

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp are becoming increasingly important in daily life. For minority languages, the Internet and social networking sites are seen as both a threat and an opportunity. On the one hand, unlimited opportunities have become available on the Internet to preserve and distribute written and audio(visual) content in a minority language and to connect minority language speakers all over the world. The Internet and other electronic technologies can connect and strengthen linguistic communities and revive threatened languages (Cunliffe et al. 2013). On the other hand, only a few languages dominate the Internet: over half of the world's websites have English content and over 75% are in either English, Russian, German, Japanese, or Spanish (http://w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content_language/all, data from March 2015).

To what extent languages function, exist and survive is often expressed in terms of the vitality of a language. Since the 1970s, this has played an important role in sociolinguistic research. UNESCO (2003) developed a 'Language Vitality Index' which, on the basis of nine factors, estimates the vitality of a language; still, the factor 'Response to new domains and media' remains an unexplored part of the index. In his article 'Digital Language Death', Kornai (2013) states that 95% of the world's languages are threatened with extinction because they are not well represented on the web. Three generally accepted signs which predict the extinction of a language are loss of function, i.e. the extent to which a language is replaced over time by another language; loss of prestige, i.e. the rise of negative attitudes, usually from

younger generations, towards the minority language, and loss of competence, the ability of younger generations to communicate in the minority language. When one wishes to consider language vitality through social media, these elements are of particular relevance.

The youngest generations are digital natives, they grew up surrounded by digital technologies and are "native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet" (Prensky 2001), and spend many hours a day online. Previous research has shown that these generations are of significant importance for the preservation of a language (Ó Riagáin et al. 2008): the attitudes that people develop towards a minority language during their teenage years can be decisive for their language choices later in life (Morris 2010; Cunliffe et al. 2013). As we observe that social media have become one of the main means of communication for teenagers, we may conclude that social media can play an important role in maintaining the vitality of a language. However, which languages are used on social media, and more specifically which languages are used in bilingual communities, remains a largely unexplored area of research (Cunliffe et al. 2013).

Cunliffe (2007) found evidence that the unequal balance of power between the majority and minority language that exists in offline society is usually maintained in online situations: it is perceived to be impolite to use a minority language when not everyone understands it, especially when someone is also proficient in the majority language, and it can be considered to be a political statement to choose the minority language instead of the majority language. Carroll (2008) reported that language behaviour of bilinguals on social networks is very complex and that it varies from one network to another. This is confirmed by Cunliffe, Morris, and Prys (2013). In their research on the use of Welsh on social networks, they concluded that Facebook was one of the few areas on the Internet where communication took place in Welsh. When researching the differential use of Welsh in young speakers' social networks, they also found that language use on social networks largely reflects the language of their real-world communities. Cunliffe, Morris and Prys (2013) expect social networks to play an important role in maintaining the Welsh language.

In his studies on the language use of German teenagers with Greek backgrounds, Androutsopoulos (2013; 2015) shows that the online use of a minority or migrant language is not always appreciated and that pressure is exerted to switch to majority languages. The use of a minority language is therefore generally limited to genres that are closely related to the respective minority culture, more in particular for formulaic discourse purposes and citations.

Marwick and boyd (2011) propose the term 'context collapse': in an online social network, different social groups come together who would normally not meet simultaneously in offline situations. The more linguistically heterogeneous the contacts on such a social network are, the more complex it will be for the owner of the network to properly address the audience in terms of language choice and style. According to Androutsopoulos (2014a), there are three strategies which are used to maximise the audience:

1. The language of choice is the language that everyone can understand;
2. Several languages are used in one or several consecutive messages to address the audience;
3. Language use is avoided and only pictures, video and/or emoticons are used.

The above-mentioned studies demonstrate that it is a challenge for any minority language speaker to adhere to their minority language on social media. To study minority language use on social media, Fryslân, a bilingual province in the Netherlands, is an excellent laboratory. Besides Dutch, the official language of the Netherlands, people also speak Frisian. Since 2014, both Frisian and Dutch have been recognised as official languages in Fryslân and have enjoyed equal legal status. However, in practice, Dutch is the dominant language in many domains, and education in Frisian is rather limited. Almost 650,000 people live in Fryslân; twothird of the population in rural areas, and onethird in one of the four major cities, of which the capital Leeuwarden, with almost 100,000 inhabitants, is the largest. Frisian is the mother tongue for 54% of the inhabitants, the majority of the inhabitants can understand the language (very) well (85%), 64% can speak it (very) well, and only 12% indicate that they can write it (very) well. In the home domain, 45% speak Frisian with their partner and 48% speak Frisian with their children. Generally, in the countryside, Frisian is used more than in the cities (Provinsje Fryslân 2011). The attitudes in Fryslân towards the Frisian language are mixed: while most Frisian speakers have a positive attitude towards their language, there are also inhabitants of Fryslân (usually those not speaking Frisian) who have negative feelings towards the Frisian language (Gorter et al. 2001). More background information about the Frisian language and its use can be found in De Graaf, Van der Meer, & Jongbloed-Faber (2015). According to the UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (Moseley 2010) the Frisian language is vulnerable. While Frisian is mainly a spoken language, only a small proportion of the population actually uses Frisian in written communication (Gorter et al. 2001). As we observe that social media have become an important part of life and in some instances have even replaced spoken communication with written communication, the upswing of social media could threaten the use of the Frisian language.

A study that analysed 6,000 tweets of 50 Frisian teenagers showed frequent phonetic writing as well as the incorporation of lexical and syntactic Dutchisms (the integration of Dutch words or Dutch grammatical constructions) in Frisian tweets (Jongbloed-Faber 2014). It seems as if the informal writing used on social media lowers the barriers to use the Frisian language, even when one's proficiency is not considered to be well enough for formal purposes.

The objective of this study was twofold. First of all, the study had an explorative character: we examined to what extent the Frisian language is used on social media. As teenage years are considered to be important for the use of a minority language later in life (Morris 2010; Ó Riagáin et al. 2008;

Cunliffe et al. 2013), we focused our study on teenagers between the ages of 14 and 18 years. Second, we aimed to identify the factors that influence the use of Frisian on social media by Frisian teenagers. We expect that mother tongue strongly influences language choice. Furthermore, we expect that also in Fryslân, one's peer group will influence language choice on social media. Since "an individual's own attitudes and preferences will influence their choice of language" (Baker 2006:6), we also investigated whether or not a positive attitude towards Frisian leads to an increased use of Frisian on social media. Finally, we considered the fact that, on average, writing skills demonstrated by Frisians in their mother tongue lag far behind their writing skills in Dutch. Because this often inhibits the use of Frisian in writing, the Dutch language has become the common language of writing in many domains in Fryslân. We therefore also studied the effect of writing skills on the use of Frisian on social media. In the next sections the study's methodology and results are presented. In the paper's concluding sections, the research questions will be answered and the implications of this study for other minority languages will be addressed.

2.2 Methodology

To answer the research questions, a questionnaire containing a maximum of 56 questions was developed. To get access to the teenagers, all over Fryslân, schools providing secondary general and vocational education were invited to participate. To recruit the schools we deployed our personal network, made many phone calls and sent many e-mails. In total, 22 of the 29 contacted schools cooperated of which 10 schools are established in one of the four major cities of Fryslân and 12 schools in the countryside. The questionnaires were filled in during class, as this would ensure the participation of all pupils in a class, with both positive and negative attitudes towards the Frisian language. The questionnaires could be filled in online, through the tool www.surveymonkey.com, or on paper if no computer facilities were available. The data were collected between October 2013 and January 2014.

Questionnaire construction

The following elements were included in the questionnaire:

1. Personal information
2. Attitudinal questions about the Frisian language
3. General language use
4. Social media use and language use on social media
5. School situation
6. General information.

Please refer to the appendix A for the complete questionnaire.

Elaboration of the measured factors

With regard to mother tongue, when talking about all Frisian teenagers, the complete sample has been used for analysis. The teenagers choosing 'both parents Frisian' represent the group L1 teenagers, the teenagers selecting 'two parents Dutch' represent the group L2 teenagers and the teenagers who

answered ‘one parent Frisian, one parent Dutch’ represent the group L1-2 teenagers (refer to question 7 in the appendix).

The self-reported proficiency in Frisian is measured on a five-point Likert scale (not at all, with difficulty, reasonably, well, very well) in four different categories: understanding, speaking, reading and writing (question 15).

To all reported residences the inhabitant figures (CBS, 2013) were added manually. Then we divided the residences into five categories, small rural village (<500 inhabitants), middle-sized rural village (500-1,500 inhabitants), large rural village (1,501- 5,000 inhabitants), town (5,001-15,000 inhabitants) and large town (>15,000 inhabitants) to get the factor ‘rurality of residence’.

The personal attitude of subjects has been based on the scores of eight word pairs (question 16) expressed on a five-point semantic differential scale: ugly-beautiful, does not-does belong to me, not useful-useful for later, formal-informal, whiny-hip, dull-cool, strange-familiar, not useful-useful with friends. The scales have a high reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.95).

The scores of all teenagers from one particular school were used to calculate an average attitude per school. This average was used to represent the attitude of a teenager’s peer group.

The teenagers were asked to indicate the frequency (never, sometimes, often, all the time) of speaking Frisian and Dutch with friends. These answers were used for the factor language use with peer group (question 10).
In the questionnaire, we asked the teenagers about their use of Frisian, Dutch, English and other languages on three different social media platforms, namely WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter, asking for both group/public posts and private messages (questions 27, 28, 31, 32, 35 and 36). Per social media activity, the teenagers were asked to indicate how often they use a language (never, sometimes, often, all the time).

Research sample

In total, 2,367 pupils filled in the questionnaire. Of these, 2,267 were selected for analysis: we excluded the questionnaires of teenagers younger than 14 years old (n=17), older than 18 years old (n=60) or questionnaires with clear indications that the teenagers did not fill in the questionnaire seriously (n=23). 73% (n=1,656) of the questionnaires were filled in online and 27% (n=611) were completed on paper. Of the sample, 48% were boys (n=1,090) and 52% were girls (n=1,170). With regards to education, 40% attended lower level education (n=903), 34% attended middle level or vocational education (n=766) and 26% higher level education (n=598). The economic status of the teenagers were divided into the following proportions: low 27% (n=614), middle 36% (n=813) and high 32% (n=720).

2.3 Results

Mother tongue

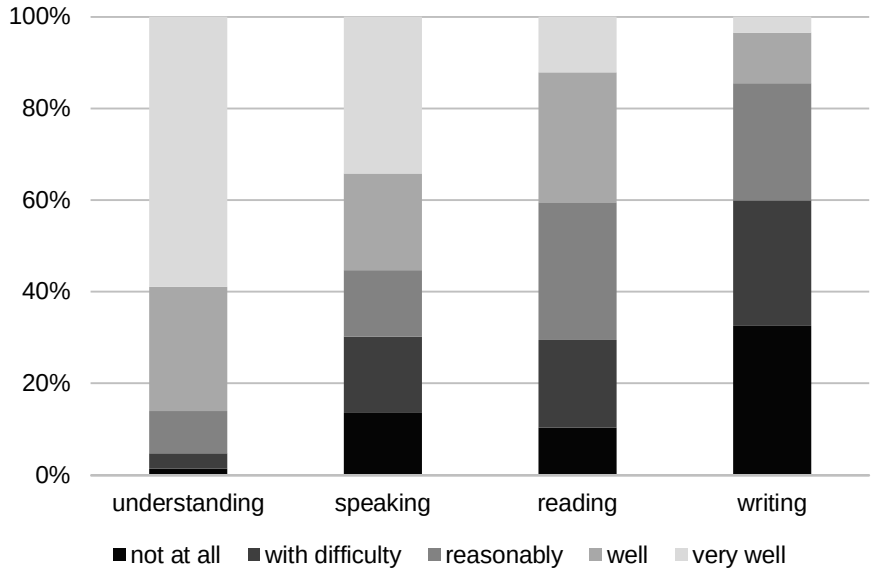
Of the participants, 45% were raised by their parents exclusively in Frisian, 12% reported having one Frisian and one Dutch-speaking parent, and 36% were raised in Dutch by both parents. 3% were partially raised in another

language variety spoken in Fryslân, and another 3% were (partially) raised in foreign or immigrant languages.

Proficiency in Frisian

Figure 2.1 presents the reported Frisian language proficiency of the teenagers, split up on the basis of the following language skills: understanding, speaking, reading and writing. 86% of the teenagers understand the Frisian language (very) well, 55% speak the language (very) well, 40% can read it (very) well, and 15% can write (very) well in Frisian.

Figure 2.1 Self-reported proficiency in Frisian



Attitudes

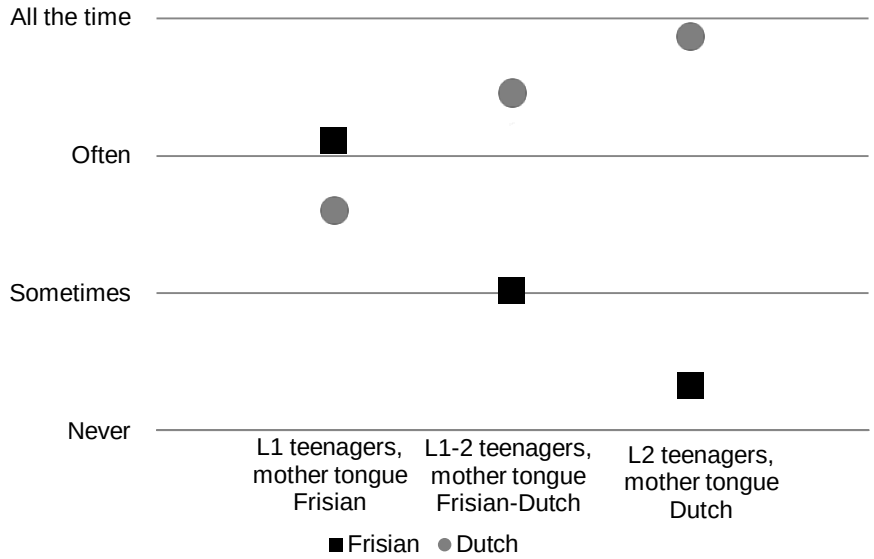
On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being negative and 5 being positive), the average attitude was 3.24 with a standard deviation of 1.21. To measure the effect of mother tongue on attitude, we classified the teenagers according to mother tongue: group L1 (with Frisian as exclusive input from their parents), group L1-2 (with mixed Frisian-Dutch input from their parents) and group L2 (with Dutch as mother tongue). The effect of mother tongue proved to be significant ($F(2,2089)=863.96$, $p=.001$) and post-hoc tests revealed significant differences between all groups. Teenagers with solely Frisian as their mother tongue were found to be positive about the Frisian language ($M=4.01$, $SD=0.84$) while teenagers with solely Dutch as their mother tongue were found to be more negative ($M=2.26$, $SD=0.94$). Teenagers with one Frisian-speaking and one Dutch-speaking parent were shown to have an attitude that is just above neutral ($M=3.32$, $SD=0.98$). Results revealed that greater

exposure to Frisian at home generally leads to a more positive attitude on the part of the teenager to the language.

Use of Frisian and Dutch with peers in offline situations

We found that the teenagers included in the study more frequently speak Dutch to their friends rather than Frisian. However, when we classified the teenagers according to their mother tongue, we found that L1 teenagers more often use Frisian rather than Dutch in oral communications with their friends. Figure 2.2 demonstrates that all other groups, including group L1-2, use Dutch more frequently than Frisian. L2 teenagers hardly ever use Frisian. The effect of mother tongue on the use of Frisian with friends was found to be significant in all cases ($F(2,1983)=1391.65$, $p=.001$). Post-hoc tests revealed significant differences between all groups.

Figure 2.2 Language spoken with friends by L1, L1-2 and L2 teenagers



The use of the Frisian language on social media

Figure 2.3 shows the average use on social media of Frisian, Dutch and English by all Frisian teenagers, irrespective of their mother tongue. It becomes clear that the Dutch language is used the most on social media, with averages varying between ‘often’ and ‘all the time’ (average scores on a scale from 1 to 4 between 3.28 and 3.45). In WhatsApp messages, both group and private messages, Frisian is sometimes used by the teenagers (average scores of 1.84 and 1.94 respectively). For Facebook and Twitter, the average use of Frisian lies between ‘never’ and ‘sometimes’. In tweets and status updates on Facebook, English is used slightly more often than Frisian. All standard deviations are approximately one step removed from the average

(between 0.70 and 1.04). In total, 56% of the teenagers use the Frisian language to some extent on one of the three social media platforms.

Figure 2.3 Average use of Frisian, Dutch and English on social media

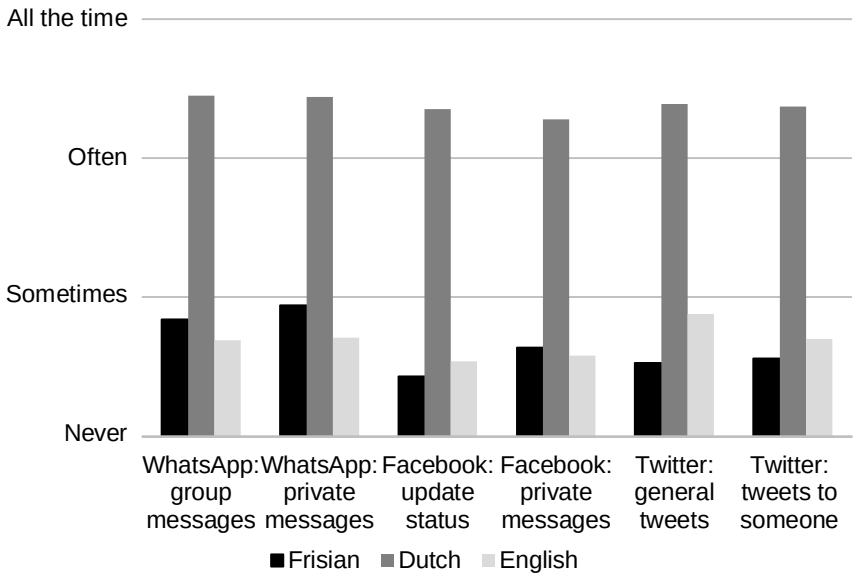


Figure 2.4 lists the average use of Frisian on social media by the teenagers investigated in this study, split up by mother tongue. The effect of mother tongue is significant in all cases (WhatsApp-Group messages: $F(2,1960)=484.38$, $p=.001$; WhatsApp-private messages: $F(2,1956)=678.62$, $p=.001$; Facebook-status updates: $F(2,1756)=193.09$, $p=.001$; Facebook-private messages: $F(2,1753)=313.94$, $p=.001$; Twitter-public tweets: $F2,1561)=204.60$, $p=.001$; Twitter-direct messages: $F(2,1555)=244.85$, $p=.001$). Post-hoc tests revealed significant differences between all groups.
Especially L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media, 87% of them use Frisian to some extent on one of the social media platforms; however, also in this group and on average, Dutch is used more frequently than Frisian. The averages of the L1-2 group lie between the L1 and L2 averages. Teenagers belonging to group L1-2 do not use the minority language as much as the teenagers who only speak Frisian at home: the dominant language Dutch seems to hamper the use of the Frisian language by these teenagers much more than is the case with L1 teenagers. Of the L1-2 teenagers, 57% use Frisian to some extent on one of the social media platforms. Among L2 teenagers, the proportion is only 19%, WhatsApp is the platform where Frisian is used the most: in private messages slightly more than in group messages. Frisian is used the least in status updates on Facebook.

Figure 2.4 Use of Frisian on social media by L1, L1-2 and L2 teenagers

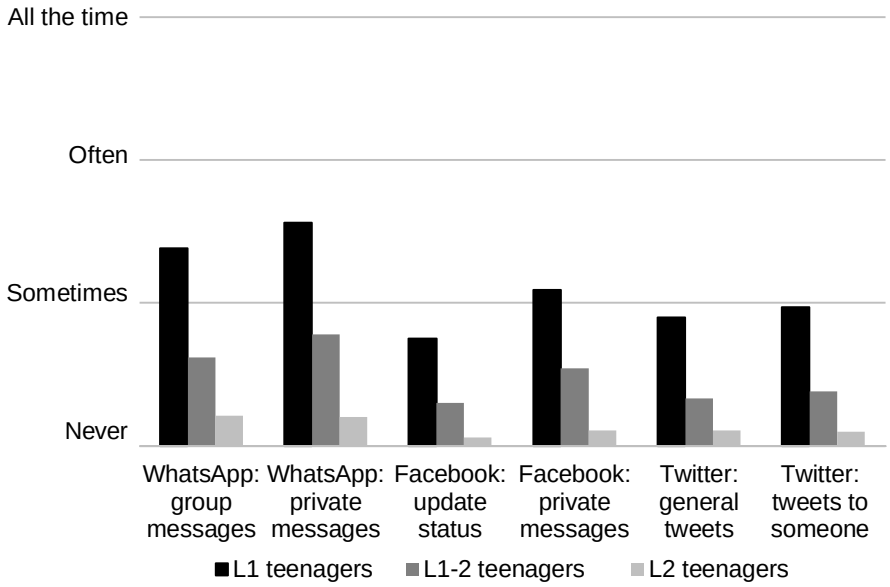
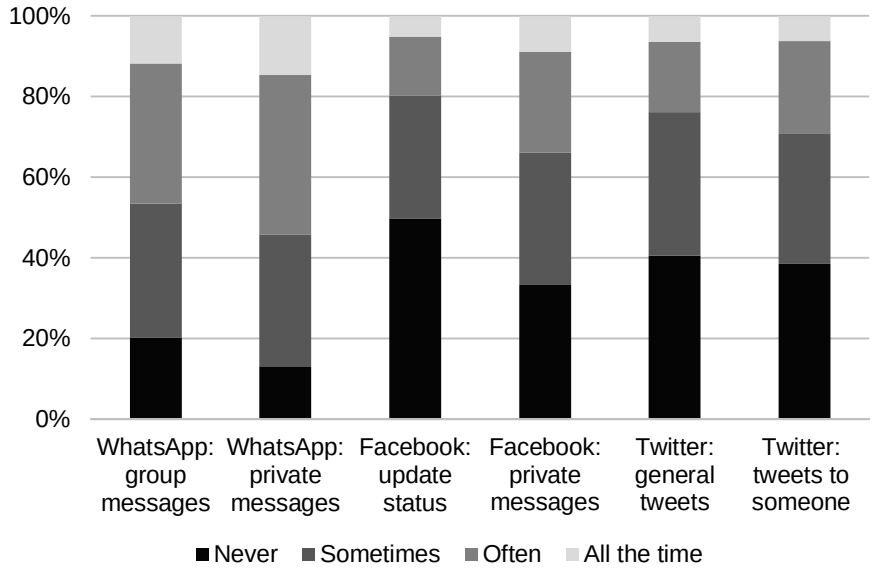


Figure 2.5 shows the variance within the native speakers of Frisian (group L1). For all but one type of social media, the group that never uses Frisian on social media is larger than the group that uses Frisian all the time; the group that uses Frisian on social media all the time fluctuates between 5 and 15%, and the group of non-users varies from 13 to 50%. The differences in the use of Frisian on the various social media platforms are substantial: while 87% of the L1 teenagers use Frisian to some extent in private messages on WhatsApp, in status updates on Facebook the proportion is only 50%.

Figure 2.5 Use of Frisian on social media by L1 teenagers



There is a general lack of interest among the teenagers to spell Frisian correctly on social media. 55% of the teenagers using Frisian on social media say they write the Frisian language phonetically, 52% think it is too much work to write diacritics and 47% (not necessarily overlapping) do not know where to put diacritics.

The factors of influence on the use of Frisian on social media

We hypothesized that one's mother tongue, one's peer group, language attitudes and writing proficiency would influence language choice. To measure the correlation between one's peer group and the use of Frisian on social media we used both the language spoken with friends, Frisian and Dutch, as well as the average attitude of one's peer group (by calculating the average attitude at a teenager's school). In addition, we also included the variable rurality of one's residence, as the Frisian language is used much more in the countryside than in the large cities of Fryslân. Table 2.1 shows the correlations between the use of Frisian on social media and these factors, and between these various factors. The strongest correlation (-0.78) is observed between speaking Frisian with friends and speaking Dutch with friends. The negative value indicates that the more Frisian one speaks with friends, the less Dutch one speaks with friends, and vice versa. Speaking Dutch with friends is negatively correlated with all included variables, except for rurality of residence. The latter indicates that the smaller the size of the town, the more Frisian is used, both in terms of speaking Frisian with friends and the use of Frisian on social media. Furthermore, in rural areas people are more likely to have Frisian as their mother tongue, to have better writing skills, and to have

a more positive attitude than people living in larger towns. The correlations largely confirm assumptions about the use of Frisian, both in offline and online situations.

Language use with friends, one's attitude and one's writing skills are more strongly correlated with the use of Frisian on social media than one's mother tongue. In other words: although mainly L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media, the extent to which L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media varies largely and therefore the correlation is lower than with the other factors mentioned. Furthermore, the attitude of the peer group and the rurality of one's residence are also correlated with the extent to which teenagers use Frisian on social media. The observation that the majority of variables are highly correlated will have to be taken into account to avoid multicollinearity when using the variables in a regression analysis.

Table 2.1 Pearson correlations: correlations between independent factors

Frisian on social media	Speaking Frisian with friends	Speaking Dutch with friends	Attitude	Writing skills	Mother tongue	Peer group's attitude	Rurality of residence
Frisian on soc.media	.708**	-.669**	.650**	.600**	.592**	.395**	-.326**
	Speaking Frisian w. friends	-.776**	.728**	.641**	.762**	.429**	-.384**
		Sp. Dutch w. friends	-.651**	-.563**	-.699**	-.397**	.383**
			Attitude	.630**	.671**	.346**	-.351**
				Writing skills	.588**	.321**	-.342**
					Mother tongue	.312**	-.358**
						Peer group's attitude	-.259**
							Rurality of residence

** Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed).

As the aim of this study is to identify the factors which help us to understand why and to what extent Frisian teenagers use Frisian on social media, we also performed a regression analysis. The regression model (see Table 2.2) in which we included all above-mentioned factors, explains 56% of the variance (R^2=0.56); however, two of the seven factors, namely mother tongue and rurality of one's residence, have very little predictive power and are not significant. One's offline language use, one's attitude and one's writing skills do have strong Betas and show high predictive power. The effect of attitude of one's peer group is significant, but not very strong. For easier comparison, we used the standardized regression coefficient β in Tables 2.2 and 2.3. The tolerance for all factors was >0.1 and the VIF <10.

Table 2.2 Preliminary full regression model, explaining the variance in the use of Frisian on social media

Independent factors	β	Significance
Speaking Frisian with friends	.275	.000
Speaking Dutch with friends	-.243	.000
Attitude	.175	.000
Writing skills	.163	.000
Peer group's attitude	.070	.000
Mother tongue	.017	.514
Rurality of residence	-.005	.766

When we consider the four most influential and least overlapping factors from this preliminary full regression model, the selected factors (speaking Frisian with friends, attitude, writing skills and peer group's attitude) still explain 56% of the variance. An overview is shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Final regression model, explaining the variance in the use of Frisian on social media, all groups together

Independent factors	β	Significance
Speaking Frisian with friends	.405	.000
Attitude	.206	.000
Writing skills	.168	.000
Peer group's attitude	.100	.000

The above-mentioned regression model explains the variance in the use of Frisian on social media by teenagers, regardless of their mother tongue. We also investigated how the variance can be explained within the three separate language groups.

Within group L2, a regression model with solely two factors can explain 30% (R^2=0.30) of the variance. These factors are 'speaking Frisian with friends' (β=0.43) and 'writing skills' (β=0.23). We can raise R^2 to 0.35; however, eight factors are needed to accomplish that.

For group L1-2, 'speaking Frisian with friends' (β=0.39), 'attitude' (β=0.28) and 'writing skills' (β=0.16) taken together explain 48% of the variance in the use of Frisian on social media (R^2=0.48).

To explain the variance in the use of Frisian on social media by L1 teenagers, several competing models can be composed with almost identical shares of variance explained. For the sake of comparison, we chose the model which showed the greatest consistency with the preceding models. The variance in the use of Frisian on social media by L1 teenagers can be explained for 35%. The factors explaining the variance include 'attitude' (β=0.24), 'speaking Frisian with friends' (β=0.24), 'peer group's attitude' (β=0.20) and 'writing skills' (β=0.17).

2.4 Conclusions and discussion

This paper explored the use of Frisian on social media by Frisian teenagers. The results show that on social media the Frisian language is used by 56% of the Frisian teenagers. However, on average, Dutch is used much more frequently than Frisian and the Frisian language is mainly used by teenagers with Frisian as their sole mother tongue. Of the L1 teenagers, 87% use Frisian to some extent on one of the social media platforms, while this proportion is 57% for L1-2 teenagers and 19% for L2 teenagers. The use of Frisian on social media differs considerably depending on the medium concerned: WhatsApp is the social medium where Frisian is used the most (87% of L1 teenagers use it to some extent), and in Facebook status updates Frisian is rarely used (50% of the L1 teenagers never use Frisian in status updates on Facebook).

Although there is a strong correlation between mother tongue and the use of Frisian on social media (r=0.59), it is impossible to explain the variance in the use of Frisian on social media on the basis of one's mother tongue. The factors which explain the variance in the use of Frisian on social media best are 'speaking Frisian with friends'(β=0.41), 'attitude' (β=0.21), 'writing skills' (β=0.17) and 'peer group's attitude' (β=0.10). Together, they explain 56% of the variance (R^2=0.56). We may conclude that one's peer group, both in terms of offline language use and group attitude towards Frisian, has a major impact on the Frisian teenagers' use of Frisian on social media. Furthermore, one's own attitude and one's writing skills affect the use of Frisian on social media: more positive attitudes and better writing skills result in a greater use of Frisian.

It is very hard to prove whether or not the Frisian language is written more often than before due to the rise of social media. Our research shows that in e-mails, i.e. a more formal type of communication, the Frisian language is used less frequently (M=1.38 on a scale from 1 to 4, and 72% of all teenagers and 51% of the L1 teenagers never use Frisian in e-mails). The informality of social media and the idea that communication via social media feels like talking to someone might result in an increase in writing.

As was seen in the studies conducted by Carroll (2008) and Cunliffe, Morris and Prys (2013), the use of Frisian also varies between one network to another and depends on the type of activity on the network as well. In the current study, WhatsApp is shown to be the platform where Frisian is used the most. Furthermore, on all three social media investigated in our study, Frisian is used more frequently in personal messages than in more public messages. In Facebook status updates, Frisian is used the least. The presence of non-Frisian speaking contacts in the teenagers' networks (Bell's Audience Design Theory 1984) and the social pressure to adhere to the majority language as found in previous studies (Cunliffe 2007; Androutsopoulos 2014a; 2015) could prevent many Frisian speakers from using the Frisian language more often, but this cannot be proven with the current data. We plan to devote more questions and attention to this issue in a next study.

Our research shows that social media have included the use of the Frisian language in the written domain. As these media have become one of the most important means of communication in modern life, the use of a minority language such as Frisian in that domain will thus increase the vitality of this language.

Coming back to the three processes identified by Kornai (2013) for languages to become digitally extinct, we may conclude that the threat named 'loss of function' currently applies to the larger cities in Fryslân. However, this is not the case in rural areas where Frisian is the mother tongue for a large proportion of the population and where generally a relatively positive average attitude towards Frisian predominates. As a result, in rural areas Frisian has gained substantial importance on the Internet.

The second process, 'loss of prestige', also threatens the Frisian language. First of all, although Frisian speaking teenagers generally show a positive attitude towards the Frisian language, Dutch speaking teenagers tend to feel negative towards Frisian. If this negative attitude prevails, the use of the Frisian language will decrease further. Furthermore, our research shows that only a small proportion of the teenagers with one Frisian speaking and one Dutch speaking parent prefers to use the Frisian language and that in practice they barely use it on social media.

The third threat, 'loss of competence', is certainly applicable in Fryslân. Only a small proportion of the Frisian population writes Frisian well. However, increased attention for Frisian in education and an increasing number of multilingual schools might counter this threat. Another phenomenon linked to loss of competence is the gradual language change that takes place as the Frisian language is often spelled phonetically and Dutch words and grammatical constructions are regularly adopted in Frisian tweets (Jongbloed-Faber 2014). The current study also shows that there is a general lack of interest among teenagers to spell Frisian correctly. One can wonder whether or not this interest recovers when these teenagers reach a more mature age. Generalising the conclusions of this research study and considering that in Fryslân 'speaking Frisian with friends', 'attitude', 'writing skills' and 'peer group's attitude' explain 56% of the variance in the use of Frisian on social media, we propose that it would be extremely valuable to compare our results with research on other minority language regions. Most probably, the impact of writing skills is similar in regions where education in the minority language lags behind education in the majority language. In regions such as Catalonia and Wales, for example, where sufficient education in the minority language is provided, the effect of writing skills may be minimal or perhaps even non-existing.

Furthermore, it is clear that in measuring language vitality, the use of a particular language on social media should be included in the analysis as an important factor. Social media have become such an inalienable part of daily life, especially for younger generations, that the use of a particular language on these media may imply an increased vitality of the language concerned. In addition, we believe that new technologies such as digital dictionaries and autocorrect functions can actually remove some of the barriers hindering the

use of a minority language online and stimulate an increased use of the language. Facilitating the use of minority languages online by means of new technologies should therefore be an important area of attention for those who wish to ensure the survival of a language into the next century.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Province of Fryslân and the Municipality of Leeuwarden for financing the research project, and we express our gratitude to the Province of Fryslân for additional funding to set up and execute the follow-up study.

3. Regional Language on Twitter: A Comparative Study between Frisian and Limburgish

This chapter is an edited version of the following publication:
Jongbloed-Faber, L., van Loo, J., & Cornips, L. (2017). Regional languages on Twitter: A comparative study between Frisian and Limburgish. *Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 174–196. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/dujal.16017.jon

Jongbloed-Faber is the principal investigator for this article. Jongbloed-Faber proposed the coding scheme for the tweets and coded the Frisian tweets. Van Loo coded the Limburgish tweets. The research questions were developed during discussions with Van Loo and Cornips. Cornips gave feedback throughout the complete research and writing process. Jongbloed-Faber wrote the largest share of the article, submitted the article and incorporated the feedback of the reviewers. During the research process and scientific output of this study, we adhered to the ethical guidelines prescribed by the KNAW.

Abstract

This paper addressed the question how the use of Dutch and the regional languages Frisian or Limburgish differ on Twitter and which patterns in language choice can be identified. Previous quantitative studies (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016; Nguyen et al. 2015; Trieschnigg 2015) have already shown that people in the Dutch provinces of Friesland and Limburg tweet in Frisian or Limburgish respectively, but most often in Dutch interspersed with some English. In this qualitative study, we compared the tweets from twenty twitterers in Friesland and Limburg who use both Dutch and Frisian or Limburgish regularly in order to get insight into their language use patterns. The following patterns in language use were identified: when a twitterer aims to maximise his/her audience, Dutch is regularly employed. However, as soon as an interpersonal, addressed tweet is formulated, Frisian or Limburgish is often used. General tweets in Dutch may therefore very well get a Frisian or Limburgish continuation. Another mechanism frequently found in responding tweets is following the language used in the original tweet, notwithstanding such a tweet was in Dutch or in a regional language. Finally, the data show that, although Twitter is a global medium which can be accessed at any time and any place provided that one has access to the needed technical equipment and Internet connection, twitterers sometimes construct localness i.e. what is perceived as local culture through using Frisian or Limburgish exclusively.

3.1 Introduction

This paper addressed the question how the use of Dutch or the regional languages[10] Frisian or Limburgish differs on Twitter and which patterns in language choice can be identified on Twitter. The study is part of a larger research project called Twidentity[11] in which the use of regional languages is studied through both quantitative (see Section 3.2.3) and qualitative methods. This study concerns the qualitative part of the project. To answer the research question, we studied almost two thousand tweets per region, coming from twenty randomly selected twitterers (ten in Limburg, ten in Friesland) who use their regional language in approximately half of their tweets.

There are several arguments why language use on social media is an interesting object of study. Social media make up an increasingly important share of daily-life communication and connect people, irrespective of place

[10] As defined by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML), "regional or minority languages" are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants.

[11] The research group Twidentity was initiated by Theo Meder and financed through a KIEM grant from Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). The members of the group were Theo Meder (project leader, Meertens Institute), Leonie Cornips, Lysbeth Jongbloed-Faber, Anna Jørgensen, Jolie van Loo, Dong Nguyen and Dolf Trieschnigg.

and time. On the internet, the line between public and private domains has become obscure. Local issues can receive, (un)intentionally, national or global attention (Tagg 2015:195). The eventuality that one may also address a non-local audience considerably complicates language choice on social media: it is easier to choose a language at the schoolyard where one knows exactly to whom one is talking, and who might be overhearing a conversation, than choosing a language to write a message to an imagined audience on Facebook (Marwick & Boyd 2011). Frisian and Limburgish are regional languages that are understood by a limited, often local audience only. If twitterers aim to reach a broad audience, another language with a national or global scope may substitute the use of these regional languages. On the other hand, through using a regional language, one automatically preselects a certain part of one's audience. This can also be a conscious choice, for example when only wanting to communicate with others who know the local context.

In addition, language on social media cannot be classified as purely oral or written communication. Androutsopoulos (2014b) considers social media as a space that cannot be seen as completely distinct from everyday offline practices. Norms in these offline practices are usually reflected in the linguistic practices on social media; a post involving a specific space or audience, usually orientates towards the norms of that specific target group. Also Stæhr (2015) shows that linguistic features that used to be associated with oral communication are exploited in posts on Facebook orientating towards the norms in daily-life face-to-face communication. Language on social media is often referred to as 'conceptually oral' (Schlobinski 2005:132), somewhere in between speaking and writing, with colloquial features being written, with or without taking into account existing spelling practices and grammar. So far, the Frisian and Limburgish varieties have been predominantly used in spoken communication (see 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 for more information about the varieties). What the position is of such spoken varieties on social media has not been extensively researched yet, but Heyd and Mair (2014:243) note that the Internet is "slowly becoming a place of more linguistic diversity." Also the research discussed in Danet and Herring (2007) on the multilingual Internet demonstrate that nonstandard non-Anglophone varieties are increasingly present on the Internet.

As the importance of social media in our daily communication increases, and although it seems that there is more room for linguistic diversity on the Internet than before, the position of regional languages might be under pressure when being part of a multilingual network. Therefore, when and how these regional languages are used on social media is an interesting topic of research. As Limburgish and Frisian are the most frequently spoken regional languages in the Netherlands (Driessen 2012), we selected these varieties for this study. The main research question that will be addressed is: When do twitterers choose their regional language i.e. Frisian / Limburgish or Dutch on Twitter? The next sections introduce the Limburgish and Frisian varieties (3.1.1 and 3.1.2 respectively), and the social medium Twitter (3.1.3).

Thereafter, in Section 3.2 the theoretical framework is presented. The methodology can be found in Section 3.3. The results are described in Section 3.4 and the article ends with discussion and conclusions in Section 3.5.

3.1.1 Limburgish varieties

The Netherlands extended minor recognition to the regional language of Limburg in 1997, through signatory of the 1992 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. One cannot speak of Limburgish as being one homogenous regional language, though. Linguists distinguish six main dialect varieties from north to south: Kleverlands, Mich-Quarter, Central-Limburgish, Eastern Limburgish, Ripuarian transitional dialects and Ripuarian (Hermans 2013:337). It was a political decision to choose Limburgish as the collective name for all dialects spoken in the Dutch province of Limburg, although dialect use in Limburg is not limited to the administrative boundaries of the province (Cornips 2013). Limburgish, therefore, cannot be defined linguistically but should be defined socio-culturally in the sense that people who use it experience being part of a community, and cherish deep feelings for it (Christensen 2009; in Cornips 2013).

Of the 1,1 million inhabitants of the province of Limburg roughly 75% speaks Limburgish (Driessen, 2006:103): in the northern and middle parts of Limburg slightly more than in the southern part of the province (Goeman & Jongenburger 2009). Limburgish is the everyday language in both informal and formal situations. Many municipal and provincial officials use Limburgish to address both citizens as well as each other in oral communication. In schools, health care and commerce, employees are inclined to switch to Limburgish once they notice that a student, client or customer speaks it as well. The number of Limburgish speakers among youth decreases as they shift from speaking a dialect to standard Dutch (Leerssen 1996). The instalment of a regional language officer, in addition to the development of educational programmes and the establishment of a standardized orthography, attempt to reduce this shift (Van Oostendorp 2006:251).

3.1.2 Frisian varieties

Frisian is the second officially recognised language in the Netherlands. Frisian is the first language for 55% of the approximately 650,000 inhabitants of the province of Friesland (Provinsje Fryslân 2015). Frisian is mainly used in informal situations and on the countryside, while in formal situations and in the cities Dutch is used predominantly (Gorter & Jonkman 1995). Although there is an official (written) standard for the Frisian language (Ytsma 2007), this standard is not frequently used in everyday writing (Stefan et al. 2015). Despite the standardisation of orthography, writing proficiency in Frisian remains low (Stefan et al. 2015; Ytsma 1995:12). While roughly 67% of the population speak Frisian, only 15% write it well (self-reported proficiency, Provinsje Fryslân 2015). The low proficiency forms a threshold for people to use Frisian in writing (Gorter & Jonkman 1995). Spoken Frisian is

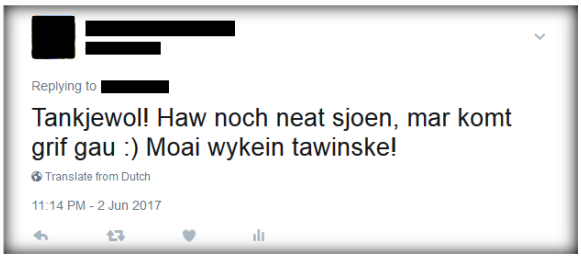
characterized by rich dialect variation. Linguists distinguish three main dialect varieties: '*Klaaifrysk*' (Clay Frisian) which is spoken in the northwestern part of Friesland, '*Wâldfrysk*' (Wood Frisian) in the eastern part, and '*Súdwesthoeksk*' (Southwestern), in the Southwest (Stefan et al. 2015). In this research, Frisian is the collection of spoken and written Frisian varieties, whether or not the utterings meet the official standard.

3.1.3 Twitter

Twitter is a microblogging service that allows subscribers to send a message with a maximum of 140 characters, a so-called tweet, on their smartphone, tablet, laptop or computer. The tweet can exist of text, pictures and/or links to other online content. Subscribers can connect to other accounts (persons and/or organisations) by 'following' them. In return, twitterers (subscribers) can also be followed by others ('followers'). Twitter allows for a private or a public setting. Selecting the private setting means that others can only follow the account after the twitterers consent. In the public setting, anyone can see the tweets, also non-recent ones, and the profile information shared by the twitterer. Three different types of tweets can be distinguished:

- General tweets: tweets fully composed by the twitterer, meant for one's entire audience. In this research these tweets will be referred to as general tweets. See an example below.

- Addressed tweets: tweets starting with @, directly addressing other Twitter accounts. In this research, these tweets will be referred to as addressed tweets. The tweets are considered to be interpersonal tweets because they concern exchanges between two twitterers. See an example below.



- Retweets: a tweet of another Twitter account is re-sent by the twitterer. The retweets will not be studied in detail as these tweets do not contain original language use from the studied participants. See an example below.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 Social media

Many scholars already defined social media. The essence of social media is that they are online platforms on which digital content is created through participation and interaction (Seargeant & Tagg 2014:2). Interaction on social media is aimed at (mainly informal) information exchange, usually with the stress on personal exchanges (Page et al. 2014:13). Social media have changed the way people interact with one-another. Especially the dynamics and communication patterns have drastically changed. Social media have a profound effect on linguistic and communicative habits of people as well as social groups and networks that are created through social media (Seargeant & Tagg 2014:2), as boundaries in space and time have largely disappeared.

Social media make it possible to communicate with people from all over the world provided that they have access to the technical equipment and an Internet connection. As a result, social media are often perceived as global rather than local and public rather than private platforms. These factors have an impact on the way in which people create their online identities and can motivate people to communicate in English or another ‘global’ language, although this is not their first language, because their audience has a global

potential (Seargeant & Tagg 2014:7). A term often used in this context is ‘context collapse’: the coming together of a diverse group of people in an online network that would never meet all together in an offline situation (Marwick & Boyd 2011; Moll 2014). Especially if the perceived audience is multilingual, and the first language of the sender is a minority language, it can be difficult to choose a language as choosing the first language on the one hand would bring about localness and intimacy, but on the other hand would automatically mean excluding a part of the audience.

Social media can be distinguished from one-another by the way in which information sharing is possible, think of short messages, photos and links on Twitter (max. 140 characters), and longer messages, links and photos on Facebook. In the case of chat-speak, it is about how to write as rapidly as possible (Vandekerckhove & Nobels 2010:178). Vandekerckhove and Nobels (2010:178) show that dialects in Flanders are regularly used in ‘chat-speak’ in the Dutch language area.

3.2.2 Language choice on social media

When people communicate, they do this with a certain audience in mind. A study from Litt and Hargittai (2016) showed that persons posting updates on social media (Twitter, Facebook and/or LinkedIn) have a targeted imagined audience in mind in almost half of the posts (i.e. audience design): in the other half of the posts they do not think of anyone specific and just want to share their thoughts with ‘everyone’. Further, communication in chat sessions can differ considerably in terms of audience (Vandekerckhove & Nobels 2010).

In face-to-face conversation the audience is very straightforward: the persons(s) with whom one is talking is/are known and it is usually easy to choose the right language and style. Language choice on social media is less straightforward than in a face-to-face conversation as it is uncertain who will read and possibly comment on a post. In order to maximise one’s audience, people will usually select a language that anyone can understand (Androutsopoulos 2014a). Androutsopoulos (2014a) observed that Facebook users with an international network on Facebook and a first language other than English often write their status updates in English. Comments though may be written in other languages, sometimes “even explicitly challenge the initiative choice of English” (Androutsopoulos 2014a). Androutsopoulos (2014a) also found that in order to address status updates to a specific part of one’s network, persons consciously selected one specific language.

Androutsopoulos (2014b) argues that sharing on social media is oriented to a networked audience. Persons do not only pay attention to what they share, but also how they do this and the feedback they can expect back from their audience. This feedback spurs and can even shape future posts. So, a ‘successful’ post with many responses and ‘likes’ in a certain language might motivate Facebook users to select this variety for their next post again. A Facebook user simultaneously adapts both the role of ‘speaker’ and ‘addressee’ and is responsive to his audience in a very dynamic way.

Cunliffe, Morris and Prys (2013) concluded in their research about Welsh that Facebook was one of the few places on the internet where communication took place in this minority language. They found that language use on social networks is a reflection of offline communication patterns when researching the use of Welsh by adolescents on social networks. Johnson (2013:114) studied tweets of Welsh-English literates and found that Welsh was mainly used when directly addressing another bilingual. In general tweets, English was used more often. Generally, the Welsh-English bilingual community on Twitter conforms to the offline practice norms, using Welsh to other fluent Welsh speakers and using English when monolinguals are present as well (Johnson 2013:116). Cunliffe (2007) also found that the unequal power that prevails in the offline world between speakers of the majority and minority language is often sustained online: according to the norms in offline society, it is rude to communicate in a language that cannot be understood by everyone, particularly when also being proficient in the dominant language. Selecting the minority language in such a situation is often believed to be a political statement. Androutsopoulos (2014a; 2015) draws from a number of studies of online language use that often, communicating in a majority language and/or English is preferred over a minority, regional or migrant language. This can be the result of different factors, such as: peer pressure (Androutsopoulos 2015); taking part in translocal activity spaces and communities beyond local home bases (Leppänen et al. 2009); or considerations from the senders themselves who do not want to exclude anyone of their audience through their language choice (Kadende-Kaiser 2000, as cited in Androutsopoulos 2006). Androutsopoulos (2006) for example concludes that only a small proportion of posts on diaspora websites are in immigrant languages such as Persian, Greek or Moroccan, while the majority of the posts is in German. Androutsopoulos (2015) states that the use of a minority language is generally limited to genres that are related to the minority culture. When networks are linguistically diverse “the communicative aim of reaching as many audience members as possible may override the preference for the heritage language, and at the same time the wish to index ethnolinguistic identity may lead to patterns of formulaic and emblematic code-switching into the heritage language” (Androutsopoulos 2013).

Thus, for persons with a language-homogeneous audience, language choice on social media could still be fairly straightforward, however, for persons with a language-heterogeneous audience this could be more complicated. The more linguistically diverse the contacts on such a social network are, the more complicated it will be to appropriately address the entire public regarding language choice and style.

3.2.3 Existing quantitative research about Frisian and Limburgish on social media

For this study, a language detector was developed which identified over 11,000 twitterers in Friesland and nearly 10,000 twitterers in Limburg

(Trieschnigg 2015). The language identifier calculated that 8% of the collected tweets from Limburg were in Limburgish and 5.3% of the tweets from Friesland in Frisian (Trieschnigg 2015). What's more, an automatically generated overview revealed many twitterers who infrequently use Frisian and Limburgish in their tweets and only a few 'power' twitterers who almost always tweet in Frisian or Limburgish (Trieschnigg 2015). Nguyen, Trieschnigg and Cornips (2015) also concluded that although tweets are most often in Dutch, twitterers may change to the regional language during their tweet conversation. They found that the length of a tweet exchange heightened the chance that these twitterers will continue their online conversation on Twitter in their regional language.

Research among 2,267 Frisian teenagers about their language use on social media showed that Frisian is used most on WhatsApp (Jongbloed-Faber, Van de Velde, Van der Meer & Klinkenberg, 2016). Table 3.1 shows how often Frisian is used by the Frisian teenagers. Please note that Frisian is the first language for around half of these teenagers. On Twitter, 15% of the teenagers say they use Frisian often or all the time in addressed tweets (interpersonal tweets, starting with @), and 13% in general tweets. Almost two third of the teenagers do not use Frisian on Twitter.

Table 3.1 Use of Frisian on social media by Frisian teenagers (n = 2,267)

	All the time	Often	Sometimes	Never
WhatsApp: private apps	8%	22%	26%	45%
WhatsApp: group apps	6%	19%	26%	49%
Facebook: chat messages	5%	13%	22%	61%
Facebook: status updates	3%	7%	18%	72%
Twitter: addressed tweets	3%	12%	21%	64%
Twitter: general tweets	4%	9%	23%	65%

Source: Jongbloed-Faber et al. (2016)

The study furthermore shows that on social media, Frisian is mainly used by first speakers, 87% of whom use to some degree on either Twitter, Facebook or WhatsApp. To account for the variation in the use of Frisian on social media, the teenagers' peer group, language attitudes, and writing proficiency were the most important factors. Although teenagers hardly ever spell Frisian according to the official standard, Frisian varieties have gained presence on social media. Through social media an extended group of people have thus started to use Frisian in the written domain, which signifies an increased vitality of the Frisian language (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016).

An online investigation commissioned by the daily provincial newspaper *De Limburger/Limburgs Dagblad* of a representative sample of 1,078 inhabitants in Limburg presented questions on whether in their terms a dialect is used on social media. This investigation was conducted in early 2016. See Table 3.2 how often dialect is used per type of social media.

Dialect/Limburgish is used most often on WhatsApp and least on LinkedIn. On Twitter, 2% of the respondents use dialect/Limburgish (almost) all the time, and 3% use it often. 73% of the respondents stated they never use dialect on Twitter.

Table 3.2 Use of dialect/Limburgish on social media (n=1,087)

	(almost) All the time	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
WhatsApp	7%	16%	19%	15%	44%
Facebook	4%	10%	19%	16%	50%
Snapchat	2%	7%	9%	20%	62%
Twitter	2%	3%	8%	14%	73%
Instagram	2%	3%	8%	8%	79%
LinkedIn	1%	0%	2%	5%	92%

Source: Flycatcher, 2016

Applying the before-mentioned theory to our research question we expect that twitterers will employ their regional languages more often in interpersonal, addressed tweets than in tweets that target a general public, and when tweeting about culture that is perceived and produced as local (Appadurai 1996). For instance, culture may be produced as local through twittering about rehearsals or performances of drama clubs, music orchestras, pop bands, practicing and competition of sports such as *skûtsjesilen* (regattas of traditional sailing vessels) or *keatsen* (rebound), and also through celebrating feasts as *vastelaovend* (carnival) and organising culinary events.

3.3 Methodology

Between 2014 and 2015 we (the Twidentity research group) developed a language detector and trained it to automatically detect Dutch, Frisian and Limburgish tweets. To train the language identifier on Frisian, 1,000 Frisian tweets from teenagers (Jongbloed-Faber 2014) were used as well as all available Frisian Wikipedia pages, and entering tweets from twitterers who were already indexed by the website Indigenous Tweets[12] as twitterers from Friesland. To train the language identifier on Limburgish, online Limburgish dictionaries and all Limburgish Wikipedia pages were used as a basis. A first data set of 3,985 tweets for the Limburgish language identifier and 2,347 tweets for the Frisian language identifier were manually annotated to optimise the language identifier. After optimisation, the language detector identified over 11,000 twitterers in Friesland and nearly 10,000 twitterers in Limburg.[13] These twitterers could be found in Friesland and Limburg as they allow Twitter

[12] http://indigenoustweets.com/fy/

[13] Previous research discussed in this paper on tweets is based on the data derived from these twitterers.

to show their location. The twitterers were solely selected on location, and not on language choice, so the identified twitterers may tweet in any language.

In order to answer our research question when and how twitterers use Dutch or a regional language, the language identifier was programmed to arbitrarily select twenty twitterers (ten in Friesland and ten in Limburg) tweeting approximately 50% in Dutch and 50% in Frisian or Limburgish.[14] This ratio between Dutch and a regional language gives us the best insight in twitterers' language choice patterns. We selected personal Twitter accounts only; group accounts, for example, carnival associations and political parties were excluded from the selection.

After selecting the twenty twitterers, the language identifier selected two hundred tweets per twitterer from 2013: from half of the twitterers the last two hundred tweets from 2013 were selected, from the other half two hundred non-chronological tweets from 2013. We chose to include both chronological and non-chronological tweets in the analysis in order to prevent that specific events, such as carnival in Limburg or *skûtsjesilen* (regattas of traditional sailing vessels) in Friesland, would affect the research outcomes too much (as we expect these cultural events to trigger the use of Limburgish and Frisian). In total, almost 4,000 tweets formed the corpus of this study (as not all selected twitterers tweeted 200 times in 2013).

Firstly, all tweets in the corpus were manually annotated on language(s) used and type of tweet (general tweet, addressed tweet or retweeted tweet, see Section 3.1.3 for more information). After that, we started annotating the tweets on topic. We tried applying two different code books from other scholars (Dann 2010; Humphreys et al. 2013). However, these code schemes were not specific enough to answer our research question about when and how Frisian and Limburgish are used on Twitter. Therefore, we let 'the tweets speak for themselves' and coded the topics of all tweets without a prescriptive code book. Then, we analysed the coded tweets, the identified topics, and developed a new code book containing 61 topics. Finally, we coded all tweets again following the newly developed code book.

Of all coded topics, this paper specifically addresses the topic that we labelled local culture. Tweets were coded as local culture when containing communication about cultural events in the provinces Friesland and Limburg such as rehearsals and performances of drama clubs, music orchestras, pop bands, all activities having to do with carnival, and practices and matches of traditional Frisian sports. The language choice patterns were identified through two different methods: first, through analysing tweet sequences in which the regional languages were used. In addition, we also studied tweets in which the language choice of the twitterer deviated from the expected language choice (i.e. based on their regular language choice). These data

[14] After annotating and adding geotags it appeared that the twitterers from the Venlo region were overrepresented among the Limburgish twitterers. Therefore, we manually added four new twitterers from other Limburg regions. In the end, two hundred tweets from twenty twitterers, ten from Friesland and ten from Limburg, who were, in terms of location, sex, age, and social class, fairly evenly divided, were used in the analysis.

combined gave us a clear insight in the language choice patterns between a regional language or Dutch in tweets.

3.4 Results: Identified patterns in language choice

In the studied tweets, we discovered several patterns of language choice. Some patterns showed an extensive use of the regional language while others were dominated by the use of Dutch. Although our sample exists of twitterers who tweet more in their regional language than average (see Section 3.3), we argue that the identified language patterns are illustrative for general language choice patterns on Twitter. Note that we analysed almost 4,000 tweets. The following sections illustrate the language choice patterns we found and the context behind the use of the regional language. Frisian and Limburgish are displayed through cursive font, English is underlined.

3.4.1 Following language choice of others

The first pattern detected is that a twitterer chooses the language choice of her/his follower. An example to illustrate this patterns is a tweet from twitterer 1 below. When we examine all tweets by twitterer 1 in our corpus, it appears that she uses predominantly Frisian in her tweets (85% in her general tweets, and 73% of her addressed tweets, tweets starting with @, are in Frisian). But in (1b) when she formulates an addressed tweet she makes an exception to use Frisian for (1b) is completely in Dutch:

(1) a. De lokale democratie lijkt springlevend, http://t.co/link (interessant artikel :) (follower twitterer 1)
    b. @.... Lijkt???? De lokale democratie lijkt springlevend, http://t.co/link (interessant artikel:) (twitterer 1)

(1) a. The local democracy seems alive and kicking, http://t.co/link (interesting article:) (follower twitterer 1)
    b. @....Seems??? The local democracy seems alive and kicking, http://t.co/link (interesting article:) (twitterer 1)

Twitterer 1 could have maintained her regular language use, Frisian, in response to the Dutch tweet of the follower, but chooses to follow the language used in the initial tweet by her Frisian follower. The subject of the tweet which deals with politics can be of influence of language choice here. Since 1b is an addressed tweet directed at her follower, broadening the audience through language choice will not be the motive of twitterer 1.

Example 2 shows a conversation between twitterer 2 and her follower, following a general tweet in Dutch of the latter in (2a), even though both most often tweet in Limburgish to each other (the corpus reveals that twitterer 2 uses Limburgish in 54% of her addressed tweets). Twitterer 2 responds in Dutch (see 2b), however, immediately thereafter, the conversation switches

to Limburgish (in 2c), in accordance with their regular language choice when tweeting to each other.

(2) a. Zo hele huis is er opgeblazen ofzo (follower twitterer 2)
b. @ … Wij willen foto zien! (twitterer 2)
c. @ … haha ik lig nog in bed *in ein zn hiele hard knal net of ein hiel hoes werd opgebloaze* (follower twitterer 2)
d. @ … *Aha, ik dach al det geej hiel vuuel rommel had gemak*. (twitterer 2)
e. @ … *nea ik vind het best um in bed te ligge haha* (follower twitterer 2)
f. @ … *haes-se toch wat van diene ome Ronald! Hahaha!* (twitterer 2)

(2) a. Wow it seems the entire house has been blown up (follower twitterer 2)
b. @ … We want to see a picture! (twitterer 2)
c. @ … haha i'm still in bed *all of a sudden this really loud bang just like an entire house was being blown up* (follower twitterer 2)
d. @ … *Aha, i already thought you made a huge mess*. (twitterer 2)
e. @ … *nah* I'm fine *with lying* in bed haha (follower twitterer 2)
f. @ … *so it shows you really are alike your uncle Ronald! Hahaha!* (twitterer 2)

3.4.2 Switching to the regional language in response to general tweets in Dutch

Another pattern we regularly encountered in the corpus is the switch to a regional language in response to general tweets in Dutch. A tweet by a follower of Limburgish twitterer 3, who is originally from Limburg and now lives elsewhere in the Netherlands, informs about her plans for the evening, a belly dance presentation. The tweet is formulated in Dutch (see 3a). Twitterer 3 responds in an addressed tweet to this follower in Dutch and English (see 3b), and then continues in Limburgish while referring to the celebration of carnival which is perceived as a local feast. Her motive can be the subject of the tweet, local culture, or the habit to address her follower in Limburgish since the corpus shows that 57% of her addressed tweets are in Limburgish. The addressed tweet shows that Limburgish is used when responding to a specific follower.

(3) a. De spanning stijgt: presentatie buikdans #kunstlinie #Almere. We zijn er klaar voor! (follower twitterer 3)
b. @.... succes en have fun!*met de vastelaovendj nog in de bein kumptj det gans good!:)* (twitterer 3)

(3) a. The tension rises: presentation bellydance #kunstlinie # Almere. We are ready for it! (follower twitterer 3)
b. @... good luck and have fun!*with vasteloavendj in the legs it will be all fine! :)* (twitterer 3)

In example (4) we present a tweet sequence of twitterer 4. The corpus reveals that he regularly uses Frisian in addressed tweets, namely 52% of his addressed tweets are in Frisian). When he uses Dutch in addressed tweets, he seems to address non-Frisian speakers only. With one follower he tends to switch languages during the course of a Twitter conversation. An example of how the switch between Dutch to Frisian is made is presented in (4). Again, the addressed tweets show that Frisian is used when responding to a specific follower.

(4) a. Weekend! Prima te doen zo'n 2daagse schoolweek! (follower twitterer 4)
b. @.... ambtenaar :p (twitterer 4)
c. @.... *Verskil moat dr bliuwe twitterer4*! (follower twitterer 4)
d. @.... *das wier!* (twitterer 4)

(4) a. Weekend! Pretty doable a 2 day school week! (follower twitterer 4)
b. @ ….civil servant :p (twitterer 4)
c. @.... *We can't all be the same twitterer4!* (follower twitterer 4)
d. @.... *that's true!* (twitterer 4)

3.4.3 Enlarging audience by using Dutch

As Androutsopoulos (2014a) states, to address a non-targeted, general public, social media users usually post in standard language to maximise their audience. This can be seen in a post by twitterer 5. The corpus reveals that twitterer 5 uses a lot of Frisian in her tweets, 84% of her addressed tweets and 39% of her general tweets are in Frisian. She plans to ride the *Elfstedentocht*, a 240 km long bicycle race through eleven Frisian cities. In all her tweets about this topic she uses Frisian, except for one, illustrated in (5).

(5) Iemand belang bij twee kaarten voor elfstedentocht, starttijd 06.52? (twitterer 5)

(5) Anyone interested in two tickets for elfstedentocht, start time 06.52? (twitterer 5)

The reason to use Dutch in this tweet is to maximise the group of potential buyers (her targeted audience) of her tickets. This is in accordance with Androutsopoulos (2014a). The short exchange of tweets that follows also demonstrates this mechanism, namely using Dutch when addressing a larger public but using Frisian when responding to specific followers, as already

demonstrated in Section 3.4.2. Note that an English expression is used as well in (5d):

(5) a. Iemand belang bij twee kaarten voor elfstedentocht, starttijd 06.52? (twitterer 5)
b. @.... en nog iemand die *dr mei kapt* #hahaha (follower twitterer 5)
c. @.... *NEEEE, wy ha betiidere kaarten sjuu! ik fyts m wol :)* (twitterer 5)
d. @.... topperrr! that's the spirit (a) (follower twitterer 5)
e. @.... *dat tocht ik even! mast betiid by de dyk stean haha* (twitterer 5)
f. @.... *uhm hoelet bist ien holwerd?* (follower twitterer 5)

(5) a. Anyone interested in two tickets for elfstedentocht, start time 06.52? (twitterer 5)
b. @... and another one *who quits* #hahaha (follower twitterer 5)
c. @.... *NOOOO, we got earlier tickets see! i do cycle :)* (twitterer 5)
d. @.... aceeee! that's the spirit (a) (follower twitterer 5)
e. @.... *that's what I thought! you must be on time on the embankment haha* (twitterer 5)
f. @.... *hm at what time are you in holwerd?* (follower twitterer 5)

Another example of enlarging the audience by using Dutch is presented in (6). The corpus shows that twitterer 6 uses Frisian in 86% of his general tweets and 66% of addressed tweets. He addresses his general twitter audience in Dutch in (6a) asking about the road conditions in the Frisian villages Burgum and Sumar. One of his followers respond in Frisian (see 6b), which triggers twitterer 6 to respond in Frisian as well (see 6c). Both Burgum and Sumar are villages where many inhabitants speak Frisian, and that might be the reason why the responses to the question in Dutch by twitterer 6 are in Frisian. Moreover, it is probable that the two twitterers know each other, and that they are used to communicate in Frisian with each other. It stands to reason that twitterer 6 selects Dutch in his initial, general tweet to enlarge the number of possible informants on this matter, the roadblock near Sumar.

(6) a. Kan ik eind van de middag nog naar Burgum of is de weg naar Sumar geblokkeerd? #fb (twitterer 6)
b. @.... *ik leau dat dyk Sumar- Nijegea ticht is*. (follower twitterer 6)
c. @.... N*effens …. op Facebook kin men it doarp net mear út of yn*... (twitterer 6)

(6) a. Can I still go to Burgum this afternoon or is the road to Sumar blocked #fb (twitterer 6)
b. @.... *i think that the embarkment Sumar-Nijegea is closed*. (follower twitterer 6)
c. @…. *According to … on Facebook people can't enter or leave the village*… (twitterer 6)

Also in example (7) Dutch is used to maximise one's audience. The corpus shows that twitterer 7 uses Limburgish in 28% of his general tweets and 84% of addressed tweets. In (7) he tweets about spending the evening in a casino. One of his followers responds to this tweet in Limburgish (7b,d). Twitterer 7 then also selects Limburgish in his response (7c,e).

(7) a. Avondje Holland Casino! (twitterer 7)
b. @.... *de kums dus vnv thoes met unne nieje auto of met un leage pinpas ;p* (follower twitterer 7)
c. @…. *ik goan oet van t 2e haha!* (twitterer 7)
d. @.... *haha dot ge zeker vriendentafel ofzo motte wee ouk mer us met ozse groep goan doon haha* (follower twitterer 7)
e. @.... *haha, bin met 5 piek mier noa boete gegoan..* (twitterer 7)

(7) a. Evening at Holland Casino! (twitterer 7)
b. @.... *you will come home 2night with a new car or with an empty debit card ;p* (follower twitterer 7)
c. @…. *I assume the 2nd haha!* (twitterer 7)
d. @.... *haha you will do friends table or alike we should do that one time with our group haha* (follower twitterer 7)
e. @.... *haha, went outside with 5 euros*.. (twitterer 7)

All examples presented above perfectly illustrate that many tweets start out public, but may turn into a more private conversation. Generally, private conversations, or interpersonal tweets, are more likely to take place in the regional language Frisian or Limburgish. This is in line with Nguyen et al. (2015) who show that longer tweet exchanges have a higher probability that a regional language will be selected.

3.4.4 Language use in tweets about local culture

Localness in the tweets in the corpus is produced through the use of almost exclusively Frisian or Limburgish, and in our data Dutch is mainly used in retweets about local culture. Some examples of tweets producing localness are given in (8) through (11). First, example (8) shows a general tweet in Frisian about a performance of a local drama club (twitterer 8 uses Frisian in 62% of her general tweets). Also the name of the local drama club *Fuort mar los* (Just start now) is a Frisian one.

(8) *jun tonielutviering fan 'fuort mar los' …. en ik binne der klear foar !!* http://t.co/picture (twitterer 8)

(8) *tonight 'just start now' on stage …. and I are ready for it !!* http://t.co/picture (twitterer 8)

Second, example (9) shows a Frisian tweet about *skûtsjesilen* (regattas of traditional sailing vessels) by twitterer 9 (twitterer 9 uses Frisian in 54% of his

general tweets). The first hashtag (#) in example (9) is the abbreviation of the flatboat competition while the second hashtag refers to summer (*simmer*) activities throughout the province of Friesland.

(9) *Drekt mei it skûtsje fan starum nei hylpen foar de #ifks #simmer13* (twitterer 9)

(9) *Soon with the flatboat from starum to hylpen for the #ifks #summer13* (twitterer 9)

Twitterer 10 tends to switch between Limburgish and Dutch (she uses Limburgish in 62% of her addressed tweets and 23% of her general tweets). In the following tweet, example (10), she uses Dutch to tell her audience she is sewing costumes for carnival. She feels proud that she is allowed to participate even though sewing isn't her expertise. As she used Dutch here, we assume she wants to share this information with all her followers. Shortly after, she posts a tweet, example (11), about the same topic in Limburgish. In this post, she announces she has to make a stop-over at an acquaintance called Truus for the costumes. Since it is very likely that followers who know this certain person also understand Limburgish, there is no need to address the entire public anymore and this could be the motive of twitterer 10 to switch to the regional language.

(10) Weer verder "naaien" aan de carnavalspakjes. En ik zit er gewoon bij. :p #kannietnaaien #CvdeMallebergers (twitterer 10)

(10) Continue "sowing" on the carnival costumes. And I am participating. :p #dontknowhowtosow #CvdeMallebergers (twitterer 10)

(11) *Eve naor Truus veur de carnevalspekskes 2012*. #CvdeMallebergers (twitterer 10)

(11) *Visiting Truus for a bit for the carnival costumes 2012*. #CvdeMallebergers (twitterer 10)

3.5 Conclusions and discussion

This study investigated when twitterers use Dutch or regional languages on Twitter. Based on existing literature, we expected that twitterers will employ regional languages more often in interpersonal, addressed tweets than in tweets meant for a general public, and when tweeting about culture that is perceived as local. The language identifier that was developed for the Twidentity project estimates that 5.3% of the tweets from Friesland are in Frisian compared to 8% of the tweets from Limburg in Limburgish (Trieschnigg 2015). Generally, there are many persons who occasionally tweet in a regional language and only a few who frequently do this. So, although regional languages are used on Twitter, Dutch is used much more on average.

In this qualitative research, the language choice is analysed of twitterers who, according to the language identifier, tweet as much in Dutch as in the regional language. Since the analysed twitterers used Frisian and Limburgish more than average (as a result of the assignment to the language detector to select twitterers who tweeted around half in the regional language and the other half in Dutch), the data are ideally suited to demonstrate certain patterns in language choice on Twitter.

Generally, we can say that when a twitterer aims to maximise his audience, the national language Dutch is most frequently employed. This strategy is also described in existing literature such as Cunliffe (2007) and Androutsopoulos (2014a). As soon as an interpersonal, addressed tweet is formulated, Frisian or Limburgish is regularly used. General tweets in Dutch may therefore very well get a Frisian or Limburgish continuation often followed by a Frisian or Limburgish reaction by the same twitterer who first tweeted in Dutch. We can conclude that the longer a tweet exchange lasts, the larger the chance that language users will continue their online conversation on Twitter in the regional language. A previous publication of the Twidentity research group, which is based on a large amount of quantitative data, also confirms this conclusion (Nguyen et al. 2015). In interpersonal tweets, Frisian and Limburgish are frequently used. Once a tweet is specifically addressed to one or more persons who share the same first language, usually the regional language is chosen. This too has already been shown in previous research by, among others, Cunliffe (2007) and Jongbloed-Faber (2014).

A mechanism we also identified in our data is that the twitterer follows the language choice in the tweet to which (s)he is responding. This happens in response to tweets written in Dutch as well as to tweets formulated in the regional language.

Usually tweets are initially meant as a public announcement, but often turn into a private conversation. As a private conversation between two speakers of a regional language will usually be conducted in this variety and not in Dutch, interpersonal tweets between two twitterers speaking the same regional language are also more likely to be in that regional language. A public announcement in Dutch may therefore get a continuation in a regional language.

Finally, our data show that tweeting produces local culture through almost exclusively writing in Frisian or Limburgish. The Dutch tweets we found in our dataset that deal with what is perceived as local culture are almost 100 percent retweets. This corresponds to Androutsopoulos' statement that minority languages are mainly used when discussing topics that are related to the culture of the minority language speakers (Androutsopoulos, 2015).

Summarising the similarities and differences between the use of Limburgish and Frisian on Twitter, we can conclude the following. Limburgish is more frequently used on Twitter than Frisian: the large dataset of our research shows that 8% of the tweets coming from Limburg are in Limburgish compared to 5.3% in Frisian of all monitored tweets from Friesland (Trieschnigg 2015). Both in Limburg and Friesland, interpersonal tweets are often written in the regional language, like tweets engaging with local culture.

Furthermore, in both regions a general tweet in Dutch is regularly followed by a personal response in Frisian or Limburgish. Here we did not observe any differences between the two regions.

We argue that the identified language choice patterns are illustrative for general language choice patterns on social media/Twitter involving regional or minority languages. Although the twitterers in our sample use regional languages more than average in their tweets, also persons using these languages less often will be more likely to use regional languages in tweets about local culture, or in response to a tweet of another speaker of the same variety.

Coming back to the already existing literature, we can conclude that although Twitter owes its rise and popularity to its global spread, it should not be assumed that all new media practices are in fact global; they interact with local scales as well since twitterers may construct a local 'place' through selecting a regional language.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), grant Twidentity (KIEM 314-98-008). The authors would like to thank Theo Meder, Dolf Trieschnigg, and Dong Nguyen.

4. What can Hashtags tell us about Minority Languages on Twitter? A Comparison of #Cymraeg, #Frysk and #Gaeilge

This chapter is an edited version of the following publication:
Sarah McMonagle, Daniel Cunliffe, Lysbeth Jongbloed-Faber & Paul Jarvis (2019). What can hashtags tell us about minority languages on Twitter? A comparison of #cymraeg, #frysk, and #gaeilge. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 40(1), 32-49. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2018.1465429

McMonagle was the initiator of the study and principal investigator. The coding scheme was developed by McMonagle, Cunliffe and Jongbloed-Faber. Cunliffe coded the #cymraeg tweets, Jongbloed-Faber the #frysk tweets and Mc Monagle the #gaeilge tweets. Jarvis performed the statistical analysis. The article was co-written by McMonagle, Cunliffe and Jongbloed-Faber. McMonagle edited the last version, submitted the article to the journal and incorporated the feedback of the reviewers.

Abstract

Researchers of minority language media are increasingly interested in the role of internet-based communication in language usage, maintenance and revitalisation. This study explores the use of hashtags signifying the Welsh/Cymraeg, Frisian/Frysk and Irish/Gaeilge languages on Twitter. Acknowledging the challenges of interpreting social media data, we focus on the hashtag and what it can tell us about the social and digital lives of minority languages. Specifically, we examine the agents using those hashtags, the topics they discuss, the languages used and the extent to which ambient communities may be formed through their use. Our analysis reveals different types of agents who are active and who have a variety of purposes in applying the minority language hashtag – sometimes to promote content in the minority language, more often to draw attention to content about those languages. Comparative analysis between the three language hashtags reveals statistically significant differences along a number of different dimensions, indicating that each minority language hashtag community has its own unique character. Through this comparative, platform-specific contribution we reach some generalisations concerning minority languages in the digital age, while also paying attention to the particularities of each language context and the exploitable features of social media for those languages.

4.1 Introduction

Minority language media researchers must be concerned with the ways in which media developments affect languages and their users (cf. Cormack, 2013). In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to the role of new technologies in maintaining and revitalizing minority languages. The present study undertook a comparative exploration of minority language hashtags on Twitter; the languages explored are Cymraeg/Welsh, Frysk/Frisian and Gaeilge/Irish.[15] It analysed a corpus of tweets (n=3,000) tagged with one of the following: #cymraeg (for the Welsh language, n=1,000), #frysk (for the Frisian language, n=1,000) and #gaeilge (for the Irish language, n=1,000). The aim was to identify the ways in which the minority language hashtag is applied. Hashtags are topic-markers or signifiers that combine the hash character (#) with a keyword, employed to draw attention, promote and inform (Page 2012b; boyd et al. 2010). The use of a minority language hashtag is a conscious act on the part of the user. Hashtags are a form of social metadata, generated by users which render tweets publicly 'searchable' (Zappavigna 2011). They have significance beyond their role as a topic marker, as they bring into being 'ambient communities' whose members forge alignments and negotiate meanings, often without direct communication (Zappavigna 2015; Zappavigna & Martin 2017). In this paper we establish a methodology of

[15] The authors would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their careful reading of our manuscript and for the helpful comments that have led to its improvement. It was not possible to address many suggestions within the confines of the current paper, although they will help the development of our research.

coding and categorising metalinguistic hashtags in order to uncover their significance in identifying content in a given minority language as well as discourses about that language. In other words, does a minority language hashtag draw attention to, promote or inform about language? Is it used in meaningful ways to create semiotic meanings or affiliations?

The UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger[16] classifies Welsh and Frisian as 'vulnerable' and Irish as 'definitely endangered'. The Welsh language has official status in Wales, though English is the dominant language and has de facto official status. According to the most recent census in 2011, Wales has a population of around 3 million people, of whom approximately 560,000 (19%) can speak Welsh (StatsWales n.d.). Around 53% of these speakers speak the language on a daily basis (Welsh Government 2015). Welsh is a compulsory subject in school between the ages of three and 16, either as a first or second language. Young Welsh speakers are most likely to have learnt the language in school, while older speakers are most likely to have learnt it at home as children (Welsh Government 2015).

Frisian is the second officially recognised language in the Netherlands. It is the first language for 55% of the 650,000 inhabitants of the province of Fryslân (Provinsje Fryslân 2015). While Dutch is dominant in formal situations and in urban areas, Frisian is used more often in the countryside and in informal situations (Gorter & Jonkman 1995). Frisian is a compulsory subject in primary and secondary education with regular schools (where instruction is solely in Dutch) offering courses of around half an hour to one hour per week, focusing mainly on oral skills (Günther-van der Meij 2018). Bilingual (Dutch-Frisian) and trilingual (Dutch-English-Frisian) primary education is increasingly popular in Fryslân.

Irish is the national and official language of the Republic of Ireland, visible in street signage and an obligatory school subject at primary and secondary levels. English, the second official language, is the dominant language of communication, trade and public services. According to the 2016 census of the Republic of Ireland, almost 74,000 people claim to speak Irish every day and outside of education (Central Statistics Office 2017:66). Due to its obligatory status in education, a much greater number would have at least some knowledge of the language. Irish has special language policy and planning status in more rural Gaeltacht areas,[17] although 'Urban Gaeilge' is increasingly broached (cf. Carson et al. 2015).

Each of the three languages can therefore be seen to have relatively small speaker populations in contexts of much larger and more powerful languages (i.e. English and Dutch). Research concerning such languages in the digital age is often framed under the 'opportunities and challenges' paradigm: on the one hand communication technology can be 'a powerful force for propagating a majority language and its cultural values; on the other hand, it can provide vital new opportunities for media production and

[16] http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php

[17] Officially designated Irish-speaking areas, located mainly along the western seaboard as well as in counties Meath and Waterford.

consumption in minority languages' (Cunliffe & Herring 2005:131). We can therefore assume that, as internet-based communication technologies become socially ubiquitous, they have an impact on minority languages and their users (McMonagle 2012b). The precise impact is, however, difficult to determine and will vary between linguistic contexts. Furthermore, double-edged paradigmatic thinking has assumed new perspectives with the rise of Web 2.0, the semantic Web, and the phenomenon of social media.[18]

Case-by-case studies shed light on the impacts of technological change on minority languages and how their users react and adapt to such changes (see, for example, Jones and Uribe-Jongbloed eds. 2013). Research and findings in this regard are as multifaceted as explorations of language in offline contexts, as they incorporate user preferences, practices and attitudes regarding both languages and the available technologies as contexts of communication (e.g. Cunliffe et al. 2013; Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016; Ní Bhroin 2013; Reershemius 2017; Stern 2017). Much of this research has been user-centered, deploying and adapting traditional social scientific methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and ethnography to online practices. Others focus on the possibilities and constraints of the technologies themselves regarding language presence online (John 2013; Lackaff & Moner 2016; Lenihan 2014; Liao et al. 2015).

As the field of minority language media studies develops, we come to understand more about the social life of minority languages and their users online. Yet, we have identified a gap in this research field that might go beyond traditional sociolinguistic approaches to focus on distinctive features of digital media and technologies. The hashtag is a natively digital object, without an equivalent in the offline world.[19] That is to say, it is embedded in its online medium (i.e. Twitter). We propose following 'the methods of the medium' to enquire whether they can tell us something about social and cultural life (Rogers 2013:1). By focusing on minority language hashtags we thereby seek to uncover the socio-technical practices of Twitter users who may or may not be speakers of the languages in question, and how they apply this hashtag as a deliberate action to provide metadata concerning the topic(s) of their tweets (Nic Giolla Mhicíl et al. 2018). Does the minority language hashtag folksonomy examined here indicate ways in which digital objects may be utilised for minority languages?

Although the languages in our investigation are vulnerable to a degree, they do have relatively significant presence on social media and on Twitter in particular, as identified by the Indigenous Tweets website. Table 4.1 shows that Welsh, Frisian and Irish are among the 'top' minority languages on

[18] boyd (2015) argues that social media is a phenomenon, to be described in the singular, as opposed to the more grammatically correct 'phenomena', as it refers to a set of practices, tools and ideologies.

[19] Born on Twitter, the hashtag has spread to other social media as well as to the offline world. Heyd and Puschmann (2017) note the 'commodification, professionalization and deictic status' of hashtags in offline semiotic contexts. As such, the hashtag is appropriated for non-digital modes. However the searchable, dialogic and affiliative functions of digital hashtags are not transferable.

Twitter, in terms of both the number of tweets in the language and the number of users who tweet in the language.[20]

Table 4.1 'Top' minority languages on Twitter by number of tweets, as identified by Indigenous Tweets (as of 14 July 2017)

Language	Users	Tweets
Euskara	17,052	10,664,821
Kiswahili	1,296	8,413,349
Cymraeg	14,273	5,698,636
Kreyòl Ayisyen	14,270	5,604,681
Kapampangan	1,379	2,183,819
Gaeilge	11,404	1,981,514
Frysk	2,712	933,743

Furthermore, the three languages in the present study are relatively well studied compared to other autochthonous minority languages, and this body of research is always increasing with regard to internet technologies and social media. We add to this growing body of knowledge with a comparative, platform-specific contribution that offers a methodology for coding metalinguistic hashtags, leading to some generalisations concerning minority languages in the digital age, while also paying attention to the particularities of each language context and the exploitable features of social media for those languages.

4.2 Methodology

The overall methodology was to draw a sample of 1,000 publically accessible tweets from Twitter for each minority language hashtag. The sample was taken in reverse chronological order from the 15th September 2015, the intention being to define a relatively stable sample space.

Each tweet was manually coded for particular characteristics. For example, the language(s) in which the tweets were composed were coded in order to clarify whether the hashtag is applied to content in the respective language. Moreover, each of the languages operates within a majority language context in which discourses regarding minority languages are conducted. As well as identifying content in the respective minority/majority language(s), we further aimed to identify what the tweets were about. The topic of each tweet was therefore recorded. The data was then statistically analysed to identify any significant differences between the three language hashtags.

One of the challenges in this research was the need to code across the five languages expected to occur in the tweets (Dutch, English, Frisian, Irish,

[20] http://indigenoustweets.com/, accessed 14.07.2017. The figures for the top four languages have not been updated since April 2017, for technical reasons.

Welsh). Three coders processed the data, with each able to work within one of the majority/minority language pairs. In order to ensure consistency between the coders, an initial sample of 100 tweets from each language hashtag was free-coded by its respective coder. The three resulting sets of codes were then reconciled and a coding book with agreed meanings was created and used as a reference point during the coding process (the coding categories from the coding book are reproduced in the appendix B).

4.3 Sample data

Working in reverse chronological order from the 15th September 2015, tweets for complete days were collected, leading to an initial oversampling.

For #cymraeg, a total of 1,028 tweets were collected over a period of 32 days between 15-9-2015 and 15-8-2015. The maximum number of tweets in a single day was 51 and the minimum was 16. The arithmetic mean number of tweets per day was 32.13 (n=1,028).

For #frysk, 2,685 tweets were collected over 153 days, from 15-9-2015 to 16-4-2015. This sample contained a very distinct peak of activity on the 16th April when 2,252 tweets applied #frysk. On this day, the language promotion campaign PraatMarFrysk (DoSpeakFrisian) organised the Fryske Twitterdei (Frisian Twitter Day). The goal of this campaign is to stimulate individuals and organisations to tweet in Frisian. This yearly event has already proven to boost the use of Frisian on Twitter (Jongbloed-Faber 2014). The 1,000-tweet sample included 567 (of 2,252) from the Twitter Day and 433 from 'normal' days. An analysis of what type of person or organisation was tweeting[21] and the language used[22] showed statistically significant differences between tweets on Twitter Day and those in the 'normal' #frysk sample. On Twitter Day, a higher proportion of tweets than usual were made by language promotion organisations, and nearly all tweets were made entirely in Frisian (compared with around half on other days). Therefore, the decision was made to exclude the Twitter Day data from the subsequent analysis and comparison with #cymraeg and #gaeilge.

For the 'normal' #frysk sample, the maximum number of tweets in a single day was 32 (on the day after Frisian Twitter Day) and the minimum was 0. The arithmetic mean number of tweets per day was 2.85 (n=433).

For #gaeilge, a total of 1,024 tweets were collected over 26 days between 15-9-2015 and 21-8-2015. The maximum number of tweets in a single day was 78 and the minimum was 20. The arithmetic mean number of tweets per day was 39.38 (n=1,024).

The analysis presented in this paper is based on the 1,000 most recent tweets from the #cymraeg and #gaeilge samples and all 433 tweets from the 'normal' #frysk sample. The analysis focuses on four main areas. Firstly, the Agent – what types of person/organisation are tweeting using these hashtags? Secondly, the languages and combinations of languages used in the tweets.

[21] $\chi 2=59.475$, $p<0.001$

[22] $\chi 2=248.653$, $p<0.001$

Thirdly, the Topic – what subjects are being discussed in these tagged tweets?

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 Agent – who is using this hashtag?

In order to understand which types of agent are active users of the hashtags, the originators of the tweets in the sample were coded. Each of the languages in our study represents a particular sociolinguistic and language policy space. We therefore anticipated a range of agents including governmental, educational, cultural, commercial and voluntary organisations with an interest in the respective minority language. Viewed another way, their strategic use of the hashtag may indicate, to some extent, the adoption of digital tools for the organisations' activities. Such organisations are readily recognisable from their Twitter account names and/or biographies (see Figures 4.1-4.3). So too are individuals with a public persona, such as celebrities and politicians. At the same time, private individuals are overwhelmingly agents of online information spaces. Twitter accounts that were not readily recognisable or did not include an official remit in their biographies were coded as 'private individuals' and remain anonymous in our study. These agents display different and changing motivations in their online contributions that may present difficulties in interpretation to researchers. Their reasons for applying the minority language hashtag may be illuminated by further coding categories, such as additional hashtags used in combination with the minority language hashtag (see below).

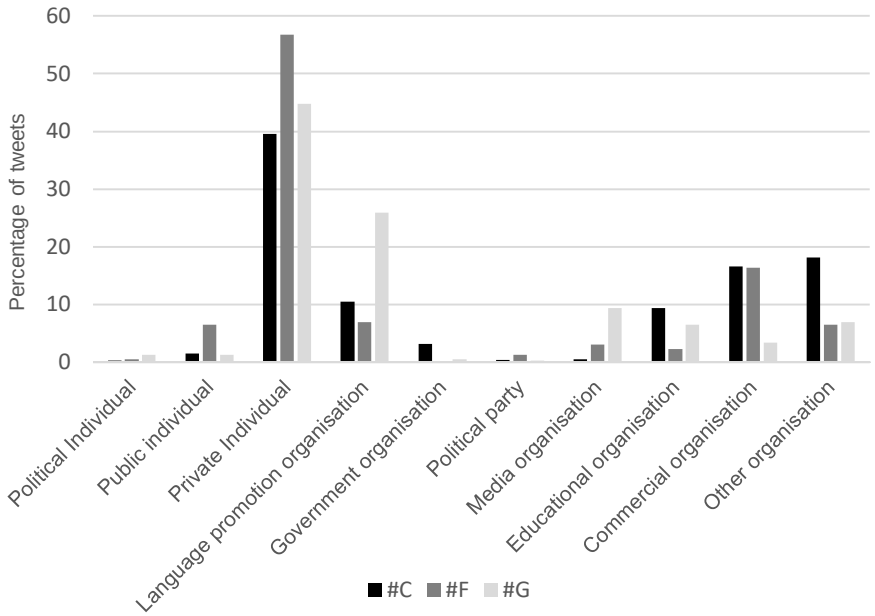
Figure 4.1 Welsh Language Unit, Welsh Government, a language promotion organisation active in the #cymraeg sample

Figure 4.2 Praat mar Frysk, a language promotion organisation active in the #frysk sample

Figure 3 Conradh na Gaeilge, a language promotion organisation active in the #gaeilge sample

Agent types were coded according to the scheme in Appendix B1. The distribution of different agent types across the three language hashtags is shown (by percent) in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4 Distribution of agent type by percentage



The #cymraeg tweets originated from 352 different Twitter accounts, with an arithmetic mean of 2.84 tweets per account. Most accounts (62.22%) only accounted for one tweet. The most prolific account was @lleoldotcymry which accounted for 63 tweets. Table 4.2 provides an overview of the five most frequent tweeters during the period of analysis.

Table 4.2 Most frequent tweeters in #cymraeg sample

Account	Tweets	Type	Comment
@lleoldotcymru	63	Other organisation	The Twitter account for the lleol.cymru website which offers *inter alia* a directory of companies offering services in Welsh and advertisements for jobs where Welsh is required. This account was exclusively used to give a 'morning shout-out' to other Twitter users who presumably tweet in Welsh, using the hashtag #BloeddyBore.
@WebPractice	55	Commercial organisation	Appears to be one of two accounts used by the company to promote its music-related apps.
@practicemusic	46	Commercial organisation	Appears to be the same company as @Webpractice. Probably also partly responsible for high frequency of #ysgol (school).

Account	Tweets	Type	Comment
@username[i23]	30	Private individual	Typically tweeting about nature, often giving Welsh names for birds.
@Cymraeg	28	Language promotion organisation	Welsh Language Unit, Welsh Government.

The #frysk tweets originated from 227 different Twitter accounts, with an arithmetic mean of 1.91 tweets per account. Most accounts (69.16%) only accounted for one tweet. The most prolific account was @PraatmarFrysk, the sole language promotion campaign in Fryslân that also organises the Frisian Twitter Day. Table 4.3 provides an overview of the five most frequent tweeters during the period of analysis.

Table 4.3 Most frequent tweeters in #frysk sample

Account	Tweets	Type	Comment
@PraatmarFrysk	28	Language promotion organisation	Language promotion campaign that also organises the Frisian Twitter Day. Their tweets have a weekly theme, e.g. poetry, Frisian in public spaces, Frisian-Dutch mixed expressions, etc.
@username	20	Private individual	Student who tweets about Frisian history.
@WeduweJoustra	18	Commercial organisation	Producer of (Frisian) liquors.
@fryslan1	9	Media organisation	Private news website, mainly discussing current affairs in Fryslân.
@username	8	Private individual	Speech therapist who mainly tweets about her work, language and children's books.

The #gaeilge tweets originated from 342 different Twitter accounts, with an arithmetic mean of 2.92 tweets per account. Most accounts (56.73%) only accounted for one tweet. The most prolific account was @CnaG which accounted for 80 tweets. Table 4.4 provides an overview of the five most frequent tweeters during the period of analysis.

Table 4.4 Most frequent tweeters in #gaeilge sample

Account	Tweets	Type	Comment
@CnaG	80	Language promotion organisation	Conradh na Gaeilge, non-governmental organisation which promotes the Irish language in Ireland and worldwide.
@raidionalife	35	Media Organisation	Raidió na Life, Irish-language radio station based in Dublin; broadcasts on FM and the internet; responsible for #BricBlasta hashtag to refer to weekday morning show.
@username	29	Private individual	Learner of Irish; tweets Irish language basics; largely responsible for #BuntúsCainte hashtag in the present sample.

[23] Twitter handles representing 'private individual' accounts have been anonymised.

Account	Tweets	Type	Comment
@username	25	Private individual	Tweets proverbs in Irish with English translations; largely responsible for #proverb hashtag in the present sample.
@gaelchultur	22	Language promotion organisation	Provides Irish language classes and resources throughout Ireland; tweets *inter alia* 'Phrase of the Day' in Irish and English.

The results show that the number of tweets from the different types of agent vary significantly between the three language hashtags.[24] Examination of standardised residuals indicated which types of agent were over and under-represented, in terms of the number of tweets produced and tagged. The over and under-represented agent types that are significant at the 5% level ($p<0.05$) are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Over and under-representation of agents based on number of tweets

#cymraeg		#frysk		#gaeilge	
Over-represented	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**
Government organisation	Private Individual	Public individual	Language promotion organisation	Language promotion organisation	Public individual
Educational organisation	Language promotion organisation	Private individual	Government organisation	Media organisation	Government organisation
Commercial organisation		Political party	Educational organisation		Commercial organisation
Other organisation		Commercial organisation	Other organisation		Other organisation

The minority language hashtags present different agentic characteristics. Here we select the specific examples of commercial and language promotion organisations in an attempt to explain the over-representation of these agent types in the different hashtag spaces. Firstly, commercial organisations are over-represented for both #cymraeg and #frysk and under-represented in #gaeilge. While this may indicate greater commercial activity around these two languages, the actual explanation is likely to be more complex. In the case of #frysk, this can be partly explained by the use of 'frysk' to refer to the language and as an adjective referring to products of a Frisian origin. Some organisations also seem to use #frysk as a way to increase the exposure of their tweets (and therefore products and services). For example, the company responsible for a liquor named 'Frysk' hardly uses the Frisian language in their communications. Only the hashtags in the following tweet are in Frisian: *#FRYSK Nieuw product mee naar de beurs! @LWD2018 mee naar @DrankenPakket #Frysk gaat 't land in! #Fryslân #grutsk* (#FRYSK Taking new product to the fair! @LWD2018 goes to @DrankenPakket #Frysk

[24] $\chi 2=471.527$, $p<0.001$

explores the country! #Fryslân #proud). While this should not apply in the case of #cymraeg,[25] there are some examples of the use of #cymraeg to refer to products of a Welsh origin. The following tweet illustrates the possible use of #cymraeg to increase exposure: *@Prynhawnda @HybuCigCymru ni yn y gegin yn coginio #cigoen #cymraeg ar gyfer y siop (lamb&leek pies)* (@Prynhawnda @HybuCigCymru we are in the kitchen cooking #Welsh(language) #lamb for the shop (lamb&leek pies)).

However, both languages do feature commercial organisations among their top five tweeters, and given the small content spaces defined by the minority language hashtags, it is possible for a single, highly active account to have a significant impact. This effect has been noted more generally, where languages with a small number of social media users can be heavily influenced by a few highly active users (Keegan et al. 2015).

Taking another example, tweets by language promotion organisations are over-represented in the #gaeilge sample and under-represented for #cymraeg and #frysk, even though a language promotion organisation features among the top five tweeters for both these samples. This may in part be due to the different number of language promotion organisations present in each minority language hashtag sample. The #cymraeg sample features tweets from 25 such organisations, the #frysk sample from just one, while 42 different language promotion organisations were identified in the #gaeilge sample. Organisations that promote the Irish language are not just active at the national level, but also internationally (see below) as well as in local communities where Irish-language activities and classes are organised. A greater volume of promotional organisations *per se* might explain the over-representation in the #gaeilge sample. On the other hand, language promotion organisations – regardless of language – will vary in their activity levels on Twitter, and in their use of the hashtag. Furthermore, social media platforms are used by individuals and organisations to depict what is happening 'socially', which changes all the time and with differing degrees of relevance to users and their intended audiences. This point will be further elaborated below in respect of over-represented topics in each hashtag sample. Next, we present patterns of language use in the content of the analysed tweets.

4.4.2 Patterns of language use – in which language(s) were agents tweeting?

In this investigation, we did not presume to equate minority language hashtag usage with content in the respective language. One cannot expect that everyday users of a given language tag their online content as such. This could be confirmed by cross-checking our samples with the most prolific tweeters for each minority language, as identified by Indigenous Tweets (op. cit). At time of writing, the most prolific tweeter in the Irish language was

[25] In Welsh there is a distinction between Cymraeg (Welsh – the language) and Cymreig (Welsh – originating in or belonging to Wales) as well as further words referring to Welsh people.

@aonghusoha,[26] who appeared just once in the #gaeilge sample; the account @newyddcymraeg tweets most often in the Welsh language,[27] yet did not appear at all in the #cymraeg sample; likewise, @omropfytsban tweets most often in Frisian[28] but was not identified in the #frysk sample. All three had joined Twitter well before the sample period and all were active at least a year thereafter, so presumably were active during the sample period. The fact that the most prolific minority language tweeters do not appear in the samples suggests that there is a lot of minority language tweeting occurring in these languages that is not tagged as such.[29] Nonetheless, this does not debar the application of the minority language hashtag by other users who display a range of motives and language abilities. A basic inquiry of this investigation was to see whether the minority language hashtag draws attention to content in the three minority languages, the extent to which the majority languages (English/Dutch) are used or whether content is posted in other languages that is tagged with the minority language hashtag.

Each tweet was coded according to which languages were used within that tweet and how they were used – i.e. majority or minority language only, language combinations or no language at all (see Appendix B2). The results presented here represent original tweet text only, i.e. new text content produced by agents, excluding non-text content, retweeted material, etc.

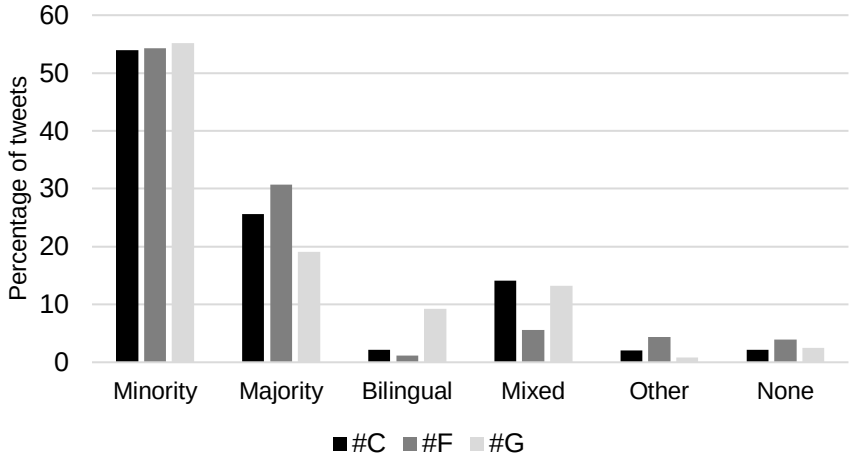
[26] http://indigenoustweets.com/ga/

[27] http://indigenoustweets.com/cy/

[28] http://indigenoustweets.com/fy/

[29] The authors speculate that, as minority language users began to use Twitter, they may have been more inclined to apply the minority language hashtag in order to connect with topics and other users – to create 'ambient affiliations' (Zappavigna 2011) – in the respective language. As Twitter 'followings' increase and stabilise, the necessity of the hashtag to affiliate may become less. We also speculate that users of 'smaller' languages may continue to apply their respective minority language hashtag. Such speculations must be tested and verified by further studies.

Figure 4.5 Distribution of language use type by percentage



It is clear from Figure 4.5 that all three hashtags define complex multilingual spaces. While the majority of tweets in each space feature the minority language, there is a significant proportion of tweets in the majority languages only. Tweets which combine the majority and minority languages make up only a small proportion.

The results also show that language use varies significantly across the language hashtags.[30] Examination of standardised residuals indicated which formats are over and under-represented for each hashtag. Considering significance at the 5% level, #cymraeg and #frysk have fewer bilingual tweets than would be expected. #Gaeilge has more bilingual tweets, but fewer majority and other language tweets. #Frysk has more majority and other language tweets, and fewer mixed language combinations. The relative peak in #frysk for 'Other' is mainly due to the use of English.

Figure 4.6 Example of minority language only content from #gaeilge sample (Agent: language promotion organisation)

Tá 78 imeacht #Gaeilge ag tarlú #OícheChultúir dé hAoine bheag seo. Méadú 354% é sin ó líon na n-imeachtaí anuraidh!

Figure 4.7 Example of bilingual language content from #cymraeg sample (Agent: commercial organisation)

Mr Huw EP Du Llun allan rwan // Mr Huw Du Llun EP out now: bit.ly/1GAS797 #mpFree #Ltdedition #alternativemusic #Cymraeg

[30] $\chi 2=128.195$, $p<0.001$

Figure 4.8 Example of 'other' language content from #frysk sample (Agent: private individual)

@GeorgeMichael Its a famous song from Fryslân in Holland (North). Muzyk! Wa set it #Frysk It giet sa moai as wat! Hehe @othertwitterer

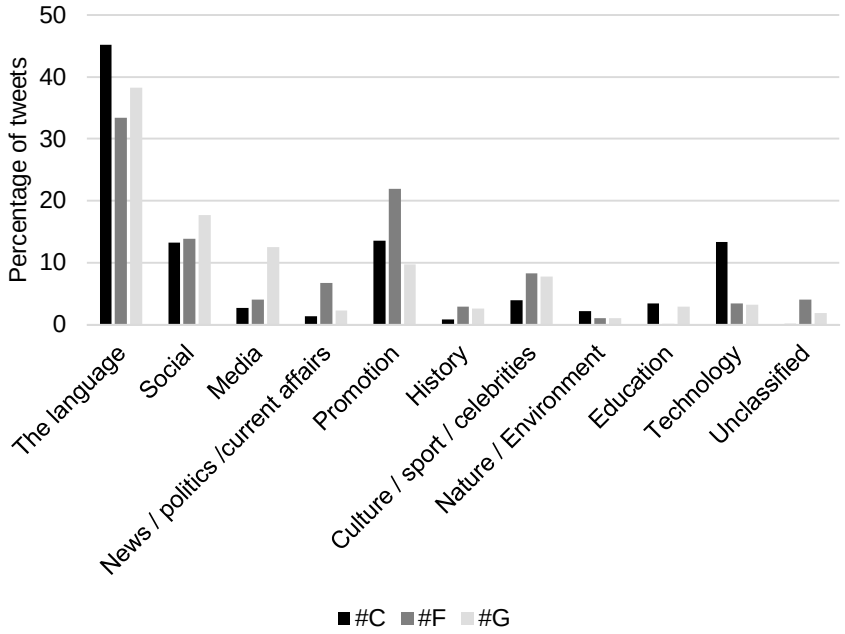
As noted, although our sample shows that the minority language is widely used to create content, users do not always tag their social media activities as such. Although some agents may indeed wish to draw attention to the language(s) that they use, hashtags are more widely applied as topic-markers that may or may not refer to the language in question. The following section analyses the topics of the tweets in our sample to show the degree to which language-related and associated content is tagged.

4.4.3 Topic – what are agents tweeting about?

We sought to uncover which topics were tagged with the minority language hashtag, using the coding scheme in Appendix 3. A tweet could be coded using more than one topic code. The more specific second-level codes were used in preference to first-level codes where possible. For instance, while we anticipated the topic of many tweets to concern the languages in question, it was important to capture – as precisely as possible – what Twitter users were saying about these languages. What information do Twitter users want to make public regarding those languages? So, while 'The Language' was included as a first-level topic code, this was further broken down to more precise second-level codes such as 'learning and teaching the language' or 'language policy'.

The aggregated distribution of different topic codes to first-level codes across the three hashtags is shown (by percent) in Figure 4.9. Unsurprisingly, the largest topic to emerge across the three samples is indeed 'The Language'. Yet other topic codes deemed relevant to the three language hashtags from our pilot sample were also included and varied across the three samples.

Figure 4.9 Percentage of topic codes used, aggregated to first-level codes



Examination of standardised residuals indicates which topics are over- and under-represented for each language hashtag. First-level topics (aggregated with the second-level topics where appropriate) that are significant at the 5% level (sorted in order of most extreme over- or under-representation) are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Over and under-representation of topic codes aggregated to first-level codes

#cymraeg		#frysk		#gaeilge	
Over-represented	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**
Technology	Media	News / politics / current affairs	Technology	Media	Technology
The language	Unclassified	Unclassified	The language	Culture / sport / celebrities	Promotion
Nature / environment	History	Promotion	Education		The language

#cymraeg		#frysk		#gaeilge	
Over-represented	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**
Education	Culture / sport / celebrities		Media		
Promotion	News / politics / current affairs		Social		

It should be noted that the over- and under-representations identified here occur in small samples, collected over a specific timeframe, and may or may not point to larger trends in minority language hashtag usage. If we take as an example the over-represented topic of 'Media' in the #gaeilge sample, we can speculate both ways. On the one hand, @raidionalife – a media organisation – was identified as one of the most frequent users of #gaeilge in our sample. This Twitter account is also responsible for the #BricBlasta hashtag which refers to a weekday Irish-language radio show, An Bricfeasta Blasta. Where the minority language hashtag is used to promote regular media events, such as daily shows, then we can assume that this topic is indeed regularly signified by the respective minority language hashtag. On the other hand, social media activity responds to rapidly changing social events so that we may expect peaks and troughs of topic-related hashtag usage. In reference again to 'Media' in the #gaeilge sample, distinctive media events that occurred during the data collection timeframe led to a peak in media-related tweets. These included the screening of the TV show *An Klondike* on the Irish-language television station TG4, the launch of an Irish-language plan by the state broadcaster RTÉ, and discussion around the availability of Irish-language commentary for televised Gaelic games.

To take another example, an event that may have led to over-representation of 'News/politics/current affairs' in the #frysk sample was a court case that was ordered to take place outside of Fryslân resulting in the Frisian defence not being allowed to use Frisian, although this is a legal right. Disaggregating the first-level topics and including the second-level topics, topics that are significant at the 5% level are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Over and under-representation of topic codes

#cymraeg		#frysk		#gaeilge	
Over-represented	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**	**Over-represented**	**Under-represented**
Promoting the language	Social	News / politics /current affairs	Promoting the language	Social	Metalanguage
Community	Radio	Company / Organisation	Community	Radio	Product / Service
Software	News / politics /current affairs	Metalanguage	Software	Teaching the language via Twitter	Social Media
Social Media	Teaching the language via Twitter	Unclassified	Social Media	Learning and teaching the language	Software
Metalanguage	Unclassified	Twitter Day	Learning and teaching the language	Promoting the language inter-nationally	Community
Product / Service	Print	Technology	Education	TV	Company / Organisation
Wikipedia local version	History Culture / sport / celebrities	Promotion	Radio	The language	Wikipedia local version
Nature / environment	Promoting the language inter-nationally		Teaching the language via Twitter	Online	Promoting the language
Education	The language TV		Wikipedia local version	Print	Expanding the language via Twitter
Expanding the language via Twitter			Promoting the language internationally	Personal family / friends	Humour
Domestic			Language policy	Language policy	Domestic
Humour				Culture / sport / celebrities	
				Media	

Here we see some considerable differences across the three samples, which may be due to specific events leading to Twitter activity during the data collection timeframe and/or generally salient topics as they relate to each of the languages. For example, the Irish language is promoted by Irish embassies and cultural groups abroad, with classes and events organised as part of the diasporic experience in areas of historical and contemporary Irish migration (McMonagle 2012a). This may be the reason why the topic of ‘Promoting the language internationally’ is over-represented in the #gaeilge sample. The Frisian language is most strongly associated with the province of Fryslân and not beyond it. While there are Welsh speakers living in many countries, and a community of several thousand Welsh speakers in

Patagonia, the promotion of the Welsh language internationally was not reflected strongly in the sample, with only three tweets coded for this topic. Internet-based and social media, not limited by national borders, seem an ideal avenue to promote languages beyond 'traditional' territories of usage. Such activities will reflect different geolinguistic profiles and diasporic engagement, as well as uptake of new technologies and the different use of hashtags.

Taking another example, 'Wikipedia local version' is over-represented in the #cymraeg sample, given that it does not feature at all in either the #frysk or #gaeilge samples. WiciCymru tweeted 25 times during the sample period (the sixth most prolific account) and #Wicipedia was the eighth most used hashtag alongside #cymraeg. Although two Twitter accounts for Gaeilge Wikipedia (Vicipéid) can be identified, neither was active during the period of data collection.[31] No such Twitter account could be identified for Frysk Wikipedia (Wikipedy). At time of writing, Cymraeg Wikipedia had 92,631[32] articles, more than twice as many as the Gaeilge and Frysk Wikipedias, which had 44,373[33] and 39,282[34] pages, respectively. According to Wikipedia statistics, the Gaeilge and Frysk versions also have fewer users.[35] Taken altogether, the over-representation of 'Wikipedia local version' in the #cymraeg sample may be due to it having a more clearly defined organisation associated with it. It may also be the case that active users of Wikipedia use social media more frequently to promote their activities, or that they apply the minority language hashtag more specifically. These differences can only really be understood by examining the wider context of agents and their behaviours. The results in Tables 6 and 7 indicate significant differences in the degree to which each of the language hashtag spaces is focused on 'language' as a topic. In order to examine the extent to which the language hashtag is used to identify tweets that are in some way about the respective language, the number of tweets that were coded with at least one code from 'The Language' topic codes (first or second level) was counted. More than 70% of the #cymraeg tweets and more than 50% of the #gaeilge tweets were coded as being in some way about the Welsh and Irish languages, respectively. The fact that the majority of #frysk tweets were coded as not being in any way about the language can in part be explained by the use of 'frysk' as an adjective referring to things of a Frisian origin. Given the distinctive sociolinguistic spaces that each language occupies, with different links to culture, governance, geography and education, it is perhaps unsurprising to find so many tweets tagged with the respective minority language hashtag that do not directly address the given language in their content. For example, a tweet from the #cymraeg sample directed to the rugby player, Leigh

[31] At time of writing, @Ga_Vicipeid had last tweeted in November 2012; @Vicipeid_IE began tweeting in July 2017.

[32] https://cy.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hafan

[33] https://ga.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pr%C3%ADomhleathanach

[34] https://fy.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haadside

[35] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedias

Halfpenny, does not appear to refer to the language, but rather to Wales or possibly the Welsh rugby team: *@LeighHalfpenny1 how you feeling mate? Able to rest up okay? Feel for you. #cymraeg*.

Another example from the #gaeilge sample, and regarding sport, was tweeted in reference to County Mayo losing a Gaelic football match: *Beidh lá eile againn le cúnamh Dé #mayogaa #gaa #gaeilge* (With the help of God we'll have another day #mayogaa #gaa #gaeilge). Gaelic sports and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) are closely associated with the promotion of Irish language and culture – indeed, #gaa was the eighth most frequent hashtag used alongside #gaeilge in the present sample. Considering this close relation in terms of Irish culture and heritage, tweets concerning Gaelic sports are sometimes tagged with #gaeilge. However, the example cited here is entirely in the Irish language, which could also indicate that tweets that are simply composed in the respective language may also be tagged with the relevant hashtag. In any case, the diversity of topics indicated here can be further explored by examining other hashtags applied alongside the minority language hashtag. The following section deals with other hashtags coded in the sample.

Hashtags – what other hashtags were used?

Of the mutated forms of Cymraeg, only #gymraeg was observed and it occurred just 16 times.[36] Aside from #cymraeg and #gymraeg, 641 unique hashtags were used, with an arithmetic mean of 2.58 hashtags per tweet (including #cymraeg and #gymraeg). The ten most frequently used hashtags are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Most frequently used hashtags alongside #cymraeg

#tag	Count	Comment
#cymru	141	*Wales*
#Welsh	110	
#BloeddyBore	63	*Morning Shout-out* by @lleoldotcymru; appears to be a daily shout-out to people who tweet in Welsh.
#ysgol	46	*School*
#wales	43	
#PethauBychain	32	*Little Things* – Welsh Government campaign to encourage people to make small changes to increase the everyday use of Welsh.
#yagym	30	Yr Awr Gymraeg *The Welsh Language Hour* – a campaign to encourage companies to promote their services in Welsh on Twitter.
#Wicipedia	26	The Welsh-language version of Wikipedia.

[36] In both Welsh and Irish initial mutations may occur in certain grammatical situations. Thus, for Welsh it was necessary to additionally search for the mutated forms of #cymraeg (#gymraeg, #nghymraeg and #chymraeg) and for Irish, the mutated forms of #gaeilge (#anghaeilge, #ghaeilge and #ngaeilge).

#tag	Count	Comment
#newyddion	21	*News*
#App	20	

Aside from #frysk, 330 unique hashtags were used, with an arithmetic mean of 2.12 hashtags per tweet (including #frysk). The ten most frequently used hashtags are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Most frequently used hashtags alongside #frysk

#tag	Count	Comment
#Fryslân	28	Friesland, the province.
#Fries	14	Inhabitant of the province of Fryslân, but also Dutch name for the Frisian language.
#diktee2015	12	Hashtag for annual Frisian spelling competition.
#LWD2018	12	Hashtag for Leeuwarden 2018, the capital of Fryslân and European Capital of Culture in 2018.
#friesland	11	The Dutch name for the province of Fryslân.
#hjoedyn	9	*today in*
#Fair	6	Used by a commercial organisation to promote their fair fashion products.
#Fashion	5	Used by a commercial organisation to promote their fair fashion products.
#Frysketwitterdei		Frisian Twitter Day.
#Nederlands		Dutch.
#Omropfryslân		The regional broadcaster (mainly in Frisian).

Of the mutated form of Gaeilge, only #ghaeilge was observed and it occurred just once. Aside from #gaeilge and #ghaeilge, 461 unique hashtags were used, with an arithmetic mean of 1.98 hashtags per tweet (including #gaeilge and #ghaeilge). The ten most frequently used hashtags are shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Most frequently used hashtags alongside #gaeilge

#tag	Count	Comment
#Irish	82	
#BricBlasta	25	Hashtag of weekday morning Irish-language radio show, *An Bricfeasta Blasta* (= the tasty breakfast).
#proverb	25	Usually applied in bilingual Irish-English tweets containing proverbs.
#BuntúsCainte	21	*Basic Speaking*
#Gaeltacht	21	Officially designated Irish-speaking regions of Ireland, although also often applied to other Irish-speaking areas and initiatives.
#Ireland	18	

#tag	Count	Comment
#edchatie	15	Hashtag applied to topics concerning education in Ireland.
#gaa	15	Gaelic Athletic Association, Irish sporting and cultural association.
#gaeilgechat	13	Irish language chat.
#AerÁrann	12	Regional airline based in Ireland.
#OícheChultúir		Culture Night.

The hashtags most frequently used alongside the minority language hashtags show large commonality. Often, the minority language hashtag is accompanied by the name of the language in the majority language (#Welsh, #Fries, #Irish). This again highlights the complex patterns of language use evident in these bi/multilingual spaces. Also, references to geographical space and local events are frequently made, as well as various language promotion campaigns within Twitter itself.

4.5 Conclusions and suggestions for further research

This paper presents the first comparative study between minority language hashtags. It provides a methodology and set of analyses through which these spaces can be explored. It shows that the minority language hashtag refers to different ambient communities, is partly used to tag content in the languages considered, is more often used to tag content about those languages, and sometimes leads to information that has little to do with those languages. The range of agents and topics identified reflects the distinctive sociolinguistic spaces that each language occupies, with the respective minority and majority languages used in reference to multiple topics. The differences identified between the three samples here may partly reflect differences in offline structures, such as the number of language promotion organisations per se that exist for each language.

Yet the present analysis provides just a snapshot of digital content relating to minority languages, taken at a specific point in time and in a highly dynamic space. User-generated content on social media relies on individual expression and motivation that is highly changeable. The agents identified here will have both different attitudes to and experiences of the minority languages in question, as well as changing behaviours on social media. For the present study, content was identified via the minority language hashtag over a specific period of time. The reasons underlying use of this hashtag can therefore not be understood within the limits of this study. For this, a more qualitative approach which engages directly with users would be necessary. Such an approach was precluded by our focus on the hashtag as digital object in an attempt to follow 'the methods of the medium' and whether they tell us anything about the social and digital lives of minority languages.

We do suggest that further use be made of digital objects to tell us more about minority languages and their users in the digital age. While the use of hashtags can be seen as a social resource used for building ambient

communities in which participants do not necessarily interact with each other directly (Zappavigna 2015), other digital objects may shed light on social engagement and interactivity in these spaces. Digital objects such as retweets and @ mentions could reveal insights into the user affiliations and sociality of these networked spaces.[37] But neither does digital object research preclude other types of investigation, such as the qualitative engagement with users we recommend above. Ideally, researchers should proceed to combine various methods to build a fuller picture of minority languages on the web. Building this picture would also require that the present study be repeated across different timeframes to see whether and how minority language hashtag use changes. The inclusion of other minority languages, especially those with a smaller web presence, could also determine the ways in which the minority language hashtag is used differently or similarly when compared with the present sample.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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[37] A distinct advantage of using Twitter in language-related research is its open API and the fact that the majority of Twitter accounts are public. Other social media platforms, such as Facebook and Snapchat, are more challenging for such research as access to user-generated content must usually be granted by users themselves.

5. Local Identity Construction in Dialect Pop Music: Songs, Narratives, and Social Media Posts

This chapter is a slightly adapted version of the following publication:
Jongbloed-Faber, L. (2018). Local Identity Construction in Dialect Pop Music: Songs, Narratives, and Social Media Posts. Us Wurk, Tydskrift foar frisistyk, 67(3-4), pp. 104-136.

During the research process and scientific output of this study, I adhered to the ethical guidelines prescribed by the Fryske Akademy/KNAW. Emiel Stoffers granted permission to reproduce and analyse the social media posts and song texts of *De Hûnekop*, audio recordings made during the interview, and the video recording of their theatre show.

Abstract

Social media use has gradually become intertwined with offline social life. Research that relates online identity work to identity performances in offline contexts is, however, scarce. Moreover, scholars have hardly addressed the use of regional/minority languages in identity work on social media, although their importance for identity construction has been recognised. This paper therefore examines the relationship between online identity construction and identity work in offline contexts of the Frisian dialect pop band *De Hûnekop*. The study compares language practices in songs, a live show, an interview, and social media posts. The results demonstrate that in all forms of communication, *De Hûnekop* construct local identities through the selection of linguistic forms associated with Frisian and through their choice of topics. *De Hûnekop*'s linguistic practices are often strategically motivated, depending on the context and which language variety will deliver maximum success. The research proves that identities are flexible, relational, and negotiated during interaction at all times.

5.1 Introduction

Recent years have shown a growing interest in the use of regional/minority languages on social media. Topics that have been studied include the influence of the Internet and new digital technologies on minority languages (cf. Jones & Uribe-Jongbloed 2013; Kornai 2013), the actual use of minority/ regional languages on social media (e.g. Cunliffeet al. 2013; Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016, 2017; McMonagle et al. 2018; Reershemius 2017), and technological challenges to the online use of lesser-used languages (e.g. Lackaff & Moner 2016). However, the social meaning of the use of those varieties on social media has hardly been addressed. As social media use has become increasingly intertwined with our offline social life (Page 2012a:17-18), and identity performances on social media are subject to the norms of offline society (Stæhr 2015), there is a need for multidimensional research that explores the relationship between online identity work and identity performances in offline contexts (Page 2012a:17-18). This paper therefore investigates how local identities associated with (parts of) Fryslân are constructed, and how identity performances in online and offline contexts relate to one another.

Identity is no longer regarded as a fixed phenomenon, nor as a simple result of the general social categories one belongs to. Rather, identity is considered to be both flexible and negotiable, strongly relational and sociocultural, and constructed during interaction (Bucholtz & Hall 2005). An individual can choose from a spectrum of resources to construct his/her identity(ies) (Jørgensen 2010:2). One of the most important resources in local and social identity construction is language, such as accent or a broad linguistic system labelled as language or dialect. Speech that is perceived as regional is no longer considered to be the logical effect of where one was born or raised, but is seen as a "resource for social action" (Johnstone 2004, as

cited in Johnstone 2010:389). Speakers are considered as having control over their linguistic repertoire, and identity work can therefore be seen as "performance" (Coupland 2009). In other words, the selection of a particular variety, register, style, or accent in one's communication is regarded as a conscious choice made to show which particular social group one wants to be identified with. Until recently, the focus of research on local identity construction was mainly on spoken language (Sebba 2012:1). However, with the advance of social media, a new source for the study of linguistic identity construction has become available. "Writing is becoming as diverse as speaking […] especially on digital media" (Swanenberg 2018:195), and this provides new opportunities to study identity formation.

As in any social interaction, identity production takes place on the Internet as well. While some assume that offline identities can be renegotiated in online contexts, since social cues such as appearance, voice, and pronunciation can be hidden (Zhao et al. 2008), others challenge this assumption because online linguistic practices have often proven to reveal traditional offline social roles (Tagg 2015:144). Moreover, online identity may not be the sole result of one's own utterances, but it may also be influenced by responses and posts of others (Tagg 2015:146). Individuals negotiate their online identity(ies) "through largely text-based visual resources, including written language, typography, orthography and the creative combining of different scripts, as well as photos, other images, videos and the embedding and sharing of hyperlinks to other sites" (Tagg 2015:147) and also through the selection of certain linguistic forms (lexicon, morphosyntax) (Nguyen 2017), language varieties (Hillewaert 2015), non-standard orthographic practices (Sebba 2012:5) and pop music.

Popular music is an important linguistic and cultural practice (Coupland 2011:578). For instance, from the sixties onwards, non-American popular music bands have often reproduced some features of American pronunciation in order to connect to the mainstream pronunciation in the music industry and thus increase their chances of commercial success (Trudgill 1983). In contrast, (punk) bands such as the Sex Pistols rebel against this trend through using dialect features (Coupland 2011). Beal's work (2009) shows that through using dialect in music, pop bands create authenticity (cf. Gerwin 2017). Hiphop artists, too, are often concerned with 'Keepin' it real' (see Cutler 2007 for an overview). In the Netherlands, in the seventies, the genre *boerenrock* 'farmers' rock' emerged. The genre can be described as contemporary Dutch music sung in a regional dialect in which the countryside is celebrated (Klumpenhouwer 2002:153). An example is the band *Normaal* 'Ordinary' who do not sing in Standard Dutch, but in a Low Saxon dialect called *Achterhoeks*, The main heroic character in their songs is the farmer who is challenged, predominantly by new urban norms (Grijp 1995). Through the use of dialect and the theme of their songs, *Normaal* construct a rural identity. Their music has increased the personal and collective self-consciousness of people living in rural areas (Klumpenhouwer 2002). The music of contemporary Frisian bands, such as *Strawelte*, *De Hûnekop* and *De*

Doelleazen, can also be classified as Farmers' Rock. They, too, have (re)invented the culture of their region of origin. Their fascination for the more rebellious aspects of their local culture and their linguistic choices appeal to a broad audience and have become a successful trademark (Jensma 2015).

This paper investigates the linguistic practices of the dialect pop band *De Hûnekop* 'The Dog's Head' from the bilingual Frisian-Dutch province of Fryslân (The Netherlands). As academic research on the social meaning of using regional minority languages is limited, and the relationship between online and offline identity work has hardly been covered, this paper addresses the following research question: How are local identities associated with (parts of) Fryslân constructed in dialect pop music, and how do identity performances in online and offline contexts relate to one another? To answer this question, the linguistic practices of *De Hûnekop* in their songs and their onstage and offstage narratives are related to their linguistic practices in social media posts.

After an explanation of the local context (the province of Fryslân, the Frisian Woods, Frisian varieties and a short biography of *De Hûnekop*) in the following section, the research methodology will be elaborated in Section 5.3. Then, in Section 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6, the research results are discussed according to type of communication: in Section 5.4, an analysis of one refrain and three songs by *De Hûnekop* is presented, followed by an analysis of the linguistic practices in onstage and offstage narratives in Section 5.5. Section 5.6 discusses the orthographic practices of *De Hûnekop* on social media. The paper ends with a discussion and conclusions in Section 5.7.

5.2 Local context

The province of Fryslân is one of the twelve provinces of The Netherlands. Fryslân used to have an economy that was highly dependent on agriculture, but in the past thirty years it has developed into a service economy. Within the Netherlands, however, Fryslân still has a rural image. Although less than 5% of the Frisian working population is employed in agriculture, the share of agricultural employment remains twice as high as the Dutch average (Provinsje Fryslân 2016).

Frisians are known for their strong sense of independence. The earliest known documentation describing Frisians as "craving liberty" originates from circa 1240 AD (Vries 2015). In the Middle Ages, too, the inhabitants of the Frisian lands defended their self-governance with both words and deeds (Nijdam 2008:108). The strong sense of regional identity was further strengthened during the 19th century when the increasing influence of the Dutch central state and the shift of political, economic and scientific power to other regions was opposed. The stereotype is that Frisians are down-to-earth and straight-forward but also independent, passionate, idealistic and proud (Jensma 2003; Schroor 2007).

5.2.1 The Frisian Woods

The Fryske Wâlden 'Frisian Woods', the Frisian region where *De Hûnekop* is proud to have its roots, owes its name to the landscape, which is formed by trees and hedges instead of the channels and ditches that characterise the rest of the province. The region is situated in the eastern part of the province. The soil is mainly sandy, making it less fertile than the clay soil found in the other parts of Fryslân. Consequently, the region has always focused less on agriculture, and its inhabitants needed other sources to maintain a living. In the 18th,19th and early 20th century the population consisted of (seasonal) peat workers, labourers, and small tradesmen (small cattle traders, broom makers, and chair-bottomers). Some villages were also founded as colonies for 'expelled' impoverished, fugitive criminals and the socially failed. The living conditions on the heath were extremely harsh. Large families often lived in a shelter (spitkeet) constructed of sod, wood and rush, together with their small livestock. The heath did however support the inhabitants in their livelihoods: on the heath they could find sods for their homes, firewood, food for their cattle, and poaching opportunities. The inhabitants used to be very attached to their village. They were known for their 'henhouse culture': persons would rather live in a henhouse on their parents' property than move to a better house in another village. Young men from other villages with romantic intentions were most often (violently) barred from the village, which could result in fights, which sometimes were fights to the death, and mostly involved knives. Some villages such as *Harkema* en *De Westereen* are still known for their notorious knife-fighters (Verhaar 1997:17-19; Spahr van der Hoek 1960:95-97).

Just like the inhabitants of many villages and regions in the world, the inhabitants of the Frisian Woods have been nicknamed; they are called *wâldpyk* 'forest chicken', both by inhabitants from other Frisian regions and by themselves. According to the stereotype, a *wâldpyk* is a hot-tempered, unrestrained, liberated filibuster with no respect for the government or societal norms (Spahr van der Hoek 1960). Nowadays, a *wâldpyk* is often characterised as a rough and bad-mannered boor.

5.2.2 Frisian varieties

Just over half of the 647,000 inhabitants of the bilingual Frisian-Dutch province of Fryslân consider Frisian (officially labelled as West Frisian, however this label is hardly used outside academia) as their mother tongue (Provinsje Fryslân 2015). While Frisian is used more frequently in the countryside and in informal situations, in the cities and in formal situations Dutch is often used (Gorter & Jonkman 1995). Due to the dominant position of Dutch in Frisian society and education, Frisian is predominantly a spoken language: writing proficiency among Frisian-speakers is low and Standard Frisian is not regularly used in everyday writing (Stefan, Klinkenberg & Versloot 2015). The written standard differs substantially from spoken Frisian and is often associated with official domains and the so-called elite: (governmental)

institutions working with the Frisian language and their employees, writers, and language activists. Spoken Frisian varies considerably across the province. The three main dialect varieties are: *Klaaifrysk* (Clay Frisian) spoken in the northwestern part of Fryslân, *Wâldfrysk* (Wood Frisian) in the eastern part, and *Súdwesthoeksk* (Southwestern) in the Southwest (Hof, 1933).

Frisian in all its varieties has gained a presence on social media (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016). Research among Frisian teenagers into their language use on social media showed that 87% of the teenagers for whom Frisian is their first language, use what they label as Frisian on social media to some extent. The study showed that peer group, language attitudes, and writing proficiency of those teenagers are reliable explanatory factors for their use or non-use of Frisian on social media, and that the social group one orients oneself towards has an impact on one's use of Frisian on social media (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016). There is a large variation in Frisian used on social media: few Frisian teenagers adhere to the official spelling standard and many write in their own way. Therefore, Frisian on social media is an excellent source for the study of identity construction.

Several linguistic features distinguish Wood Frisian from other varieties. Important articulatory characteristics of Wood Frisian with a high token-frequency rate are:

- The personal pronouns *sy* [si] 'she; they', *hy* [hi] 'he', *wy* [vi] 'we', *dy* [di] 'you' (as object form), *my* [mi] 'me' and the preposition *by* [bi] 'by; with'. In the other Frisian dialects these forms are pronounced with a diphthong as [sɛi], [hɛi], [vɛi], [dɛi], [mɛi], and [bɛi], respectively. It should be noted, however, that the pronouns *dy* and *my* are pronounced as [di] and [mi] in the whole language area if they occur in weak position (Taalportaal > Frisian > Morphology > Inflection > Pronouns > Personal pronouns > Form and Taalportaal > Frisian > Phonology > Allomorphy > Clitic allomorphs > Personal pronouns with /ɛj/ and their clitic allomorphs with /i/ in Klaaifrysk)
- In the Northern Frisian Woods, the personal pronoun *dû* [du] (2nd person singular) is used instead of [do:] (Hof 1933:179; Fokkema & Spahr Van der Hoek 1967:34-35, map 6).
- Palatalization of the glide in raising diphthongs, for example [bi̯atsjə] instead of [bu̯atsjə] 'play' (Dyk 2008).
- In Frisian, the diphthong in words as *wein* 'wagon' is usually pronounced as [ai̯]. However, in the eastern part of the province, this is pronounced as [ɛi̯] (this might be the historic pronunciation as well). In a smaller part of the northeast of the province, around the village of De Westereen, this diphthong is monophthongised and raised to [e:] (Fokkema & Spahr van der Hoek 1967:37-40, map 8; Vries 1993).
- [ɪ] before dentals may be rounded. For example [lɪlk] 'angry' is pronounced as [lölk] (Hoff 1933:152-253).

In addition, several lexical items also differ from Standard Frisian, the most recognised one being *saterdei/saterje* [sa:tərdi] [sa:tərjə] instead of *sneon* [snö.ən] 'Saturday' (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal 1984-2011).

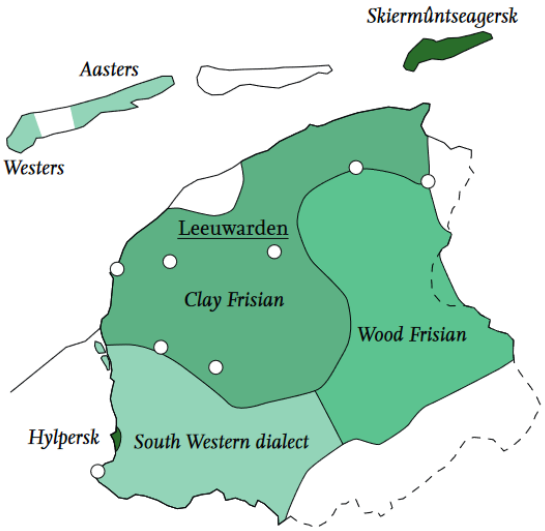
5.2.3 De Hûnekop

The band *De Hûnekop* 'The Dog's Head' was founded on April 4th 2009. The music of the four-headed male formation can be classified as regional pop music (cf. Grijp 1995) and/or farmers' rock (cf. Klumpenhouwer 2002). Jensma (2015) defines their music as *heiderock* 'moorland rock'. *De Hûnekop* use a mix of the Wood-Frisian variety and Standard Frisian in their songs, blended with many Dutch interferences. Their logo (see Figure 5.1) emphasises their Frisian identity: one eye of the skull has the shape of the contours of Fryslân (Figure 5.2) and the other has the shape of a water lily leaf (seven of such leafs are found in the Frisian flag, see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.1:
the logo of
De Hûnekop

Figure 5.3:
the Frisian flag

Figure 5.2:
the Fryslân province and its main dialects
(copyright Arjen Versloot)



De Hûnekop performs in all cities and corners of Fryslân, not only in local pubs and on festivals, but also in theatres. Performances outside Fryslân are rare. Their fan base consists of Frisians of all ages. So far, *De Hûnekop* have produced five albums containing a total of sixty-one songs, a compilation album, and some albums in collaboration with other artists. Out of the sixty-one songs on these five original and single-authored albums, sixty are in Frisian and only one is in Dutch. The songs have all been written by the lead singer of the band, Emiel Stoffers and the first person is used in the texts as

if the songs are autobiographical and the singer sings about his own life and experiences (Coupland 2011). Many topics of the songs refer to life of a *wâldpyk* and the daily-life and struggles of the working class, such as daily routines, hierarchical differences at work, drinking alcohol, differences between men and women, and financial problems. Essentially, these are topics their whole audience can identify with, at least to a certain extent. By using the first person, the singer shows that he is one of them.

5.3 Research methodology

This paper addresses the following research question: How are local identities, associated with (parts of) Fryslân, constructed in dialect pop music, and how do identity performances in online and offline contexts relate to one another? In order to answer the research question the linguistic practices of *De Hûnekop* in three different types of communication are analysed: songs as performed on their CDs, speech of the lead singer both onstage and during an interview with the author, and social media posts.

The four songs that were analysed, were selected, because they each construct regional identity at a different level: In the songs *Alderwetske wâldpyk* 'Authentic *wâldpyk*' and *Ien twa trije* 'One two three' an identity is constructed that is typical of an 'average' *wâldpyk*, while in the song *Harrekiet'n* (word denoting inhabitants of the village of *Harkema*) a difference is made between an 'average' *wâldpyk* and those coming from villages notorious for their knife-fighters. Finally, in the Dutch song *Ons Friesche Land* 'Our Frisian Homeland' an identity that is stereotypical for all Frisians is expressed.

For the analysis of speech, the author attended a live performance of the band and interviewed the band's lead singer. The live performance of *De Hûnekop*, the theatre show *Wanklanken fan de wurkflier* 'Discord from the workplace', took place on 9 February 2017 in the Posthuis Theatre in Heerenveen. The interview with the lead singer of the band, Emiel Stoffers, was held on 16 March 2017.

To analyse the linguistic practices in social media posts, all tweets sent from the Twitter account @de_Hunekop between the day the account was created (February 2011) and December 2017, were collected, as well as all posts on the Facebook page of *De Hûnekop* in 2016 and 2017. The six posts analysed in this paper all contain linguistic practices that enrich our knowledge about (local) identity construction.

In the transcripts that follow, the songs are spelled in Standard Frisian. If a particular pronunciation is of particular interest, this will be marked in IPA in bold and further discussed in the text. To explain the linguistic features throughout the paper, the online version of *Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal* (the Frisian Acadamic Dictionary) has been consulted through http://gtb.inl.nl between 29 March 2017 and 31 August 2018. The narratives are written in an orthography that follows as closely as possible what has actually been said; using Standard Frisian would not adequately reflect what the singer said on stage and during the interview. This orthographic practice is a combination of

Standard Frisian, Standard Dutch, Dutchisms, and an orthography that reflects the Wood-Frisian pronunciation of words. The social media posts have been taken from the Twitter and Facebook accounts of *De Hûnekop*. The Frisian transcripts and social media posts have been freely translated into English with a focus on content. Each line number therefore represents the same meaning.

5.4 Identity construction in pop songs

This section investigates how *De Hûnekop* construct an identity associated with (parts of) Fryslân in their songs. A random selection of their song titles is presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Examples of song titles

Original song title[38]	Translation
Alderwetske wâldpyk	Authentic wâldpyk
Moai smoar	Happily drunk / happily in love
Harrekiet'n	(word denoting) Inhabitants of *Harkema* (village in the Frisian Woods, stereotypically a village of hot-tempered knife-fighters)
Ruchhouwer	Boor
Hollânse famkes	Dutch girls
De klomp	The clog
Grûden en bljirren	Scars and blisters
Jild	Money
Tiid foar skoft	Time for a break
Soantsje fan 'e baas	The boss's son
Ons Friesche land	Our Frisian homeland

The selected titles illustrate the main topics of the songs of *De Hûnekop*: life of the working class and of the stereotypical *wâldpyk*. Although the band members of *De Hûnekop* are now making a living through performing and selling their music, through the topics of their songs they construct a (Wood) Frisian, working class identity.

Four more songs, as performed on the band's albums, will be discussed in more detail. As explained above, in the section on research methodology, the four songs have been selected because they each construct regional identity at a different level. First, the refrain of the lyric *Alderwetske wâldpyk* 'authentic *wâldpyk*', see Extract 1, will be discussed, followed by the full text of the songs *Ien twa trije* 'one two three' in Extract 2 and *Harrekiet'n* (people from the village of *Harkema*) in Extract 3. Finally, the only Dutch song *De*

[38] The names of the songs have been taken from the album covers.

Hûnekop has produced, called *Ons Friesche Land* 'Our Frisian Homeland', can be found in Extract 4.
Extract 1 shows the refrain of the song *Alderwetske wâldpyk* 'authentic *wâldpyk*'. The title of the song is very informative. Straight away the term *wâldpyk* will trigger thoughts about people from the Frisian Woods. All Frisians have a stereotypical person in mind when thinking of a *wâldpyk*, although, depending on their own life trajectories, some stereotypes will be more nuanced and richer than others. One cannot only recognise a *wâldpyk* by the way he/she speaks, Frisians would say, but also by the way they behave. The title refers to the life of an authentic *wâldpyk*, what it means to be an authentic *wâldpyk*, and not a fake one, nor a *klaaiklút* ('lump of clay' term used to refer to people living on the fertile clay soil in the (North)West of Fryslân). The song is about what everyday life of a *wâldpyk* looks like.

Extract 1 Refrain of Alderwetske wâldpyk

Original lyrics	Translated lyrics
1 Oan in overdosis drank, overdosis swiere sjek.	1 On an overdose of alcohol, overdose of heavy tobacco.
2 Ik hâld fan it leven en it jout my toch gjin sek.	2 I love life and it does not give a fuck.
3 Ik bin net graach nuchter, ik bin leaver smoar.	3 I don't like being sober, I prefer being drunk.
4 Ik gean nei de kroech en gedraach my idioat.	4 I go to the pub and behave like an idiot.
5 Jou my in pot bier en in pak swiere sjek.	5 Give me a pint of beer and a pack of heavy tobacco.
6 Ik bin in âlderwetske wâldpyk en ik hou dy op 'e bek.	6 I am an authentic wâldpyk and I will beat you up.

The refrain expresses the life of an authentic *wâldpyk* as imagined by Frisian people. The person is someone who drinks too much beer to forget his struggles in life (lines 1, 2, 4 and 5), smokes heavy tobacco, instead of expensive cigars or ordinary filter cigarettes (lines 1 and 5), and has a hot-tempered, violent character (line 6); this is identical to the stereotypical *wâldpyk* from the Frisian Woods (see Section 2). Through these themes, a Wood-Frisian identity is constructed.

In the song *Ien twa trije* 'one two three', too, the singer constructs an average *wâldpyk* identity: he is a hot-tempered, unrestrained, and liberated filibuster. In Extract 2 the song has been written down and translated.

Extract 2 Lyrics of Ien twa trije

Original lyrics	Translated lyrics
1-4 Ien twa trije **[tre.i̯ə]** si'k dy snije (4x)	1-4 One two three I'll cut you up (4x)
5 Ien twa trije **[tre.i̯ə]** si'k dy snije	5 One two three I'll cut you up
6 Do mast mar even komme	6 Just come over here
7 Si'k dy by **[bi]** it strotsje krije	7 I'll grab your throat
8 Ien twa trije **[tre.i̯ə]** sil'k dy snije	8 One two three I'll cut you up
9 Do mast mar even komme	9 Just come over here
10 Si'k dy by **[bi]** … it strôtsje krije	10 I'll grab your … throat
11 Net te leauen jong sa'n grut wurd	11 Can't believe it boy such big words
12 It bekje hjoed wol wer aardich grut	12 You've got quite a big mouth today
13 Mast rap fersichtich wurde	13 Better be careful now
14 mei dyn grutte bek	14 with your big mouth
15 Mast mar even komme jong	15 Just come over here boy
16 dan stek ik dy lek	16 then I will stab holes in you
Refrain (rep. lines 5-10)	Refrain (rep. lines 5-10)
23 Myn messe jûket my yn 'e bûs	23 My knife itches in my pocket
24 Ik jou dy in ritssluting sa moai as poes	24 I give you a zipper as nice as pussy
25 It jout my neat want ik doch dy dea	25 I don't care because I will kill you
26 Ik snij dy read	26 I will cut you red
27 en dan smyt'k dy yn 'e feart	27 and then I'll throw you into the ditch
Refrain (rep. lines 5-10)	Refrain (rep. lines 5-10)
34-36 Ien twa trije **[tre.i̯ə]** si'k dy snije (3x)	34-36 One two three I'll cut you up (3x)
37 Godverdomme bier moat der komme	37 Goddamn we need beer
38 Bist wol wiis, ferstiest wol Fries	38 Are you sane, do you understand Frisian
39 Ik jou dy Nederlânske les, aap noot mes	39 I'll teach you Dutch, monkey nut knive[39]
40 Ik haw mar ien geloof, de heer is myn redder	40 I have one faith, the lord is my saviour
41 Dat sit yn myn bûs, en dat is myn Herder	41 It's in my pocket, and that is my Herder[40]
Refrain (rep. lines 5-10)	Refrain (rep. lines 5-10)

Ien twa trije refers to the hot-tempered character of the typical *wâldpyk* and more specifically to the notorious knife-fighters from the Frisian Woods (e.g. the introductory lines 1-4, lines 5-10 of the refrain, and lines 16, 23-27, 39, and 41). Not only the topic, but also the pronunciation refers to the Frisian Woods.

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39 *Aap noot mies* is the famous start of a Dutch reading board. Instead of mies (name), *De Hûnekop* sing *mes* 'knive'

40 Herder is a famous trademark of knives, especially popular in the Frisian Woods. There is even a saying *Myn Herder is myn redder* 'My Herder knive is my saviour' (Van der Kooi 2011:number 1253).

In some instances, linguistic variants from the village of *De Westereen* and its surroundings are used, so that an identity of a person feeling connected to that village is constructed. For example, *trije* 'three' in lines 1-5, among others, is pronounced as [tre.i̯ə] instead of standard-Frisian [trɛi̯ə]. In contrast, *snije* [snɛi̯ə] and *krije* [krɛi̯ə] are pronounced in Standard Frisian (Vries, 1993). Furthermore, *by* (lines 7 and 10) is pronounced as [bi] instead of [bɛi̯], a pronunciation being characteristic for the northern part of the Frisian Woods (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal, 1984-2011). Thus, throughout the song Ien twa trije, both through the use of linguistic features and the topic, a local identity associated with the Frisian Woods is constructed.

Another song in which a Wood-Frisian identity is constructed is *Harrekiet'n* (see Extract 3).

Extract 3 Lyrics of *Harrekiet'n*

Original lyrics	Translated lyrics
1 Ik wol gjin spul mear ha	1 I do not want to get into trouble
2 **mei** [mɛi̯] Harrekiet'n	2 with people from Harkema anymore
3 Oars ha ik binnenkoart	3 Otherwise I will soon
4 myn lêste stront noch skiten	4 have shit for the last time
5 Ik kin fertaan mar better myn bek mar hâlde	5 I'd better keep my mouth shut in the future
6 Ik wol gjin spul mear ha **mei** [mɛi̯] Harkema	6 I do not want to get into trouble with Harkema anymore
7 Fan it wykein, wie ik wer aardich op dreef	7 Last weekend, I got going quite well
8 Mei de bealch fol mei drank	8 With my body loaded with alcohol
9 fiel ik my aardich geef	9 I feel rather well
10 Ik socht wat slaanderij yn Quatre-bras	10 I picked a fight in Quatrebras[41]
11 Mar dy jongens, dy kamen út Harke-ma	11 But those guys, they were from Harkema
12 Dêr wie ik noait oan begong,	12 I would never have started it,
13 at ik dat hie **witten [vitən]**	13 if I had known that
14 Want ik wol gjin spul mear ha,	14 Because I do not want to get into trouble
15 **mei** [mɛi̯] Harrekiet'n	15 with people from Harkema anymore
Refrain (rep. lines 1-6)	Refrain (rep. lines 1-6)
22 Ik hie wat trammelant, yn 'e Heidehoeke	22 I had some trouble, in the Hei-dehoeke[42]
23 Ik sei **dû** [du] mast mar even rap	23 I said you'd better be
24 foarsichtich wurde **bûke** [bukə]	24 careful now boy
25 Ik joech him op 'e bealch, mar dat foel net ta	25 I beat him up, but that was not easy

[41] Large dancing/nightclub in the Frisian Woods
[42] Pub in a Wood-Frisian village

Original lyrics	Translated lyrics
26 En toen belle d'r Henkie út Harkema	26 And then he called Henkie[43] from Harkema
27 No ha se juster**jonne** [jösterjonə] my de rúten yn smyten	27 Now they smashed my windows last night
28 Nee ik wol gjin spul mear ha	28 No, I do not want to get into trouble
29 **mei** [mɛi̯] Harrekiet'n	29 with people from Harkema anymore
Refrain (rep. lines 1-6)	Refrain (rep. lines 1-6)
36 Uuuhhh-Harkema	36 Uuuhhh-Harkema
37 Dêr kist mar better gjin spul **mei** [mɛi̯] ha	37 You'd better not mess with them
38 Harre-harre-harre-harkema	38 Harre-harre-harre-harkema
39 Dat wurdt dyn dea, dat kin mar sa	39 It will be your death, that's very well possible
2x Refrain (rep. lines 1-6)	2x Refrain (rep. lines 1-6)

In the song *Harrekiet'n* an identity is negotiated that is even more specific than a Wood-Frisian identity: a contrast is made between a 'regular' *wâldpyk*, the first person in the song, and people associated with the notorious village of *Harkema* (lines 2, 11, 15, 26, and 29). The song tells the story of the singer getting into a fight with guys from *Harkema*. The village of *Harkema*, just as some other villages in the Frisian Woods, is known as the home of hot-tempered knife-fighters. Thus within the Frisian Woods, a distinction is made between wâldpiken coming from different villages, revealing a local identity construction on an even smaller scale.

In the song *Harrekiet'n*, place is constructed along two dimensions (Coupland 2011). First of all, the narrative in the song takes place in the Frisian Woods, in the notorious nightclub *Quatrebras* (line 10), in the pub *Heidehoeke* (line 22), and at home (line 27). It names one village in particular, namely *Harkema* (lines 6, 11, 26, 36 and 38). Second, specific linguistic features are used that index the Frisian Woods: for instance, the word *bûke* [bukə] 'boy/mate' (line 24) is used, a word that is still predominantly used in the Frisian Woods (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal 1984-2011), and *justerjonne* [jösterjonə] 'yesterday evening' (line 27). The word *jonne* [jonə] is also the form used in the eastern part of the province instead of the standard form [jun] (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal, 1984-2011). Furthermore, the pronunciation of some specific words refers to the (northern part of) Frisian Woods: *mei* [mɛi̯] 'with' (e.g. lines 2, 6, 15, 29 & 37) instead of [mai̯] and *dû* [du] 'you'(line 23) instead of [do.u̯]. Finally, the singer pronounces *witten* as [vitən] instead of using the Standard-Frisian [vɪtən] 'known' (line 13). Thus, in this song, both through the linguistic practices and the topic of the song, a Wood-Frisian identity is constructed. Moreover, the singer, who is not afraid of fighting either, distinguishes the notorious people from the village of *Harkema* from other inhabitants of the Frisian Woods, thus constructing a Wood-Frisian identity on an even smaller scale.

[43] Man's name

Extract 4, below, shows the only Dutch song *De Hûnekop* have produced so far, called *Ons Friesche Land* 'Our Frisian Homeland'. The actual song (on the recording as well as during live show) is preceded by a telephone call from a Dutch-speaking booking agent who announces that he foresees a promising future for the band, provided that the band sings in Dutch. The Dutch of the agent is extremely posh in contrast with the Dutch used by the singer, who speaks with an unmistakeable Frisian accent and mixes his Dutch with several Frisian loanwords. From the outset *De Hûnekop* clearly marks the large difference existing between themselves and Dutch people.

Extract 4 Lyrics of *Ons Friesche Land*

Original lyrics	**Translated lyrics**
1 Ons Friesche Land	1 Our Frisian Homeland
2 Daar woon ik graag	2 Where I enjoy living
3 Het is een lang, lang, lang, lang eind	3 It is a long long long long way
4 Van Den Haag	4 From The Hague
5 Onze koeien zijn zwartbont	5 Our cows are black and white
6 Het ruikt hier vaak naar stront	6 It often smells of cow dung here
7 Maar dat is voor ons een genot	7 But to us that is a joy
8 We spenderen ook geen tijd	8 We also do not spend time
9 Aan de criminaliteit	9 On crime
10 Dus de achterdeur hoe't niet op slot.	10 So the backdoor does not need to be locked.
Refrain (lines 1-4)	Refrain (lines 1-4)
15 De mode van de jaren tachtig	15 The fashion from the eighties
16 Dat vinden wij hier prachtig	16 We love it very much here
17 Want dat is bij ons nu pas in	17 Because it has only just come into fashion here
18 Heb je daarop commentaar	18 If you don't like that
19 Dan ben je de sigaar	19 Then your game is up
20 En slaan we jou een dikke lip	20 And we'll hit you a big lip
Refrain (lines 1-4)	Refrain (lines 1-4)
25 De politiek is overbodig	25 Politics are unnecessary
26 Dat hebben wij niet nodig	26 We do not need that
27 Want dat vinden wij maar dom praat	27 Because we think that is just foolish talk
28 En we vechten nog altijd	28 And we still fight
29 Voor onafhankelijkheid	29 For independence
30 Van de Nederlandse staat	30 from the Dutch state
2x Refrain (lines 1-4)	2xRefrain (lines 1-4)
During 2nd repetition of refrain:	During 2nd repetition of refrain:
35 Ons Friese land dat is een zegen	35 Our Frisian homeland is a blessing
36 En zonder zure regen	36 And without acid rain
37 Want je hebt hier maar amper verkeer	37 Because there is hardly any traffic here
38 Ook files he'we niet	38 nor are there any traffic jams
39 En dat doet ons geen verdriet	39 And we do not regret that
40 Nou, zeg nou zelf, wat wil je nog meer.	40 Well, tell me, what more could you desire.
Refrain (lines 1-4)	Refrain (lines 1-4)

Original lyrics	Translated lyrics
45 We zijn doordeweeks aan 't werk	45 During the week we are at work
46 En zondags naar de kerk	46 And on Sunday we go to church
47 En dan ook het liefst drie keer	47 preferably three times
48 Want dat moeder ons baarde	48 Because our mother gave birth to us
49 Op het mooiste land der aarde	49 In the most beautiful country on earth
50 Daarvoor danken wij de Heer	50 For that we thank the Lord
2x Refrain (lines 1-4)	2x Refrain (lines 1-4)
During 2nd repetition of refrain:	During 2nd repetition of refrain:
55 Ons Friesche land van pracht en praal	55 Our Frisian homeland of splendour and beauty
56 En onze eigen taal	56 And our own language
57 Dat kunnen jullie niet verstaan	57 Which you cannot understand
58 Heb je daarmee een probleem	58 If you have a problem with that
59 Dan ga je maar weer heen	59 Then you can leave again
60 Want dat staat ons toch niet aan	60 Because we do not like that anyway
Refrain (lines 1-4)	Refrain (lines 1-4)

Although the complete song *Ons Friesche Land* is in Dutch, in this song *De Hûnekop* also construct a Frisian identity. They achieve this through their linguistic practices – many Dutch words have a typical Frisian pronunciation – and through the content of the song. The text of the song *Ons Friesche Land* constructs a very strong, stereotypical Frisian identity, both in the way it is imagined by people from other parts of the Netherlands, and in the way that Frisians imagine how they are perceived by others, outside of Fryslân. In the song, the contrast is explicitly made between Frisians and ordinary Dutch people from the 'polished' metropole. Several stereotypes are referred to, such as the idea that in Fryslân, there are more cows than people (line 5), the Frisians are old-fashioned (lines 15-17), and very proud of their own language and culture (lines 48-49, 55-56). The love for the province clearly shows in this song: it is a joy to live in Fryslân (line 2); it is a rural area where people enjoy the smell of cow dung and a clean environment instead of suffering from industrial emissions or exhaust fumes (lines 6-7, 35-40); Fryslân is a safe place to live (lines 8-10); and Fryslân is the best place on earth (lines 48-49 and 55-56). At the same time, the Dutch are vehemently opposed and the criticism of the Dutch of this strong Frisian identity and their love for the province and language is clearly attacked (lines 18-20 and 58-60). In addition to constructing this 'general' Frisian identity, in line 19-20 the hot-tempered, violent Wood-Frisian identity is reinforced. However, throughout the song a Frisian identity is constructed at a general level, as opposed to a Dutch identity. This song shows that even through Dutch a Frisian identity can be negotiated.

The analysis of the four songs shows that in their songs, *De Hûnekop* construct a (Wood-)Frisian identity through their linguistic practices as well as through the content of their songs.

5.5 Identity construction in onstage and offstage narratives

This section analyses the narratives of lead singer Emiel Stoffers of *De Hûnekop* to find out how local identity(ies) associated with (parts of) Fryslân is(are) constructed in speech. It discusses fragments taken from the theatre show *Wanklanken fan 'e wurkflier* 'Discord from the workplace' and an interview with the lead singer. The extracts are written in an orthography that reflects as closely as possible what the singer actually said. In the theatre show, the songs from *De Hûnekop* are alternated with sketches performed by the lead singer Stoffers. Just after the start, Stoffers tells that, as a matter of fact. he was not born in the province of Fryslân but in Groningen (the neighbouring province). Especially between the inhabitants of those two provinces (Fryslân and Groningen) there is animosity, which goes back centuries (Jensma 2003; Schroor 2007). Stoffers is the child of a Frisian and a Groningen parent and moved to Fryslân at the age of four. A part of this scene follows below in Extract 5.

Extract 5 Onstage narrative about Fryslân and Groningen

Original narrative	Translated narrative
1 Ja. Ik bin geboaren dus op 25 juny	1 Yes. So I was born on 25 June
2 1980 yn Grins. (silence, comments).	2 1980 in Groningen (silence, comments).
3 Ja toe maar. Nuh. Pleagje my mar jong.	3 Yes, go ahead. So. Tease me man.
4 Jim mat mar goed raar tsjin my dwaan.	4 Just harass me
5 Mei syn allen tsjin ien. 383 tsjin ien.	5 All of you against one. 383 against one.
6 Bytsje eh grappen meitsje **[mɛi̯tsjə]**	6 Making eh some jokes
7 oer myn beperking,	7 about my disability,
8 ja, dat is net leuk. Fyn 'k gjin stijl.	8 yeah, that is not funny. It is not fair.
9 Dat is wol hiel dapper	9 It is very brave
10 mei **[mɛi̯]** syn allen tsjin ien.	10 all of you against one.
11 Ik koe der ek weinig oan dwaan.	11 I could not do much about it.
12 Ik bin namenlik in krusing tusken in	12 For I am a cross between a Frisian
13 Fries en in Grinslander.	13 and a person from Groningen.
14 Ja, ik bin in bastaard.	14 Yes, I am a bastard.
15 Mar ik bin yn ieder gefal gjin ynteelt.	15 But at least I am not inbred.
16 En de heupkes bin best. 100% HD frij.	16 And the hips are great. 100% HD free.
17 Dus ja, ik fiel my soms krekt as eh	17 So yes, sometimes I feel just like eh
18 as in hûn dy yn in 'e hynstestâl geboaren is.	18 like a dog that was born in a horse shed.
19 Dat wol sizze, ik fiel my mear	19 That is to say, I feel more like
20 hûn as hynder.	20 a dog than a horse.
21 Snappe jim dat? Wurdt moeilik hin.	21 Do you get that? Is difficult, right?

Original narrative	Translated narrative
22 Ok, eh, wachtsje even.	22 Ok, eh, wait a minute.
23 Ehm it komt der op del, en dat is	23 Ehm it comes down to this, and this is
24 net om by **[bɛi̯]** jim om te slijmen,	24 not to flatter you,
25 want ik skyt op jim allegearre.	25 because I shit on all of you.
26 Ik fiel my mear Fries	26 I feel more Frisian
27 as Grinslander.	27 than someone from Groningen.
28 En ik fyn .. (applause)… fantastisch,	28 And I think .. (applause)… fantastic.
29 Nee, ik fiel my mear,	29 No, I feel more,
30 en ik fyn trouwens, en dat ma jim	30 and I think, by the way, and you will
31 ek wol mei **[mɛi̯]** my iens wêze,	31 agree with me on that,
32 ik praat ek wol aardich Fries	32 I speak Frisian reasonably well
33 foar in Grinslander. Of net?	33 for someone from Groningen. Don't I?

In this particular extract, the singer does several things. Firstly, he relates his identity to his birth-place, which was not in Fryslân, but in the neighbouring – rival – province of Groningen (Grins, line 1-2). Moreover, in lines 12-13 he confesses that he has a Frisian parent and a parent from Groningen. However, he says that he feels more like a Frisian than like a person from Groningen in line 26-27. Interestingly, in line 32-33, he stresses that he speaks reasonably good Frisian for someone from Groningen. At the end of this fragment, Stoffers seems to suggest that although feeling Frisian, and speaking the language, if one was not born in Fryslân, one simply cannot be a real Frisian. His linguistic practices in Extract 5 are fairly neutral, except for *meitsje* [mɛi̯tsjə] instead of [maitsjə] 'make' in line 6 and *mei* [mɛi̯] instead of [mai̯] 'with' in lines 10 and 31. These pronunciations are typical for Wood Frisian, Interestingly, in line 24 he uses the Clay-Frisian variant of *by* [bɛi̯] instead of the Wood-Frisian [bi] 'with'.

In the interview, when asked whether he feels more Frisian, Dutch, European or a world citizen, the singer gave the following answer (see Extract 6).

Extract 6 The hybrid identity of the lead singer

Original narrative	Translated narrative
1 It is foar my **[mi]** hiel lestich.	1 It is very difficult to me.
2 Ik bin eh, Ik bin natuerlik geboaren yn Grinslân,	2 I was ehm, of course I was born in Groningen,
3 en ik bin opgroeid yn Kollumersweach.	3 and I grew up in Kollumersweach.
4 Allinnich dêr bin ik op myn 17de fanôf	4 But at the age of 17 I,
5 op myn 17de bin ik al yn Ljouwert	5 when I was 17 I moved to Leeuwarden
6 wenjen gongen. Dus ja, ik bin fan alles	6 to live there. So yes, I am a little bit
7 krekt neat, wist **[vist]** wol.	7 of everything you know.

Original narrative	Translated narrative
8 Hè, dus ja, sjoch as ik yn it bûtelan bin dan	8 So yes, you see, when I'm abroad then
9 dan sis ik it leafste fan ik bin in Fries	9 I prefer to say that I am a Frisian
10 wist **[vist]** wol. Ik bin, ik fyn eh,	10 you know. I am, I find ehm,
11 de Fryske kultuer dat dat fyn ik iets	11 the Frisian culture that is something
12 dêr soe'k ja earder grutsk op wêze	12 I could be proud of more easily
13 kinne dan Nederlander ofsa.	13 than of being Dutch or so.
14 Ik fiel my totaal gjin NEDERLANDER	14 I do not feel DUTCH at all.
15 Nee as ik in typyske trochsnee	15 No, if I met a typical average
16 Nederlander tsjin soe komme op fakânsje	16 Dutchman on my holiday
17 dan soe dat net ien wêze wêr't wêr't wêr't	17 then that would not be someone with whom, with whom, with whom
18 ik eh ja eh automatysk goed mei opsjitte	18 I would, ehm, automatically get along
19 kin of sa wist wol. Dus ja it	19 with easily or so, you know. So yes, it
20 is hiel moeilik. Mar ja yn myn teksten	20 is very difficult. But yes, in my texts,
21 eh doch ik myself altiij=altiten foar	21 ehm, I alway-always present myself
22 as in ja as in einlik **[ɛi̯ⁿləks]**	22 as a, yes, as a matter of fact as an
23 in trochsneed wâldpyk.	23 an average wâldpyk.
24 Yn myn muzyk bin ik dat wol.	24 In my music that is what I am.

Thus, while in their songs *De Hûnekop* construct the identity of an average *wâldpyk* (see Section 3), in real life the singer is more hesitant about his identity. He feels he is a little bit of everything (lines 6-7) depending on the situation. He is very clear, though, that when being abroad (lines 8-9) he presents himself as a real Frisian. More specifically, he prefers being Frisian to being Dutch (lines 11-14), and he even states that he does not feel Dutch (explicitly emphasising the word Dutch) at all in line 14. This is an apt illustration that identities are never autonomous and only achieve social meaning relative to other identity positions and during interaction (cf. Bucholtz & Hall 2005, see also the introduction). Linguistic features (such as style; accent; or shibboleths, a linguistic feature distinguishing one social group from another; but also broad linguistic systems such as languages or dialects) can be employed both to demonstrate conformity with a social group and to distinguish oneself from a particular social group (Bucholtz & Hall 2005). The lead singer from *De Hûnekop* confirms this theory several times, e.g. during the theatre show (see Extract 5). During the theatre show, he says he identifies more with Frisians than with people from Groningen. In the above extract from the interview, he distinguishes himself from the Dutch, identifying himself as more Frisian than Dutch. In his songs this can also be found, for example, in the song *Ons Friesche Land* (elaborated in Extract 4).

The singer admits to deliberately presenting himself as a stereotypical *wâldpyk* in his music (lines 19-24). Interestingly, in Extract 6, the lead singer only pronounces words in the typical Wood-Frisian way four times: once [mi] instead of [mɛi̯] 'me', once [ɛi̯nləks] instead of [ai̯nləks] 'actually', and twice [vist] instead of the Standard-Frisian [vɪst] 'know'. In Extract 7, the interview continues. According to the singer, by presenting *De Hûnekop* as Wood Frisian, the band is allowed to sing and say anything, because its audience expects this. The Wood-Frisian identity thus gives the band liberty to use rough texts in its songs and narratives.

Extract 7 The *wâldpyk* identity provides liberty to use rough texts

Original narrative	Translated narrative
1 En dan is it moaie, dan	1 And then the good thing is, then
2 mei **[mɛi̯]** ek alles dan	2 everything is allowed, then
3 mei **[mɛi̯]** ek yn ien kear alles	3 really everything is allowed,
4 wist **[vist]** wol datst	4 you know, that you
5 it wat oandikst ennuh ja, we	5 exaggerate a little, and ehm, yes, we
6 nimme ek totaal gjin eh serieuze	6 do not express any, ehm, serious
7 standpunten yn.	7 points of view.
8 Of der sit einliks **[ɛi̯ⁿləks]** ek hielendal gjin boadskip **[bjatskɪp]** yn use muzyk,	8 Or our music does not actually have a message at all,
9 it is gewoan eh ja lekker	9 it is just, ehm, messing
10 flak ouwhoere ja, en dan meist **[mɛi̯st]**	10 around and then one can
11 ek alles sizze **[se:zə]**.	11 say anything.
12 Ien twa trije **[trɛi̯ə]**	12 One two three
13 si'k dy snije **[snɛi̯ə].** En dat	13 I will cut you (song text). And those
14 bin einliks **[ɛi̯ⁿləks]** hiele ja pakken-	14 are essentially very, yes, catchy
15 de opmerkingen allinnich ja wy **[vi]**	15 remarks; it is just, yes, that we can
16 meie **[mɛi̯ə]** it gewoan dwaan want	16 just do it because
17 iederien wit **[vit]** dat wy **[vi]**	17 everyone knows that we
18 der toch wol wat de gek mei **[mɛi̯]** ha	18 are just making fun.
19 wist **[vist]** wol	19 you know.

A quick scan of Extract 7 for bold IPA markings shows that once the lead singer has concluded that he presents himself as an average *wâldpyk* in his music, the number of Wood-Frisian features in his speech increases drastically, compared to the preceding part of the interview in Extract 6. Examples are the use of [mɛi̯] instead of [mai̯] 'allowed', [bjatskɪp] instead of [bu̯atskɪp] 'message', [mɛi̯st] instead of [mai̯st] 'you're allowed', [vi] instead of [vɛi̯] 'we', [mɛi̯ə] instead of [mai̯ə] 'allowed', [ɛi̯nləks] instead of [ai̯nləks] 'actually', and [vist] and [vit] instead of Standard-Frisian [vɪst] and [vɪt] 'know'. *De Hûnekop* are very aware of the fact that their commercial success can largely be contributed to the use of Frisian in their songs, and shifting to Dutch

or English would make the band less successful. See Extract 8 for this part of the interview.

Extract 8 Language choice in songs

Original narrative	Translated narrative
1 Wy **[vi]** meitsje **[mɛɪtsjə]** gewoan eh	1 We just make, ehm,
2 Frysktalige muzyk omdat we ja yn	2 Frisian music because we, yes, in
3 it earste plak omdat we dat leuk fine,	3 the first place, because we enjoy it,
4 mar ek yn it twadde plak omdat it	4 but also secondly, because it
5 gewoan sa goed rint. […]	5 is just such a success. […]
6 Wy **[vi]** soene minder suksesfol wêze	6 We would be less successful
7 as wy **[vi]** yn it Nederlânsk of Ingelsk sjonge soenen.[…]	7 if we were to sing in Dutch or English. […]
8 Wy **[vi]** soenen echt ús gesicht ferlieze	8 We would really lose face
9 as wy **[vi]** echt op in Nederlânsktalige toer geane. […]	9 if we were to make the switch to Dutch. [...]
10 Nee, want dan, dan is de hiele sjeu derôf.	10 No, because then, then all charm would be lost.
11 De Hûnekop yn it Nederlânsk,	11 De Hûnekop in Dutch,
12 dat slaat gewoan nergens op.	12 that really does not make sense.

In line 1-3 the singer stresses that *De Hûnekop* make Frisian music because they enjoy that. He also admits, however, that the success they have through singing in Frisian also motivates them to continue (lines 4-5). Not only would they be less successful when singing in Dutch or English (lines 6-7), they would also lose face switching to Dutch (lines 8-9), all charm would be lost (line 10), and singing in Dutch really would not make sense (lines 11-12). So, according to Stoffers, if *De Hûnekop* were to sing in Dutch or English, their performances would no longer be considered authentic and this would have a negative impact on their success.

When the singer of *De Hûnekop* speaks, he predominantly constructs a Wood-Frisian identity. He negotiates this identity through what he talks about as well as through how he talks. Some variants would never be used by people from other parts of the province, or people who do not want to be identified with this region. In addition to the extracts above, some other examples that the author heard during the theatre show are *laatsje* [la:tsjə] 'laugh', a variant of laitsje [laɪ̯tsjə] that is being used in the Frisian Woods and the Northeastern Clay area, and heite [hɛɪ̯tə], a word mainly used in the Frisian Woods as interjection for boy or friend (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal 1984-2011). Nevertheless, during the interview, Stoffers is hesitant about claiming to be an authentic *wâldpyk*, as he was not born in the province of Fryslân. However, when abroad he constructs a real Frisian identity as he does not feel Dutch at all. Parts of the theatre show and the interviews exemplify the hybridity of identities; depending on the context, one will identify more or less with a

certain social group. The analysis shows that at all times, identities are dependent on the context and constructed in interaction.

5.6 Identity construction on social media

In this section the social media posts from *De Hûnekop* are analysed. Although Twitter and Facebook are global media, local spaces are being created, for example through topic or language choice. The Facebook page and the Twitter account of *De Hûnekop* are such spaces. *De Hûnekop* construct a Wood-Frisian identity through their linguistic practices and the topics they sing and talk about. Also on social media *De Hûnekop* incorporates Wood-Frisian features in their posts. The writing in the social media posts is a blend of Wood Frisian, an orthography reflecting Wood-Frisian pronunciation, and Frisian written according to the official standard. In the following section, six Tweets and Facebook posts are analysed. These six[44] posts were selected for this paper as they all contain linguistic practices that contribute to our knowledge of (local) identity construction.

In Figure 5.4 a tweet from *De Hûnekop* and its translation is displayed.

Figure 5.4 Tweet of @de_Hunekop on 6 June 2016

Krek eem testflucht makke foar Saterje. Nix loos! Fb.me/7qm668pSQ
Just made a test flight for Saturday. No worries! fb.me/7qm668pSQ

This tweet has several interesting features. First of all, a shibboleth from the Frisian Woods is used, namely *saterje* [sa:tərjə] 'Saturday'. *Saterje* is the orthographic Wood-Frisian variant of *saterdei* [sa:tərdi], which is the official Wood-Frisian written form, whereas *sneon* [snö.ən] is the Standard-Frisian variant (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal 1984-2011). Through the use of *saterje*, one of the strongest shibboleths of the Frisian Woods, a Wood-Frisian identity is constructed. This cannot be missed by people knowing even a little bit of Frisian. In the tweets from the account @de_Hunekop *saterje* [sa:tərjə] is used almost ten times as much as *sneon* [snö.ən], in the analysed period. In addition, there are several words in the tweet that do not follow the official spelling. In Standard written Frisian *krek* should be *krekt* 'just'. And *nix* in Dutch should be spelled as *niks* 'nothing'. The combination of an orthography based on the Wood-Frisian pronunciation with unconventional spelling of other Frisian and Dutch words constructs a Wood-Frisian identity. It also shows how multilinguals can draw from many different linguistic resources to get their messages across and construct a hybrid identity.

A shibboleth that returns in recent posts from *De Hûnekop* is *eem*. In their posts, *eem* [e:m] is used as an alternative for *even* [e:vən] 'just'. In 2016 , the variant *eem* is used in twenty-one tweets as opposed to ten times the

[44] Practically all social media posts of De Hûnekop include interesting linguistic practices, however, for the sake of space these six posts were selected for the analysis.

Standard Frisian/Dutch variant *even*. When asking Emiel *eem* or *even* he replied “eem of course”. He was even convinced that he has always used this variant. However, until 2014, *De Hûnekop* had never used the variant *eem* on Twitter. Only from 2014 the variant can be found on Twitter and the frequency has increased dramatically: from six times in 2014, ten times in 2015 to twenty-one times in 2016. In the theatre show Emiel used *eem* only once, and during the whole interview he did not spontaneously use *eem* at all. It seems as if *eem* is deliberately chosen on social media. *Eem* has not yet been observed as a Frisian variant in research about Frisian. It is, however, a common linguistic variant in Low Saxon dialects such as *Gronings* and *Stellingwerfs* (Bloemhoff et al. 2008), and as early as 1948 Hof observed a change in the pronunciation of –/ən/ into –[m̩] after the labio-dentals f and v along the Frisian language border (Hof 1948). The nasal in -ən usually undergoes assimilation to the previous and following consonant (Taalportaal > Frisian > Phonology > Phonological Processes > Assimilation > Progressive place assimilation). But here, the preceding consonant disappears altogether. This appears to be reduction in a high-frequency word. A quick search of a database of Frisian tweets shows that nowadays *eem* is regularly employed by Frisian teenagers, originating from all parts of Fryslân.

In Figure 5.5, *De Hûnekop* post an announcement of an ‘after-party’ on Facebook. In this Facebook post, too, this typical Wood-Frisian identity is constructed. The translation of the post can be found below the figure.

Figure 5.5 Facebook post of *De Hûnekop* on 19 January 2017

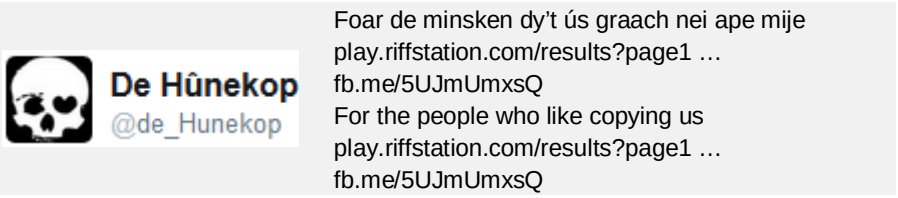
Ok, de oare deis dus wol in kater!
Above the poster: We cannot let you go home sober
Below the poster: All right, so the next day a hangover it will be!

The Wood-Frisian identity is constructed through several linguistic features. An alternative spelling compensates for the absence of a Wood-Frisian pronunciation in written communication in the case of *nij* ‘to’. *Nij* is the

alternative spelling for *nei*, which in Standard Frisian is pronounced as [na.i̯], instead of [nɛi̯], which is typical for the Northern Frisian Woods. Because the word is spelled as *nij* (which means 'new' instead of 'to'), the Wood-Frisian pronunciation [nɛi] is reflected in the written text (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal, 1984-2011).

A comparable example is a tweet of just a few days earlier (See Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 Tweet of @de_Hunekop on 16 January 2017



In this tweet, too, the poor reflection of the Wood-Frisian pronunciation in the official Frisian orthography is overcome by choosing an alternative spelling that reflects the Wood-Frisian pronunciation much better. This is the reason why *De Hûnekop* chooses *mije* [mɛi̯ə] 'like' instead of the standard-Frisian spelling *meie* [mai̯ə]. *Meie* is pronounced as [mɛi̯ə] in the Frisian Woods, while [mai̯ə] is used in the Clay area and the Southwestern part of Fryslân. Interestingly, *De Hûnekop* does use the standard-Frisian *nei* (and not the spelling *nij* as in Figure 5.5).

Another tweet where an identity associated with the Frisian Woods has been constructed, is the tweet shown in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7 Tweet of @de_Hunekop on 18 December 2016

First, the village *Aldegea* is spelled with the diacritic '^'. The use of this diacritic above the vowels 'a', 'e', 'o' and 'u' is salient for Standard Frisian; this diacritic is not used in Dutch. However, in Frisian the diacritic '^' is never used with a capital letter. *De Hûnekop* diverges from these spelling rules through writing *Âldegea*. They thus overuse the diacritic sign. Moreover, spelling on social media can be a matter of speed in order to write as quickly as possible (Vandekerckhove & Nobels 2010:178), in this case the use of 'Â' requires extra effort: it takes extra time to use the diacritic. Third, the word *Bjusterbaarlik* 'extraordinary' is an archaic word the use of which has been documented since 1866 (Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal 1984-2011). It has an iconic and invigorative meaning which is associated with a primaeval Frisian

identity. Finally, *De Hûnekop* writes *jonne* [jonə] ‘evening’, and not standard-Frisian *jûn* [jun].

While most social media posts by *De Hûnekop* are written in Frisian, a few are also written in Dutch. An example is given in Figure 5.8.

Figure 5.8 Tweet of @de_Hunekop on 19 November 2017

Dames en heren, het eerste en laatste hollandstalige nummer van de hûnekop. fb.me/Lz9zGfid
Ladies and gentlemen, the first and last Dutch song by de hûnekop. fb.me/Lz9zGfid

In this Dutch tweet, a song in the Dutch language is announced (the song *Ons Friesche Land* which is also discussed in Extract 4 in Section 5.4). This tweet seems to have two target groups in mind. First of all, a Dutch-speaking audience who can ‘finally’ listen to a song they will understand. Second of all, a Frisian-speaking audience that is being reassured that this Dutch-language song is a one-time adventure only. By including the phrase “the first and the last” in the tweet, *De Hûnekop* communicate that using Dutch in their songs really is an exception. With that statement they indirectly affirm their Frisian authenticity and identity.

While the majority of the social media posts of *De Hûnekop* are a mix of standard and non-Standard Frisian, their press releases, website, and webshop are in Dutch. See Extract 9 below for the relevant abstract of the interview with Emiel Stoffers discussing the choice for Dutch. The lead singer does not express any concerns about their credibility here (in contrast to, for example, his concerns in Extract 8 in Section 5.4).

Extract 9 Offstage narrative explaining the use of Dutch in communication

Original narrative	Translated narrative
1 Ik doch it ek wolris yn it Nederlansk,	1 I also sometimes use Dutch,
2 dy’t belangryk binne.	2 those that are important.
3 Want dan tink ik ja, net	3 Because then I think well, not
3 iederien dy kin eh goed Fries lêze.	3 everyone can, ehm, read Frisian well.
4 No sa, ús website is ek yn it	4 Well, our website is also in
5 Nederlânsk, en, ja eh,	5 Dutch, and, yes, ehm,
6 persberjochten skriuw [**skrjuu̯**] ik	6 I always write press releases
7 altyd yn it Nederlansk. At ik it yn it	7 in Dutch. If I wanted to use
8 Fries dwaan wol, dan moat ik it	8 Frisian, then I would have to do it
9 twa kear dwaan. En it is en	9 twice. And it always is
10 bliuwt [**bljuu̯t]** toch in hiele protte	10 a lot of
11 wurk gewoan snapst, soms	11 work, you understand, sometimes
12 dan giest ek gewoan foar de	12 one simply chooses the
13 praktyske wei **[vɛi̯]** ennuh	13 practical way and ehm,

Original narrative	Translated narrative
14 it is sa't it is. Ik kin wol alles	14 it is what it is. I could do everything
15 yn it Fries dwaan en eh ja wy **[vi]**	15 in Frisian and ehm, we also have
ha	16 fans from outside of Fryslân and well,
16 ek wol fans bûten Fryslan no ja	17 they, they would then miss it all,
17 dy dy misse dat dan allegearre	18 but yes, so ehm,
18 mar ja dus eh	19 then I just do it bilingually
19 dan doch ik it gewoan twatalich	20 and I mean, ehm,
20 en ik bedoel eh elke Fries dy kin	21 every Frisian can read Dutch so,
21 wol Nederlânsk lêze dus eh	ehm,
22 it is wat it is.	22 it is what it is.

In this light, on social media, one other Dutch post stands out (see Figure 5.9). It asks Sint (short for Sinterklaas, the Dutch version of Santa Claus, whose holiday is celebrated on December 5th) to order presents from the webshop before 2 December.

Figure 5.9 Facebook post of *De Hûnekop* on 27 November 2016

Beste Sint.
Mocht u kadootjes willen kopen bij www.hunekopshop.nl, dan moet dat wel voor 2 Dec. Dan bent u zeker dat de kinderen ze op 5 December hebben. Succes!
Dear Sint.
Should you want to buy presents at www.hunekopshop.nl, then you will need to do so before Dec. 2. Then you can be sure that the children will have them on December 5. Good luck!

In the province of Fryslân Sinterklaas predominantly speaks Dutch and hardly ever Frisian (no literature has been found on this topic, so this is based on the researcher's personal experience and that of colleagues from the Fryske Akademy), so the singer of *De Hûnekop* was asked whether the use of Dutch in this post was chosen because *Sinterklaas* speaks Dutch. Research in Limburg, another province in the Netherlands where the Limburgish dialect is spoken next to Dutch, showed that the official language of *Sinterklaas* is Dutch, however, this was reversed during Carnival celebrations, one of the main events where speaking dialect is appropriate and speaking Dutch would be completely out of place (Thissen 2018).

In this case, the singer of *De Hûnekop* explains that using Dutch in this post purely serves a commercial purpose (see Extract 10). They want to sell their merchandise, and by using Dutch they are sure that everyone will understand the post. The words used in line 4, *hannel dwaan* 'making some business', constructs a stereotypical inhabitant of the Frisian Woods as many small merchants used to live in the Frisian Woods (see Section 5.2) and the inhabitants of the Frisian Woods are still known as small merchants, often

pursuing money-generating activities besides their regular jobs during weekends.

Extract 10 Interview about Dutch Sinterklaas post

Original narrative	Translated narrative
1 Nou, dat komt omdat it hiel	1 Well, that is because it is very
2 ynformatyf is. Eh. It giet even om de	2 informative. Ehm. It is about the
3 webshop. En dat is dus, eh, ja, ik	3 webshop. And that is, ehm, yes, I just
4 wol gewoan noch wat hannel dwaan.	4 would like to make some business.
5 En ik wol graach dat iederien	5 And I would like everyone to
6 begrypt dat at se	6 understand that if they
7 dat op 4 eh of op 3 december bestelle,	7 order on 4 ehm or on 3 December,
8 dat se it dan net op tiid krije,	8 that they will not get it in time,
9 wist **[vist]** wol. […]	9 you know. […]
10 Dan doch ik it	10 So I do it
11 mei **[mɛi]** sin yn it Nederlânsk,	11 in Dutch on purpose,
12 omdat ik graach wol dat iederien	12 because I would like everyone to
13 dat begrypt.	13 understand it.

Singing in Wood Frisian has brought *De Hûnekop* commercial success, and singing in Dutch would not make *De Hûnekop* credible, it would not make sense, according to the lead singer. On the one hand, on social media, *De Hûnekop* strengthens its Wood-Frisian identity through using Wood-Frisian markers, just as in live performances and spontaneous talk. On the other hand, however, when it concerns 'pure business' Dutch is preferred on social media in order to avoid misunderstandings and in order to get as high a sales revenue as possible.

5.7 Conclusions

This paper addressed the question how local identities associated with (parts of) Fryslân are constructed in dialect pop music, and how identity performances in online and offline contexts relate to one another. The linguistic practices of the Frisian dialect pop band *De Hûnekop* were investigated, in their songs, in onstage and offstage narratives, and on social media. The analysis confirms Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) conclusion that identities are flexible, negotiable, relational, and constructed during interaction.

In its songs, *De Hûnekop* construct local identities associated with the Frisian Woods, and sometimes with Fryslân in general. This association is not only established through the use of specific linguistic features characteristic of the Frisian Woods, but also through the topics and the places the band sings about. Violence, alcohol abuse, and the daily life of the working class are common topics in their songs. The constructed local identities differ depending on the context. In some songs *De Hûnekop* construct an identity associated

with Fryslân in general, for example when singing in Dutch about the stereotypical identity of Frisians as other Dutchmen see it. In other songs a typical Wood-Frisian identity is constructed, as a stereotype for the whole region. Finally, in some songs the band zoom in even further, constructing a local identity associated with a small village within the Frisian Woods. The songs in particular confirm the theory that identities are relational.

In the interview the lead singer says that in real life he does not feel like a typical Wood-Frisian person, however, he does not identify with Dutch culture at all, so he does not feel Dutch either. Abroad he prefers to present himself as Frisian. This shows that identities are constructed during interaction and in relation to each another. Nevertheless, the singer confirms that in his music he is a real *wâldpyk*. He even says that he purposely presents himself as Wood-Frisian as this gives him room to say anything he wants without being taken too seriously. Interestingly, during this specific part of the interview, his use of Wood-Frisian phonetic features increases as this topic is discussed. This instance again proves that identities are constructed during interaction and that identities are negotiable. Furthermore, the singer is very outspoken about the language choice of the songs. Although lately *De Hûnekop* have produced one Dutch song (out of a total of sixty-one songs), he says that it would be unthinkable to sing in Dutch: their commercial success is largely due to singing in (Wood-) Frisian, and *De Hûnekop* would lose all credibility if they switched to Dutch. In other words: if the band switched to Dutch or English, its audience would think *De Hûnekop* would want to conform to mainstream music industry and as a consequence, their performances would no longer be considered authentic and this would diminish their success.

Although in written communication on social media it is possible to hide an association with a particular place, by writing 'neutrally', without a specific 'accent', *De Hûnekop* often choose to deviate from the official Frisian written standard and to select linguistic features from non-standard Wood-Frisian in their social media posts as well. As in their music, the topics also construct local identities associated with the Frisian Woods. However, when *De Hûnekop*'s social media posts have a purely commercial purpose, Dutch is used. *De Hûnekop* thus seems to employ their linguistic resources strategically: business-like posts are usually composed in Dutch in order to avoid misunderstandings and reach the largest audience possible, thus maximising possible revenue. So, although in the interview the lead singer says *De Hûnekop* would lose their credibility when singing in Dutch, this language is used on social media to serve a commercial purpose.

With regard to the construction of identity in the three genres that were investigated in this paper, it can be concluded that through linguistic features and content, local identities are constructed in both oral and written communication; in song, speech, or written texts on social media. It seems that *De Hûnekop* and more specifically their lead singer often use linguistic features characteristic of the Frisian Woods on purpose when singing and talking: he clearly negotiates his identity during interaction. On social media,

too, often an orthography based on Wood-Frisian pronunciation is used, in that way a Wood-Frisian identity is constructed. However, the practices of *De Hûnekop* demonstrate as well that it is possible to construct one's identity in another language than the variety that is often associated with that particular identity. This paper confirms Coupland's theory (2009) that identity work is often a performance in which specific features from one's linguistic repertoire are consciously selected. The analysis shows that *De Hûnekop* are continuously performing, not only during their core activities, such as recordings and shows when their success demands them to construct a (Wood-)Frisian identity, but also on social media and during informal talk. To conclude, the life trajectory of the singer, his testimony of his struggle to define his identity – "he is a little bit of everything" –, and his identity being context dependent, illustrate the hybridity and complexity of identities.

Acknowledgements

Tige tank Emiel Stoffers! Thank you very much for your time, for the fun and interesting walk with your dog through the forest, and the permission to use and reproduce all materials I needed to write this paper. I am also grateful for the feedback on this paper by the editing board of Us Wurk and my colleagues Hans Van de Velde, Edwin Klinkenberg, and Marjoleine Sloos at the Fryske Akademy. I would like to express special thanks to Siebren Dyk who considerably enlarged my knowledge about the Wood-Frisian variety, as well as Hindrik Sijens and Pieter Duijff, who are always eager to discuss Frisian in all its varieties with me. Finally, thanks to Leonie Cornips who has supported me during my PhD to develop my interest and understanding of the construction of identity(ies).

6. Unravelling Language Choice Online: Bilingual Teenagers on WhatsApp, Snapchat and Instagram

This chapter will be published as: Jongbloed-Faber, L. (submitted). Unravelling Language Choice Online: Bilingual Teenagers on WhatsApp, Snapchat and Instagram. In Arendt, B. & Reershemius, G. (Eds.) (forthcoming). *Heritage Languages in the Digital Age: The Case of Autochthonous Languages in Europe*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

During the research process and scientific output of this study, I adhered to the ethical guidelines presently prescribed by the Fryske Akademy/KNAW.

Abstract

Social media have taken an important place in daily communication. For the use of minority languages, these new media form new challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, several factors may limit the use of minority languages. First, minority language speakers often address a multi-layered audience who may not all understand the minority language. Second, limited literacy skills in the minority language may inhibit its use. Third, the unequal power relations that exists between individuals in offline society is often maintained in online situations. On the other hand, as standard language and norms are often abandoned, the vernacular style on social media favours the writing in minority languages. This study investigates the use of the minority language Frisian on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat by Frisian-Dutch bilingual teenagers. It shows that Frisian has acquired a stable place on WhatsApp and Frisian-speaking teenagers use Frisian as frequent as six years earlier. The use of Frisian on Snapchat is comparable to WhatsApp, while on Instagram Frisian is not used much. Teenagers' use of Frisian on social media is mainly driven by offline speaking practices, their audience, writing skills, attitudes and orientation towards Frisian popular culture.

Keywords: bilingualism; social media; minority languages; audience design; attitudes; Frisian.

6.1 Introduction

In many parts of the world where people have internet and a smartphone at their disposal, social media have taken a major place in daily communication. Some social media make it possible to communicate with the world, while other social media are mainly used for communication with an intimate circle of family and friends. What are the implications of these new forms of communication for the use of minority languages? Although the opportunities seem unlimited on the Internet to preserve, spread and consume content in any language (Cunliffe & Herring 2005:131), the unequal power relations that exists in offline society between speakers of different language varieties is usually reproduced in online situations: it is often perceived to be impolite or a political statement to use a minority language that cannot be understood by one's entire audience (Cunliffe 2007; Massaguer Comes et al. 2020). Moreover, a factor that may decrease the use of a minority language on social media is limited literacy as in many cases, the minority language is not used or taught in education at all, or to a limited extent only.

This paper investigates the language use of bilingual Frisian-Dutch teenagers on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat and tries to explain the differences in language choice. It is a follow-up of a study among 2,000 Frisian bilingual teenagers in 2013/2014 (Jongbloed-Faber et al., 2016, hence T1, see Chapter 2) that investigated the use of Frisian on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. As the use of social media is volatile and many teenagers have given up using Facebook and Twitter (Newcom.nl 2020), this follow-up study

(T2) seemed necessary. New in the current study in comparison to T1 is that the influence of the audience on language choice on social media (cf. audience design by Bell 1984; 2001) is investigated. In addition, extra attention is paid to regional orientation, as regional orientation has proven to influence the (offline) use of dialect (Monka 2014;2020).

The last decade, several studies have investigated the use of regional, minority and/or heritage languages on social media (cf. Jones and Uribe-Jongbloed 2013; Lillehaugen 2019; McMonagle et al. 2019). Most studies analysed language use and choice on Facebook and Twitter. Studies on minority language use on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat are rare. Social media entail better opportunities for speakers to use minority languages than for example on websites, as social media are more interactive and more similar to face-to-face communication (Cunliffe 2019:451). However, users of majority languages or national languages often have more resources and more technology available than speakers of minority languages (Lackaff & Moner 2016), which favours communicating on social media in those national languages. So, although the Internet may entail new opportunities to engage in digital culture, 'these opportunities are not equally distributed' (Ní Bhroin 2019:117). Interfaces in minority languages or keyboards for lesser-used scripts are not available or come to market much later as commercial interests from the providers are small (European Parliament 2018).

In contrast to the pre-2.0 web, where people were often communicating *about*, but not *in* smaller varieties such as minority languages or regional varieties, social media have become a space where communication in minority languages and regional varieties are no longer obstructed by purity norms and differences between varieties (Reershemius 2017). Facebook has become such a space for many bilinguals to use their minority language (Cunliffe et al. 2013; Cru 2015). The use of a minority language in this new domain associated with modernity is far from the widespread stigma and lack of upward social mobility often attached to its regular use (Cru 2015). Although online language use is often a reflection of offline communication patterns and power differences in public life (Cunliffe et al. 2013:85; McMonagle 2019), social media provide opportunities to communicate more, spontaneously, and engage in literacy practices 24/7 which is a large difference for speakers of minority languages in the past (McMonagle 2019). Using a minority language on social media can construct closeness with the audience and feel more authentic (Jongbloed-Faber 2018; Massaguer Comes et al. 2020), however, it can be considered a marked, political choice. In combination with the smaller size of the potential market, the use of minority languages by famous persons on for instance Instagram or YouTube is still limited (Massaguer Comes et al. 2020).

Minority language speakers often make unconscious language choices on social media, making it hard to figure out which factors influence their choices (Cunliffe 2019:460). Language choice is influenced by, among others, language attitudes (Baker 2006:6). Language attitudes are often a reflection of the status of different languages in society. Attitudes may fluctuate,

depending on the circumstances (O'Rourke 2011:6-7). Generally, two evaluative dimensions are distinguished in language attitudes: status (or power) and solidarity. The status dimension refers to what extent the use of a specific language variety might lead to upward social mobility, economic opportunity and power (Gardner & Lambert 1972). The solidarity dimension refers to what extent a language variety evokes feelings of belonging. Generally, attitudes on the status dimension are more positive towards standard or high varieties than towards non-standard or low varieties, and speakers evaluate their own language variety more positively on the solidarity dimension (Kircher & Fox 2019). Some scholars distinguish a third dimension, namely dynamism (Grondelaers & Speelman 2013; Rosseel 2017:6). This dimension refers to the liveliness, coolness, and trendiness of a language variety or its speakers. The presence of a minority language on social media shows the relevance of the language in modern life and its modernity. Its absence on social media may lead to decreasing relevance in society, especially for young people (Cunliffe 2019:452; Eisenlohr 2004; UNESCO 2003), so attitudes on the dynamism dimension might be of more influence on the use of a minority language on social media than those on other dimensions.

Another factor that may influence language choice on social media is the multi-layeredness of the audience. The Audience Design Model (Bell 1984;2001) is a framework that explains language variation in news media and personal communication through the multi-layeredness of the audience and can also be applied to bilingual language choice. Bell (1984;2001) argues that intraspeaker variation is mainly influenced by the intended audience. Within an audience, several layers can be distinguished: direct addressees or second persons who are known, ratified and addressed by the speaker, and a peripheral audience that is not directly addressed. The peripheral audience, so-called third persons, consists of auditors who are known and ratified, overhearers who are known, but non-ratified and unaddressed, and finally, eavesdropper of which the speaker is totally unaware. Not only an addressee may influence the speaker's language variety, other (non-target) audience members may do so as well.

In case of bilingual language choice Bell even expects a larger influence of peripheral audience members than in monolingual style shift (Bell 1984:176). On social media platforms where a message can reach a wider audience, language choice may thus not be the sole result of the language that individuals are used to speak to one-another, but may also be influenced by peripheral audience members. A lesser spoken variety may then easily be replaced by one spoken/understood by a large(r) part of the audience. A study of language choice on Twitter showed that Welsh-English bilinguals often tweeted in English when monolingual English speakers were present as well, while Welsh was mainly used in tweets when directly addressing other bilinguals (Johnson 2013:114-116). The same patterns were found in a study comparing the use of Limburgish, Frisian and Dutch in tweets. To address a wider audience, often the national language Dutch was used while in reactions

and tweets directed at particular audience members, often Limburgish or Frisian were used (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2017).

In addition, Bell (1984;2001) makes a distinction between audience design, when speakers are responsive to their audience, and referee design, when speakers do not adapt their language towards their audience, but use a language (style) of another absent social group they want to belong to. Bell names this initiative style shift (Bell 1984:187-189; 2001:162-163). The latter is comparable to theories around social identity construction: individuals are considered to have control over their linguistic repertoire and use linguistic resources to construct their social identity (cf. Johnstone 2010; Coupland 2009). An example of initiative style shift / identity construction on social media might be the use of (the high status variety) English on Instagram although one's audience exists of speakers of Frisian and Dutch only, or the use of Frisian in front of a multilingual audience.

Approximately half of the 648,000 inhabitants in the bilingual Frisian-Dutch province of Fryslân in the Netherlands consider Frisian[45] to be their home language (Klinkenberg et al. 2018). Frisian is predominantly used on the countryside and in informal situations, while Dutch is used more often in the cities and in formal situations (Gorter & Jonkman, 1995; Klinkenberg et al. 2018). Language attitudes towards Frisian are not uniform. While those who speak Frisian at home generally show positive attitudes, attitudes of those speaking Dutch at home are often negative (Klinkenberg et al. 2018). Over the past centuries, the national language Dutch has acquired a dominant position in society and education in the Fryslân province. As a result, Frisian is mostly a spoken language: writing proficiency among Frisian-speakers is low (Stefan et al. 2015). T1 revealed that predominantly teenagers with solely Frisian as home language use Frisian on WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook: they use Frisian more frequently on WhatsApp and in private or addressed messages than in (semi-)public status updates or tweets. Teenagers' offline language use with their peer group, language attitudes and writing proficiency were the most reliable explanatory factors for the use or non-use of Frisian on social media (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016).

This paper continues with an overview of the materials and methods used for this study in Section 6.2. In Section 6.3 the results will be presented. The paper will end with conclusions and discussion in Section 6.4.

6.2 Materials and Methods

An online questionnaire containing 63 questions was developed in Frisian and Dutch to answer the research questions. The questionnaire is partially a replication of the T1 questionnaire (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016), and was supplemented with questions about audience design, attitudes and regional orientation. Schools providing secondary and vocational education throughout the province of Fryslân were contacted to participate in the survey. Eventually,

[45] Frisian is the name commonly used to refer to West Frisian, the variety of Frisian spoken in the Netherlands (Tiersma 1999)

25 schools[46] gave permission to conduct the survey. Ten of the participating schools are located in one of the four major towns in Fryslân (Leeuwarden, Drachten, Sneek and Heerenveen), and fifteen schools on the countryside. Schools participated between October 2019 and January 2020. The data were collected during classes, to avoid a bias as a result of self-selection. Some schools gave the participants the possibility to choose between the Dutch and Frisian questionnaire. Other schools provided the link to the questionnaire in just one of the two languages. Participation was anonymous. The full questionnaire can be found online in Appendix C.

6.2.1 Research sample

In total, 2,507 teenagers filled in the questionnaire. However, not all of them met the criteria set for participation in this study. For comparison with T1, only participants between 14 and 18 were selected. Other criteria were that participants gave permission to use their answers for scientific research, they resided in the province of Fryslân and it took them at least 7 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The criteria resulted in the selection of 1,982 participants for this study.

6.2.2 Independent factors

The following factors are incorporated in this study.

Home language

The teenagers reported which language(s) they speak at home with their various family members and which language(s) these family members speak to them. Home language was defined as the language(s) the parents speak to the teenagers. For this study, the teenagers were consequently split up into three different groups:

- L1 teenagers: teenagers who were exclusively raised in Frisian
- L1-2 teenagers: teenagers to whom parents speak both Frisian and Dutch
- L2 teenagers: teenagers to whom none of the parents speak Frisian

Proficiency in Frisian

The teenagers were asked to report on their proficiency for understanding, speaking, reading and writing Frisian on a five-point Likert scale: not at all, with difficulty, reasonably, well, and very well.

The use of Frisian and Dutch in offline situations with peers

The teenagers were asked to report on their offline language use with peers through reporting how often (never, sometimes, often or all the time) they speak Frisian, Dutch, English and other languages with their friends.

[46] There are approximately 110 secondary and vocational school locations in Fryslân.

Attitudes

The teenagers were asked to rate ten word pairs on an eleven-point (0-10) semantic differential sliding scale evaluating their attitude towards Frisian. The different word pairs all tap into one of the three dimensions of attitudes. The ten word pairs together have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.97. See Table 1 for an overview of the word pairs in English, Dutch and Frisian.

Table 6.1 Attitude word pairs

English	Dutch	Frisian
does not - does belong to me	hoort niet - wel bij mij	heart net - wol by my
not useful - useful for later	Niet - wel nuttig voor later	net - wol nuttich foar letter
rigid - relaxed	stijf - relaxed	stiif - relaxed
whiny - happy	zeurderig - vrolijk	seurderich - bliid
dull - cool	saai - cool	saai - cool
strange - familiar	vreemd - vertrouwd	frjemd - fertroud
not useful - useful with friends	niet - wel handig met vrienden/vriendinnen	net - wol handich mei freonen/freondinnen
ugly - beautiful	lelijk - mooi	net moai - moai
old-fashioned - modern	ouderwets - modern	alderwetsk - modern
unimportant - important	niet belangrijk - belangrijk	net belangryk - belangryk

Regional orientation

The regional orientation of teenagers was operationalised as follows. First of all, the teenagers were asked where they would like to live when they are an adult. The teenagers could choose between:

- where I currently live
- in a village close to where I currently live
- in a big(ger) town close to where I currently live
- in a village or big(ger) town elsewhere in Fryslân
- in a big(ger) town elsewhere in Fryslân
- outside Fryslân
- outside the Netherlands.

In addition, the teenagers were asked to indicate to what extent they (dis)agreed on a five-point Likert scale with the following statements measuring their orientation towards Frisian popular culture:

- I like contemporary Frisian music such as De Hûnekop, The Bounty Hunters or De Doelleazen
- I follow Frisian accounts on Instagram that share funny Frisian memes/movies (for those having an Instagram account).

Audience
To measure the influence of the audience on the teenagers' language choice they were asked to fill in two audience matrixes as displayed in Table 6.2: one matrix for speaking and one for understanding Frisian.

Table 6.2 Audience matrix

	(hardly) anybody	Less than half	About half	Over half	(almost) all
Classmates					
Friends whom you meet outside school					
WhatsApp contacts					
Instagram contacts					
Snapchat contacts					

In addition, to measure the teenagers' awareness of their language choice and their audience on social media, they were asked to indicate to what extent they (dis)agreed on a five-point Likert scale with the following statements:

- When I post a message on social media, I sometimes doubt about the language I will use.
- The language choice of my post depends on who I want to reach / from whom I would like a reaction.
- The language I use on social media is the same as the language I speak with the receiver.
- When I post a message on social media, I do not think about who will see the message.

Finally, those who indicated to use Frisian sometimes or often on social media, were asked to indicate to what extent they (dis)agreed on a five-point Likert scale with the following statement: I write social media messages in Frisian less often than I would like to, because I would like everyone to understand my messages.

6.3 Results

In this section the most important results are discussed. Section 6.3.1 shows which social media platforms are used by Frisian-Dutch bilingual teenagers and how active they are on the different platforms. In Section 6.3.2 the language use of the teenagers on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat is discussed. In addition, a comparison is made between the use of Frisian on WhatsApp by L1 teenagers in T1 and T2. Finally, in Section 6.3.3 the factors that influence the use of Frisian on these social media platforms are investigated.

6.3.1 Social media use

Table 6.3 shows an overview of the use of the various social media platforms: the share of the teenagers who use the platform, the share of daily users and the share of the users who post an update on the social media platform at least once a day. WhatsApp is the social media platform that is used most by teenagers: 99% use WhatsApp (95% in T1), 94% use it daily and 87% post a message at least once a day. Instagram is much more a social media platform to see than to be seen. 95% of the teenagers use Instagram, and 90% use it daily. However, 55% of the teenagers who have an Instagram account report that they hardly ever post an update and primarily watch what others post. Only 5% of the teenagers daily post an update on Instagram. Snapchat is less popular among teenagers than WhatsApp and Instagram. Nevertheless, the share of Snapchat users that post at least once a day is much higher than on Instagram: 77% compared to 5%. In comparison to T1, the use of Facebook and Twitter has decreased drastically. In T1, 86% of the teenagers used Facebook and 76% used Twitter to respectively 42% and 16% now.

Table 6.3 Use of various social media platforms, daily users and daily posters

Social media platform	Respondents (n)	Users	Daily users	Daily posters
WhatsApp	1,979	99%	94%	87%
Instagram	1,974	95%	90%	5%
Snapchat	1,954	89%	83%	77%
YouTube	1,916	98%	73%	4%
Facebook	1,911	42%	16%	4%
Tiktok	1,904	32%	19%	6%
Discord	1,907	21%	8%	35%
Twitter	1,910	16%	6%	9%
Telegram	1,908	6%	2%	30%

The most popular social medium to chat with friends is Snapchat (51%), followed by WhatsApp (38%). To communicate about practical matters such as homework and dinner plans, teenagers prefer using WhatsApp (82%).

6.3.2 Language use on social media

Figure 6.1 shows how often Dutch, Frisian, English, other languages and emojis only are used on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat on average. Dutch is the language that is used the most on all media, followed by Frisian on WhatsApp and Snapchat, and by English on Instagram. On Instagram and Snapchat, on average, participants post messages consisting of just emojis (sometimes in addition to a picture or video in their post) more frequently than

Frisian and English. 57% of all teenagers use Frisian to some extent on one of the three social media platforms.

Figure 6.1 Language use on social media (all teenagers)

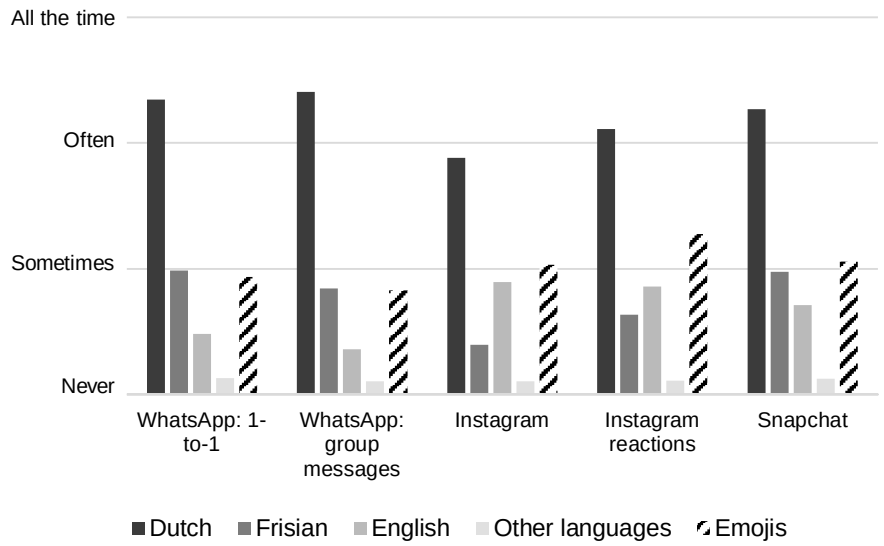
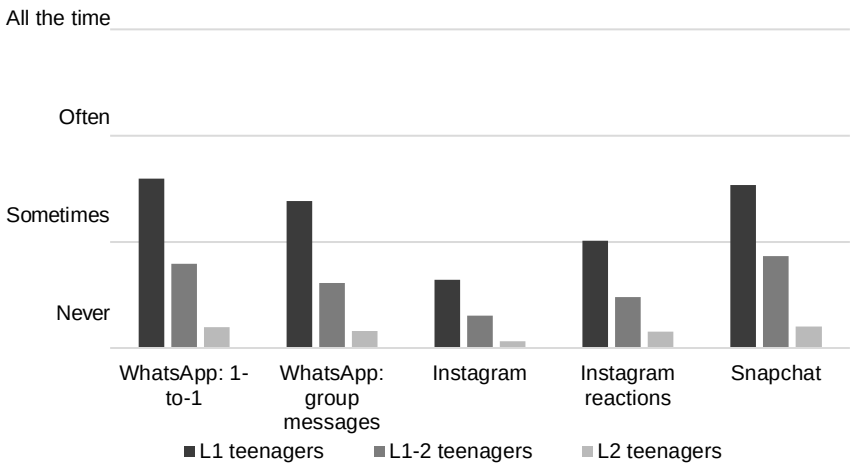


Figure 6.2 shows the use of Frisian split up by the teenagers' home language. The effect of home language is significant in all cases (WhatsApp-1-to-1 messages: $F(2,1952)=711.58$, $p<.001$; WhatsApp-group messages: $F(2,1946)=536.21$, $p<.001$; Instagram posts: $F(2,1855)=143.25$, $p<.001$; Instagram reactions: $F(2,1855)=260.96$, $p<.001$; Snapchat posts: $F(2,1697)=453.59$. Post-hoc tests revealed significant differences between all groups ($p<.001$). L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media most frequently. On WhatsApp and Snapchat, the average frequency in use lies between sometimes and often. On Instagram, Frisian is used the least, also by L1 teenagers. While in Instagram reactions, on average, the L1 teenagers sometimes use Frisian, in Instagram posts the average lies even lower, in between never and sometimes. The L2 teenagers hardly use Frisian on social media, while L1-2 teenagers show an average between the L1 and L2 teenagers.

Figure 6.2 Use of Frisian on social media (all teenagers)

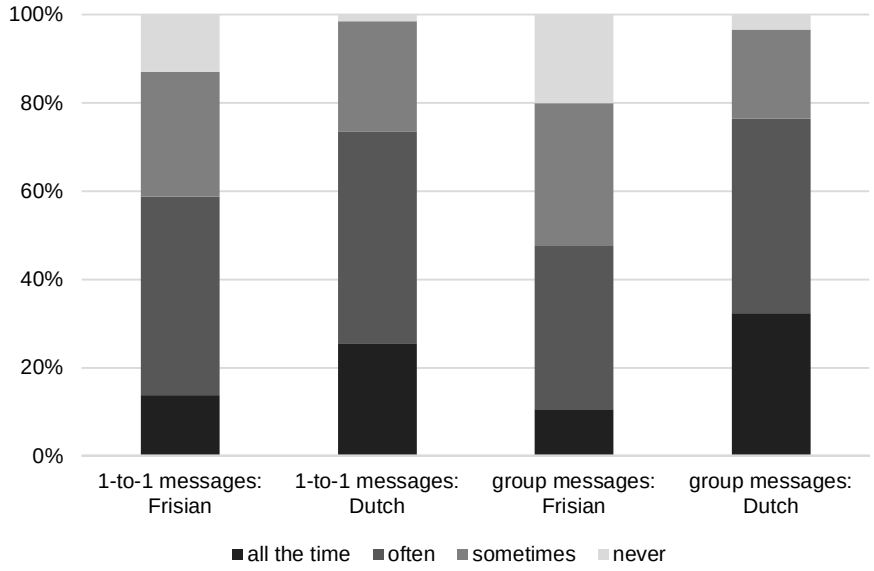


The next sections focus on the use of Frisian on the different social media platforms by L1 teenagers as these teenagers communicate most in Frisian in daily offline life. The other teenagers infrequently use Frisian in daily life and on average, their use of Frisian on social media is minimal. This selection will result in more insight in how audience on social media, literacy, regional orientation, and attitudes influences their online use of Frisian. Section 6.3.2.1 discusses the use of Frisian on WhatsApp, both in 1-to-1 messages as in different WhatsApp groups, and compares the results of T2 with T1. Sections 6.3.2.2 elaborates on the use of Frisian on Instagram and Section 6.3.2.3 shows how often Frisian is used by L1 teenagers on Snapchat.

6.3.3 WhatsApp

Figure 6.3 shows the distribution in use of Frisian on WhatsApp by L1 teenagers in 1-to-1 messages and WhatsApp Groups in general. In 1-to-1 messages 59% of the L1 teenagers use Frisian often or all the time, in group messages this share is 48%.

Figure 6.3 Use of Frisian and Dutch on WhatsApp by L1 teenagers (n=1,005 & n=1,002)



A comparison in the use of Dutch and Frisian on WhatsApp reveals that Dutch is used more frequently by 42% of the teenagers in 1-to-1 messages and 52% in group messages on WhatsApp. 32% use Frisian as often as Dutch in 1-to-1 messages and 25% in group messages. 26% of the teenagers report to use more Frisian than Dutch in 1-to-1 messages and 23% in group messages. Besides asking for the language use of the teenagers themselves, the teenagers also reported on the language use in three WhatsApp groups: family, best friends and school class.

Figure 6.4 shows how often Frisian and Dutch is used in those WhatsApp Groups. In 70% of the family WhatsApp groups, Frisian is used often or all the time, and in 9% of these WhatsApp Groups Frisian is never used. Interestingly, in a large part of these groups of 'monolingual' Frisian families, both Frisian and Dutch are used. While the results of the questionnaire show that in oral communication at home Frisian is used most by far, in social media messages, Frisian is often combined or alternated with Dutch: in just 17% of these family groups Dutch is never used. Social media is thus a space where both Frisian and Dutch are used, also among Frisian-speaking persons and generally, social media messages are thus for a large part a bilingual practice. In the WhatsApp groups with best friends of the L1 teenagers, in over half of the groups Frisian is used often or all the time. However, in these groups, Dutch is even used more often. In the WhatsApp group with class mates Frisian is used the least: in 38% of those groups no Frisian is used at all, in contrast to Dutch, which is used all the time in 52% of the cases.

Figure 6.4 Use of Frisian and Dutch in WhatsApp Groups by L1 teenagers (n=910, n=975 & n=873)

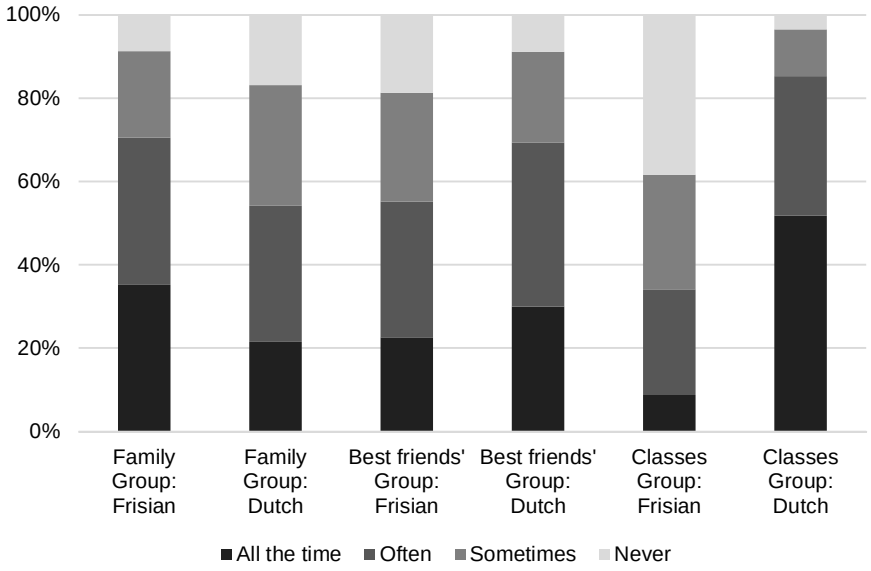


Table 6.4 compares the use of Frisian on WhatsApp by L1 teenagers in the current survey and T1. The use of Frisian on WhatsApp by L1 teenagers has not changed: the mean use has not changed. 87% of the L1 teenagers use Frisian on WhatsApp and 13% do not. 59% of the L1 teenagers use Frisian often or all the time in 1-to-1 messages and 48% do so in WhatsApp group messages.

Table 6.4 The use of Frisian by L1 teenagers on WhatsApp: current survey compared to 6 years earlier

	WhatsApp: 1-to-1 messages		WhatsApp: Group Messages	
	2013-'14	2019-'20	2013-'14	2019-'20
Mean use of Frisian (scale 1-4)	2.6*	2.6*	2.4*	2.4*
Share using Frisian on WhatsApp				
Never (1)	13%	13%	20%	20%
Sometimes (2)	33%	28%	33%	32%
Often (3)	40%	45%	35%	37%
All the time (4)	15%	14%	12%	11%

* No significant differences observed (p<0.001)

6.3.4 Instagram

Instagram is a different type of medium than WhatsApp and Snapchat. Although all three media have about the same functionalities, Instagram differs on two important aspects. First of all, Instagram has the possibility to connect and interact with people one does not know in daily life. On the one hand, many people use the medium to follow (famous) others. On the other hand, it gives people the opportunity to broaden one's audience as well. The nature of this medium is also different. Interviews with teenagers revealed that they tend to present their unfiltered self on WhatsApp and Snapchat, while on Instagram it is more about keeping up appearances. This may also affect language choice and the use of higher status language(s).

Many teenagers report to use Instagram to watch funny memes and movies: 74% of the L1 teenagers who are active on Instagram often watch funny memes/movies on Instagram and 40% specifically follow Frisian accounts that post funny Frisian memes/movies on Instagram.

The teenagers themselves do not use Frisian very often on Instagram. Most communication on Instagram happens through Dutch and emojis only, also by L1 teenagers. 57% of the L1 teenagers active on Instagram never use Frisian in own updates and 34% never use Frisian in reactions to posts of others. 17% use Frisian often or all the time when posting an update on Instagram, in reactions this share is 30%. These outcomes confirm that the nature of Instagram affects the use of Dutch and English at the cost of Frisian as well as the conclusions drawn in an earlier study about language use patterns on Twitter which showed that a Tweet in the national language might very well get a continuation in a shared regional language (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2017). Although many teenagers never post in Frisian, they respond in Frisian to Instagram posts of others more often. See Figure 6.5 for the use of the different languages and emojis by L1 teenagers in Instagram posts and Figure 6.6 in Instagram reactions.

Figure 6.5 Language use in Instagram posts by L1 teenagers (n=966)

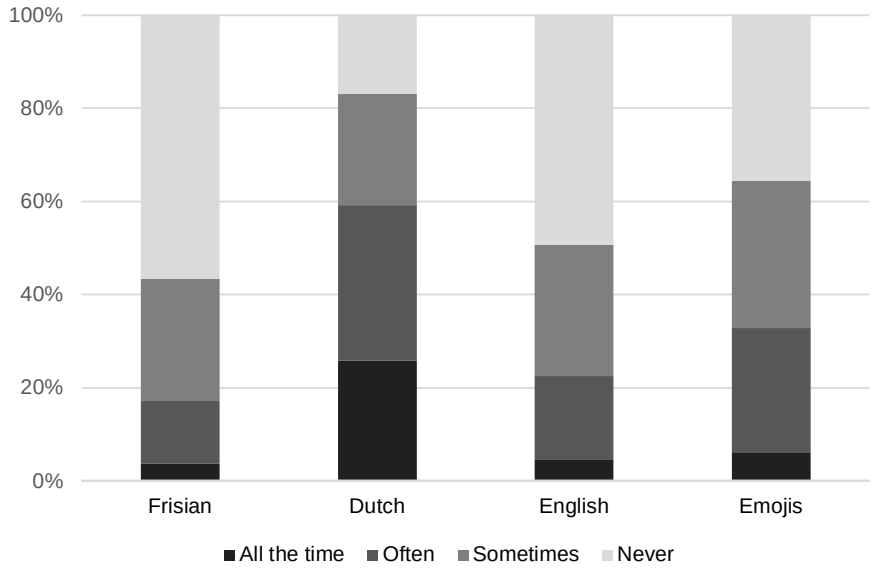
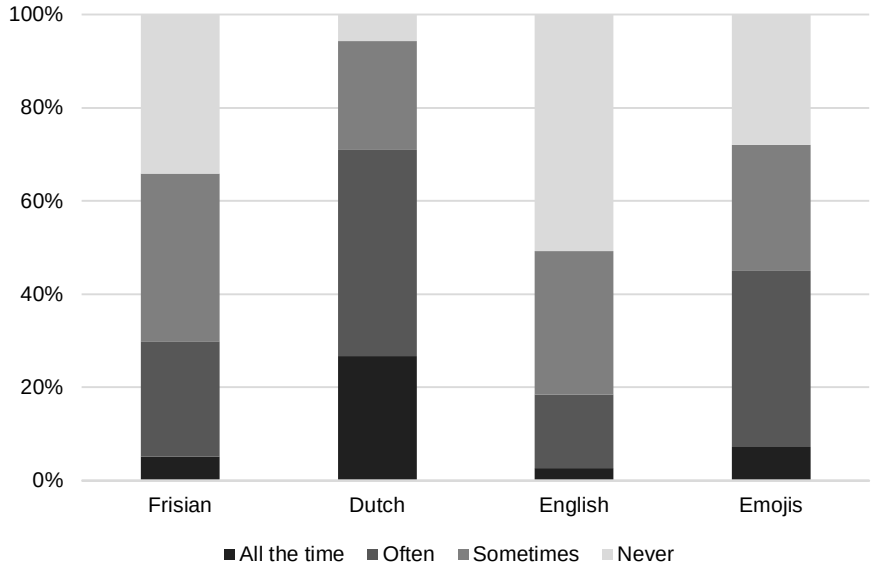


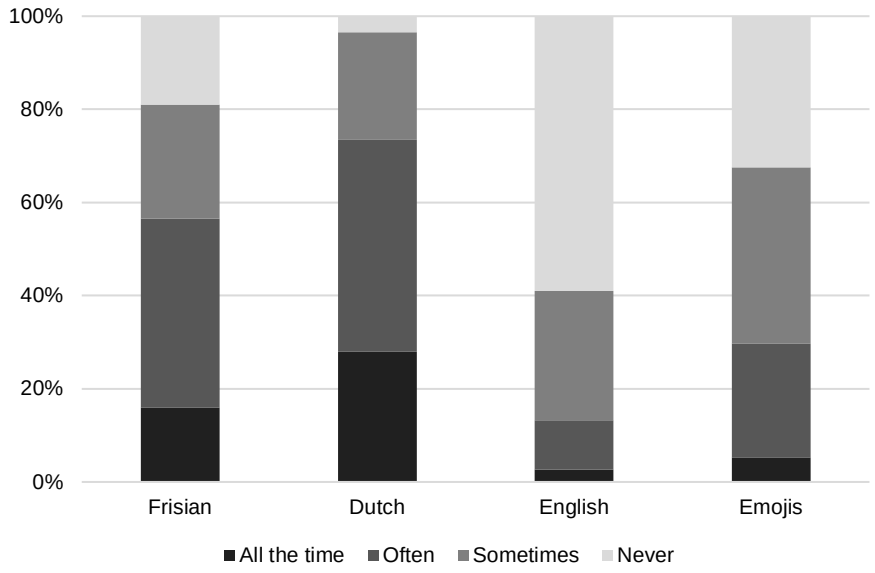
Figure 6.6 Language use in Instagram reactions by L1 teenagers (n=966)



6.3.4.3 Snapchat

Snapchat has become a very important social media platform for teenagers: 89% of the teenagers use Snapchat, 83% use it daily and of the users, and 77% post something on Snapchat once or several times a day. The language use of L1 teenagers on Snapchat is shown in Figure 6.7. On average, Dutch is used most by L1 teenagers: 74% use it often or all the time. For Frisian, the average use lies a little lower: 57% use Frisian often or all the time in Snapchat messages. 19% of the L1 teenagers never use Frisian on Snapchat, and 24% sometimes. A quarter of the L1 teenagers report to use more Frisian than Dutch, one third of the L1 teenagers use Frisian as often as Dutch, and 42% use more Dutch than Frisian. English is not used very often in Snapchat messages by L1 teenagers, messages with emojis only are more common.

Figure 6.7 Language use on Snapchat by L1 teenagers (n=885)



6.3.5 Factors in the use of Frisian on social media

As discussed in the introduction, the following factors are expected to influence the use of Frisian on social media:

- Offline language use with peers (result T1)
- Writing skills (result T1)
- Attitude towards Frisian (result T1)
- Audience
- Regional orientation.

In Section 3.3.3.1 we will investigate which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media when comparing the use of all teenagers. In Section 3.3.3.2, we will focus on teenagers with home language Frisian only. Finally, in Section 3.3.3.3 the obstacles mentioned by the teenagers to use less Frisian or not at all on social media are discussed.

6.3.6 Predicting the use of Frisian on social media by all teenagers

A regression analysis shows that with six factors it is possible to explain 61% of the variance in the use of Frisian on Snapchat and 64% on WhatsApp in 1-to-1 messages and 58% in group messages. These factors are: offline language use with peers, the share of their contacts on Snapchat/WhatsApp that speak Frisian, self-reported writing skills, attitude towards Frisian, and two variables indicating the teenagers' orientation towards Frisian popular culture. Important to note is that home language and share of one's audience that understands Frisian are not significant in this model. The extent to which teenagers thus use Frisian on social media can be largely predicted by *productive* habits and skills of the teenager and one's peers, and not by the *receptive* skills of one's peers. See Table 6.5 for an overview of the optimal models to explain the variance in use of Frisian on Snapchat and WhatsApp.

Table 6.5 Regression model explaining the variance in the use of Frisian on Snapchat and WhatsApp by all teenagers

Independent factors	Snapchat (R^2=61%)		WhatsApp 1-to-1 messages (R^2=64%)		WhatsApp group messages (R^2=58%)	
	β	Sign.	β	Sign.	β	Sign.
Speaking Frisian with friends	.324	.000	.377	.000	.333	.000
Share of audience on Snapchat / WhatsApp that speaks Frisian	.241	.000	.153	.000	.208	.000
Own writing skills	.167	.000	.218	.000	.198	.000
Attitude towards Frisian	.102	.000	.109	.000	.085	.001
Liking contemporary Frisian music	.081	.000	.077	.000	.096	.000
Following funny Frisian Instagram accounts	.058	.002	.039	.029		n.s.

So the more frequent the teenagers speak Frisian with their friends, the larger the share of one's audience that speaks Frisian, the better one's literacy in Frisian, the more positive one's attitude towards Frisian, and the more one likes Frisian popular culture the more often the teenagers will use Frisian on Snapchat and WhatsApp. The main difference is the relative importance of the different independent factors. While offline language use with peers has the strongest predictive power in all three models, the predictive power of the audience's ability to speak Frisian is stronger than writing skills for Snapchat

and group messages on WhatsApp while writing skills are stronger in the model for 1-to-1 WhatsApp messages. Writing skills in this model are less important for the use of Frisian on Snapchat, which might explain why the L1-2 and L2 teenagers use Frisian slightly more on Snapchat than on WhatsApp. The initial function of WhatsApp, sending text messages via the internet, and Snapchat, sharing (audio)visual material, might explain this difference.

Interestingly, the teenagers are not very concerned and aware about their language choice on social media. Moreover, there is little difference in agreement with statements about language choice and audience awareness between L1, L1-2 and L2 teenagers while language choice is more straightforward for speakers of a majority language than of a minority language.

Regarding the attitudes towards Frisian, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index (.967) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (sign. <.001) show that the 10 word pairs designed to measure the attitude towards Frisian are suitable for factor analysis. A factor analysis (Maximum Likelihood) shows that the 10 word pairs that all load onto one factor (Eigenvalue of 7.9, explaining 79% of the variance, factor loadings between .779 and .923) and no distinction can be made between the different dimensions of attitudes.

Of the independent variables that represent regional orientation, the (dis)liking of contemporary Frisian music and following funny Frisian Instagram accounts have a significant predictive value. In contrast to outcomes of other research (Monka, 2014;2020), where teenagers would like to live in later life does not have a significant predictive value. What thus remains of regional orientation is the orientation towards Frisian popular culture.

It is more difficult to explain the variance in the use of Frisian on Instagram. The optimal model can explain 29% of the variance in Instagram posts and 43% of the variance in Instagram reactions with six factors. Five factors in this model are the same as for Snapchat and WhatsApp, namely offline language use with peers, the share of the audience that speaks Frisian, writing skills and orientation towards Frisian popular culture. The last factor that has a small predicting value is the extent to which teenagers agree with the statement that their language on social media depends on the audience they want to reach. In contrast to the predictive models for WhatsApp and Snapchat, the teenagers' attitude towards Frisian does not have a significant predictive value for Instagram. The most probable explanation is that the orientation towards Frisian popular culture suppresses the effect of their attitude. See Table 6.6 for an overview.

Table 6.6 Regression model explaining the variance in the use of Frisian in Instagram reactions and posts by all teenagers

	Instagram reactions (R^2=43%)		Instagram posts (R^2=29%)	
Independent factors	**β**	**Sign.**	**β**	**Sign.**
Speaking Frisian with friends	.274	.000	.192	.000
Share of audience on Instagram that speaks Frisian	.183	.000	.164	.000
Own writing skills	.179	.000	.123	.000
Liking contemporary Frisian music	.114	.000	.127	.000
Following funny Frisian Instagram accounts	.086	.000	.080	.001
Language depends on audience	.050	.007	.090	.000

6.3.7 Predicting the use of Frisian on social media by L1 teenagers

Models predicting the use of Frisian on social media by L1 teenagers are able to explain less of the variance in use than for all Frisian teenagers together. The factor explaining the largest share of the variance in the use of Frisian on group messages on WhatsApp, Snapchat and Instagram is the share of the audience speaking Frisian. Audience's speaking skills is thus of very high importance for teenagers whether or not to use Frisian on social media. These results show that the language practices with their audience in offline situations steers their language choice more than to what extent their wider audience will understand their messages. As the agreement with the audience design statements in Section 6.2.2 is relatively low, it seems as if audience design and language choice are predominantly unconscious processes. Also in the model for L1 teenagers only, offline language use with peers, writing skills, attitude towards Frisian and teenagers' orientation towards Frisian popular culture influence the use of Frisian on WhatsApp and Snapchat. See Table 6.7 for the optimal models predicting the use of Frisian on Snapchat and WhatsApp by L1 teenagers.

Table 6.7 Regression model explaining the variance in the use of Frisian on Snapchat and WhatsApp by L1 teenagers

Independent factors	**Snapchat (R^2=38%)**		**WhatsApp 1-to-1 messages (R^2=43%)**		**WhatsApp group messages (R^2=38%)**	
	β	**Sign.**	**β**	**Sign.**	**β**	**Sign.**
Share of audience on Snapchat / WhatsApp that speaks Frisian	.302	.000	.218	.000	.253	.000
Speaking Frisian with friends	.190	.000	.234	.000	.181	.000
Own writing skills	.135	.000	.230	.000	.178	.000

Independent factors	Snapchat (R^2=38%)		WhatsApp 1-to-1 messages (R^2=43%)		WhatsApp group messages (R^2=38%)	
	β	Sign.	β	Sign.	β	Sign.
Liking contemporary Frisian music	.124	.000	.120	.000	.135	.000
Attitude towards Frisian	.079	.023	.140	.000	.133	.000
Following funny Frisian Instagram accounts	.071	.020		n.s.		n.s.

Also for L1 teenagers, the audience is relatively of more influence on the use of Frisian on Snapchat than it is on WhatsApp. The relative importance of offline language use and writing skills is higher in the case of WhatsApp. Two conclusions can be drawn from this model. First of all, language use on WhatsApp reflects language use in offline life more. Secondly, one's productive writing skills are of more importance when one will use Frisian on WhatsApp than on Snapchat. An explanation for this could be that on WhatsApp messages people actually write more and make less use of other semiotic resources than Snapchat. Snapchat once started off as a picture messaging app, and added an instant messaging feature later while for WhatsApp, this is the other way around.

The variance in the use of Frisian on Instagram by L1 teenagers only is again less straight forward to predict: six independent factors can predict 24% of the variance in Instagram posts and 29% in Instagram reactions. The independent factors are the same as for all teenagers together. The relative importance of the factors is however different. The orientation towards Frisian popular culture is relatively more important in this model than in other models. See Table 6.8 for the optimal model predicting the use of Frisian on Instagram.

Table 6.8 Regression model explaining the variance in the use of Frisian on Instagram reactions and posts by L1 teenagers

	Instagram reactions (R^2=29%)		Instagram posts (R^2=24%)	
Independent factors	β	Sign.	β	Sign.
Share of audience that speaks Frisian	0.189	.000	0.151	.000
Liking contemporary Frisian music	0.166	.000	0.147	.000
Speaking Frisian with friends	0.166	.000	0.132	.000
Own writing skills	0.115	.000	0.098	.016
Attitude towards Frisian	0.104	.004	0.090	.003
Following funny Frisian accounts on Instagram	0.080	.012	0.128	.000

6.3.8 Obstructions to use Frisian on social media

Generally, there are three reasons why Frisian-Dutch bilingual teenagers do not use Frisian on social media. The main obstruction is the teenagers' writing skills: writing in Frisian is difficult, and may cost too much time. The second reason is that not all friends understand Frisian. Finally, for L2 teenagers the main reason is that Frisian is not their home language.

For teenagers who do use Frisian on social media their audience is the most important reason why they do not use Frisian more often. Their writing skills are not their biggest concern, they are more annoyed by the autocorrect function on their smartphones. However, two third of the teenagers still find writing Dutch easier than Frisian. Half of the teenagers using Frisian on social media, often write Frisian the way they pronounce it and do not use diacritics either: because it is too much work or they do not know where to put them. The more frequent teenagers use Frisian on social media, the more they feel they can better express themselves in Frisian, the more they write Frisian the way they pronounce it and the more they disagree with the statement that Dutch is easier to write than Frisian. It is unclear what the cause and effect is in this case: whether the easier they find writing in Frisian, the more they use Frisian or that because the more often they write in Frisian, the easier it gets and the less difference in difficulty between Frisian and Dutch is perceived.

6.4 Conclusions and discussion

This paper investigated the use of the minority language Frisian on social media by Frisian-Dutch bilingual teenagers. The results show that Frisian is predominantly used in the more private social media WhatsApp and Snapchat, and less on Instagram. Especially teenagers who were raised exclusively in Frisian by their parents (L1 teenagers) communicate in Frisian on these social media.

Frisian has acquired a stable position on WhatsApp: compared to six years earlier (Jongbloed-Faber et al. 2016), there are no significant changes in the use of Frisian by L1 teenagers on WhatsApp. Most teenagers however use more often Dutch than Frisian, also those teenagers who were raised exclusively in Frisian. On WhatsApp and Snapchat, a quarter of the L1 teenagers use Frisian more often than Dutch. L1 teenagers thus show a very bilingual behaviour, even on the more intimate social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Snapchat. Although in everyday face-to-face communication most families solely speak Frisian to one-another, in family WhatsApp groups of these L1 teenagers, although Frisian is used more often than Dutch, Dutch is used besides Frisian in many families' group messages.

The factors that influence the use of Frisian on social media most are offline language use with peers, the share of contacts that speak Frisian on the particular social media platform, writing skills, attitude towards Frisian and orientation towards Frisian popular culture. With six four factors it is possible to explain almost two third of the variation in the use of Frisian on WhatsApp and Snapchat, and roughly one third on Instagram. To explain the variation in

use by L1 teenagers alone the same factors can be used. For L1 teenagers the factor audience is though of relatively higher importance than for all teenagers together.

The fact that offline language use with peers influences the use of Frisian on social media is not surprising. The research also shows that language attitudes influence language choice on social media as well as they do in offline contexts. In addition, although the future regional orientation does not have an impact on the extent to which Frisian is used on social media, their current orientation towards Frisian popular culture does.

Another important factor in the use of Frisian on social media is writing skills. Writing skills are a factor that can only influence one's language choice if skills are inadequate or skills in different languages, often a majority and minority language, are imbalanced. The writing skills of the teenagers, even of those with Frisian as home language, lag far behind their understanding, speaking and reading skills. Although Frisian has been an obligatory subject in the province of Fryslân in primary school since 1980 and in secondary education since 1993, 73% of the primary schools and 61% of secondary schools are not able to offer Frisian writing lessons of sufficient quality to their pupils (Varkevisser & Walsweer 2018: 36,166). This insufficient education in Frisian explains the outcomes: two third of the teenagers who use Frisian on social media find writing in Dutch easier than in Frisian. The less they use Frisian the more they agree with the statement. Moreover, over half of the teenagers using Frisian on social media often write Frisian the way they pronounce it.

When taking a closer look at the role of the audience on the use of Frisian on WhatsApp and Snapchat, it is not the share of audience that understands Frisian but the share of audience who speaks Frisian that significantly explains the variation in use. It is thus not a matter of choosing a language on social media that everyone can understand (Androutsopoulos, 2014a) but the influence of the actual language that is used in offline communication and the habit of speaking Frisian with one's audience. Communication and language choice on WhatsApp and Snapchat thus resembles face-to-face interaction more than in mass media, and the peripheral audience is thus less influential on language choice than a model like the audience design model from Bell (1984;2001) would expect. The Frisian-Dutch bilingual teenagers are thus generally responsive to their addressees, and converge their language towards their second person audience, and not so much towards peripheral audience members. In contrast, on Instagram, the variation in language choice can less clearly be explained from the factors identified for WhatsApp and Snapchat. On Instagram, one's orientation towards Frisian popular culture is relatively important. Moreover, referee design – diverging one's linguistic practices away from their audience towards an absent outgroup – plays a larger role. The use of a more prestigious language variety such as Dutch or English is more prevalent, even though for L1 teenagers on average still half of their audience on Instagram speak Frisian. The different objective of the medium, instead of communicating with peers it is more about exposing a

polished self to the world, consciously constructing oneself on Instagram, will probably be a better explanation for the less clear language choice patterns. Furthermore, the research confirms Cunliffe's statement (2019:460) that language choice is often an unconscious process for minority language speakers. Frisian bilingual teenagers do not seem very concerned and aware about their language choice on social media. There is little difference in (dis)agreement with statements about language choice and audience awareness between those teenagers speaking Frisian, Dutch or both at home while it would seem more straightforward for speakers of a majority language how to deal with language on social media than for minority language speakers.

While Bell (1984;2001) expected that "the peripheral audience members influence bilingual language choice far more than they do monolingual style shift" (Bell 1984:176), this research shows that the actual speaking practice in daily life is very important for language choice on social media for bilingual speakers and the share of one's audience on social media understanding the minority language is irrelevant in predicting models. Especially communication on WhatsApp and Snapchat can thus be considered as a new way of communication that resembles face-to-face communication more than it does traditional mass media, although one can reach a much larger audience than in face-to-face communication. The wider audience is ignored more on social media than traditional audience design models predict and language choice is less affected by the peripheral audience members. Moreover, few minority language speakers seem really concerned with their language choice, they do not think about it that much and 'just' do what they would do in offline life, provided that their poor writing skills do not hinder them to use the minority language.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the constructive feedback on the set-up of the study and during the writing process of this paper by my PhD supervisors Hans Van de Velde, Leonie Cornips and Edwin Klinkenberg.

Declaration of interest statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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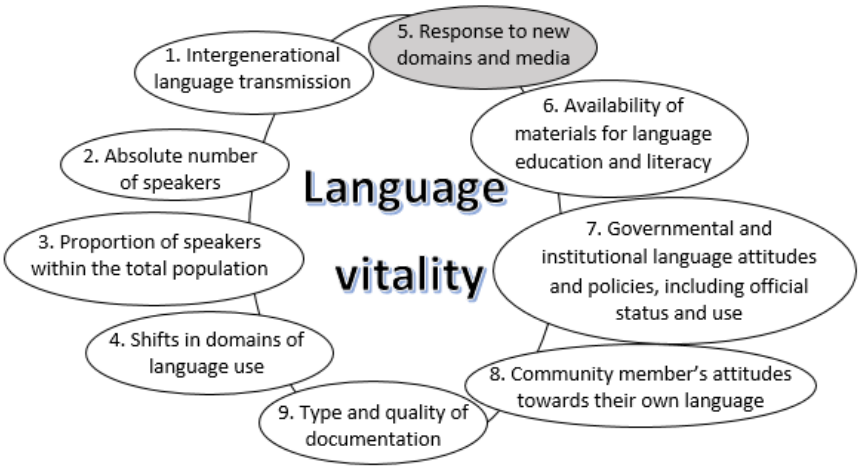
7. Conclusions

In this dissertation I investigated the use of the minority language Frisian on social media in order to study the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages. To this end, I explored several more specific concerns: when and how often Frisian is used on different social media platforms, which factors influence its use, how the use of Frisian differs from the online use of the majority language Dutch, and other minority languages, and how local identities associated with Fryslân are constructed in online and offline practices. The research presented in this dissertation is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative research comprises two surveys targeting Frisian teenagers and addressing their language use on social media. The data of the first questionnaire were gathered between October 2013 and January 2014 (n=2,287), while the data of the second questionnaire were collected between October 2019 and January 2020 (n=1,987). The analysis of the surveys can be found in chapters 2 and 6. Furthermore, we looked at thousands of tweets and the subsequent content analysis allowed us to compare the use of Frisian on Twitter with the use of three other minority languages and Dutch (see chapters 3 and 4). Chapter 3 is devoted to a comparison between the uses of Frisian, Limburgish and Dutch in order to find language choice patterns on Twitter. Next, Chapter 4 centres on tweets which include one of the minority language hashtags #Cymraeg (Welsh), #Frysk (Frisian) and #Gaeilge (Irish) in order to compare these different minority language communities on Twitter. Finally, I investigated the linguistic practices of a Frisian dialect pop band on social media, in their speech, in songs, and during concerts in order to find out how local identities associated with Fryslân are constructed in both online and offline contexts (see Chapter 5). In this concluding chapter, I will integrate the results of the five studies as way to formulate answers to the research questions articulated at the beginning of this dissertation.

7.1 Main outcomes of the dissertation

The central research question in this dissertation is: what is the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages, and, in particular, of Frisian? In the UNESCO's model for determining language vitality (see Figure 7.1 below), "Response to new domains and media" (highlighted in grey) is the principal factor to be assessed when considering the impact of social media use on language vitality.

Figure 7.1 Language Vitality Index (UNESCO 2003)



The studies included in this dissertation show that Frisian, a minority language in the Netherlands, is used on social media and that Frisian is included in this new domain. However, the extent to which Frisian is used, depends on several factors. Before I can determine the impact of social media use on language vitality, then, the following five sub-questions need to be answered:

1. **When and how often is Frisian used on social media?**
2. **Which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media?**
3. **How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of the majority language Dutch?**
4. **How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of other minority languages?**
5. **How are local identities associated with Fryslân constructed in online and offline practices?**

For the sake of consistency, I will first address RQ2, followed by RQ1 and RQ3, RQ4 and RQ5. Where possible, I will refer to the factors presented in Figure 7.1.

RQ2: Which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media?

Home language

First of all, how often individuals use Frisian on social media largely depends on their home language. As established, teenagers with solely Frisian input at home (L1 teenagers) use Frisian significantly more than teenagers with mixed Frisian-Dutch input (L1-2 teenagers) and teenagers exposed at home to a language other than Frisian (L2 teenagers) (see chapters 2 and 6).

Home language has a significant influence on the use of Frisian on social media: especially L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media. Social media therefore do not increase the use of this language by those who did not grow up learning Frisian.

Offline language use with peers

A factor that substantially influences the use of Frisian on social media is offline language use of individuals with peers. The more often an individual speaks Frisian in (offline) daily life, the more frequently one will use Frisian on social media as well.

The more often an individual speaks Frisian in (offline) daily life, the more frequently one will use Frisian on social media. Those not speaking Frisian in daily life will rarely use Frisian on social media.

Audience on social media

As demonstrated in this dissertation, the share of one's audience members who speak Frisian influences the decision to use Frisian on social media, rather than the share of audience members understanding the language. In other words, the decision by bilingual speakers on which language to use on social media is influenced by their actual speaking practice in daily life involving audience members, instead of by the share of the audience that would understand a social media message. It seems that peripheral audience members have less impact on bilingual language choice than Bell expected (Bell 1984:176), while 'senders' (i.e., writers) on social media tend to adapt their language choice to the core audience members.

It is not the ability of audience members to understand a language that steers language choice on social media, but their ability to speak the language. It is therefore the offline speaking practice with audience members that steers language choice on social media.

Writing skills

Writing proficiency is another important factor that affects the use of Frisian on social media. The better an individual's writing skills in Frisian, the more often one will use Frisian on social media. Writing skills in Frisian are generally low. Most Frisian speakers develop their literacy skills through Dutch (Günther-van der Meij 2018), and Dutch has been dominant in the written domain in Fryslân. Although Frisian has been an obligatory subject in the province of Fryslân in primary school since 1980 and in secondary education since 1993, it was established in 2018 that 73% of the primary schools and 61% of secondary schools are not able to offer Frisian writing lessons of sufficient quality to their pupils (Varkevisser & Walsweer 2018: 36,166).

Compared to the results of earlier sociolinguistic surveys, the last sociolinguistic survey showed a slight improvement in self-reported writing skills (Klinkenberg et al. 2018). The various uses of Frisian on social media

feature as a driving force behind these improving writing skills. It is safe to argue that social media have introduced a large, predominantly new group of Frisian speakers to the actual use of Frisian as a written language. This is also confirmed by the higher share of people using Frisian on social media than in e-mails. It is unclear yet whether the habit of using Frisian on social media will lead to more writing in other domains in the long run.

The more proficiency one has in writing Frisian, the more frequently one will use Frisian on social media. Social media have extended the group of people using Frisian in the domain of writing. As a result, social media have a positive influence on "Shifts in domains of language use" (factor 4 in Figure 7.1).

Attitudes

Attitudes towards Frisian have influenced the extent to which Frisian is used on social media as well: the more one likes Frisian, the more often one will use Frisian. Home language significantly influences one's attitudes towards Frisian. While L1 speakers are generally (very) positive about Frisian, L2 speakers are not. The attitudes towards Frisian among individuals who grew up with both Frisian and Dutch at home tend to fall largely in-between the predominantly positive attitudes of the L1 speakers and the negative attitudes of L2 speakers.

Orientation towards Frisian popular culture

Teenagers who are more oriented towards Frisian popular culture use Frisian more on social media than those who appreciate Frisian popular culture less. When it comes to explaining the variance in the use of Frisian, this orientation is even more important on Instagram than on WhatsApp and Snapchat. Those who appreciate contemporary Frisian music and also follow Frisian accounts on social media use on average more Frisian on social media than those who do not. The visibility of a minority language online seems to have a positive influence on the perceived modernity of a language. Those who follow such accounts see the use of the language in this new domain, and follow lead.

Social media and the presence of a minority language on social media may have a positive influence on people's language attitudes, as the presence of a minority language on social media may increase the perceived modernity of a language. In that case, social media has a positive impact on "Community member's attitudes towards their own language" (factor 8 in Figure 7.1).

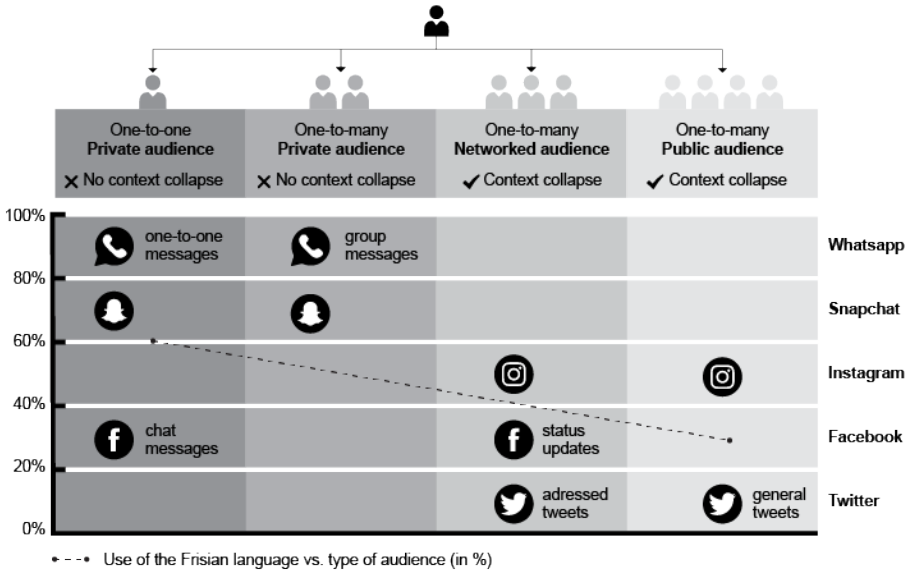
RQ1: When and how often is Frisian used on social media?

As for the central research question 'what is the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages', it is important to find out how often L1 speakers use Frisian on social media. To this end, I will elaborate on L1 speakers only (see chapters 2 and 6).

Nine out of ten L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media. The extent to which varies a lot and depends on several factors, as discussed in the preceding section. On WhatsApp and Snapchat, Frisian is used most frequently. Six out of ten L1 teenagers use Frisian often or all the time on those two social media platforms. In group messages on WhatsApp the use of Frisian is a little less frequent. The proportion of teenagers using Frisian on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter is much smaller and those who do use Frisian, use it less frequently on average. On Instagram, two out of ten use Frisian often or all the time, while six out of ten never use Frisian in their posts. In reactions on Instagram, Frisian is used more often: two thirds of the teenagers use Frisian in their reactions to some extent, and half of those teenagers use Frisian often or all the time.

The type of social media and type of message thus has an impact on how often Frisian is being used. On the private social media WhatsApp and Snapchat, Frisian is used more often than on the public social media Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. One can also conclude that the use of Frisian depends on the extent to which the context collapses (Marwick & boyd 2011): the extent to which it is possible on a social media platform to differentiate between different social (audience) groups. On Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, there is no differentiation possible between the different personal networks. In contrast, on WhatsApp and Snapchat, these networks are often organised into different groups and group messages, and therefore the context does not collapse. In addition, in posts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram where it is possible to address a particular person, Frisian is used more often than in general posts, for example addressed tweets on Twitter, wall posts and chat messages on Facebook, and responses to posts of someone else on Instagram. See Figure 7.2 below.

Figure 7.2 Private-public scale of social media and the use of Frisian



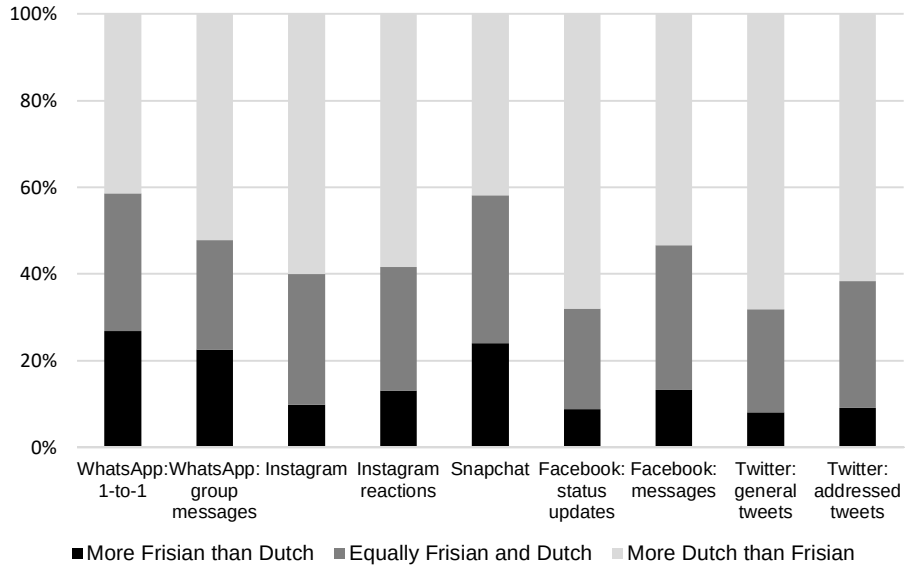
The so-called context collapse has a negative effect on the use of Frisian. The possibility to differentiate on social media between audience members enhances the use of Frisian. Especially communication on WhatsApp and Snapchat (no context collapse) can be considered as a new way of communication that resembles face-to-face communication more than traditional mass media, even though one can reach a much larger audience than in face-to-face communication. Moreover, this dissertation shows that the more a type of message is an extension of face-to-face communication, the more often Frisian is used.

RQ3: How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of the majority language Dutch?

First, I will compare the use of Frisian and Dutch on the different social media platforms as derived from the two quantitative studies described in chapters 2 and 6. After that, I will discuss the main outcomes of the qualitative study that identified language choice patterns on Twitter (Chapter 3).

On average, Dutch is used much more than Frisian on social media, also by L1 speakers. The differences in use are smaller on WhatsApp, Snapchat and addressed tweets, and largest for Instagram, Facebook and general tweets. Not all L1 teenagers use Dutch more often than Frisian. See Figure 7.3 for an overview. The data for WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat are derived from the 2019-2020 dataset and the data for Facebook and Twitter from the 2013-2014 dataset.

Figure 7.2 Difference in use of Frisian and Dutch (L1 teenagers)



Approximately a quarter of the L1 teenagers use more Frisian than Dutch on WhatsApp and Snapchat, and one third use Frisian as often as they use Dutch. On Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, these shares are much lower and the majority of L1 teenagers use more Dutch than Frisian. Although Frisian is used on social media, Dutch is used more frequently. Whether this communication in Dutch replaced part of former communication in Frisian is hard to know for sure, because Dutch is usually the language of communication between speakers of both Frisian and Dutch. In this respect, the data on language use in WhatsApp messages in family groups of the L1 teenagers are relevant. In most of these groups of 'monolingual' Frisian families, both Frisian and Dutch are used. While the results of the questionnaire in Chapter 6 show that in oral communication at home Frisian is used most by far, in social media messages, Frisian is often combined or alternated with Dutch: in just 17% of these family groups Dutch is never used. Social media is thus a space where both Frisian and Dutch are used, also among Frisian-speaking persons.

Social media might diminish the language vitality of minority languages, as Dutch is used next to Frisian, and in many cases more often than Frisian, also among Frisian-speaking persons. In particular the use of Dutch on social media between individuals who solely speak Frisian to each other, such as in the home domain, appears to threaten this vitality.

In addition to the reported language use (see chapters 2 and 6), we observed the following language choice patterns of individuals using Frisian or Limburgish and Dutch on Twitter (see Chapter 3):

1. **Maximising audience**
   In general, many minority language speakers will choose to use Dutch, the majority language, in public tweets in order to address an audience as large as possible.
2. **Responses/addressed tweets**
   Minority language speakers respond to public tweets by other minority language speakers more frequently in the minority language than in general tweets. A public tweet in a majority language may therefore get a follow-up sequence in the minority language. In addition, tweets addressed to another minority language speaker are, on average, more often in the minority language as well. However, Dutch is still used more often than Frisian (and Limburgish).
3. **Accommodation**
   Convergent accommodation is another language pattern regularly found. If an individual starts a conversation on Twitter in a certain language, the automatic reaction is to answer in that same language. The initial language choice is irrelevant in this process.
4. **Localness**
   Finally, localness in tweets is mainly (re)produced through using a minority language: tweets about local culture are almost exclusively in the minority language.

The results of the Twitter analysis in Chapter 3 confirm the reported language use in Chapter 2. Twitter is a space where predominantly Dutch is used.

Language patterns identified on Twitter show that in social media messages in which it is not possible to differentiate between audience members, the default language is Dutch. Only when a minority language speaker addresses another minority language speaker, Frisian is used more frequently besides Dutch. Generally, public social media such as Twitter may therefore block the use of a minority language, which in turn diminishes its vitality.

RQ4: How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of other regional or minority languages?

The use of Frisian on Twitter displays some similarities with the use of other minority languages, as indicated above. However, although generally the same language choice patterns can be identified, the sociolinguistic background of the language communities may also lead to differences. The comparative study on Twitter for #cymraeg, #frysk and #gaeilge (see Chapter 4) shows that each language community (re)produces its own sociolinguistic

space with its own characteristics. For example, we observed that the roles of persons and organisations behind Twitter accounts using the minority language hashtags differ substantially. Moreover, as we found, the language use and the topics discussed in tweets with a minority language hashtag are different as well. Finally, the size of the language community varies considerably. Despite the fact that on a daily basis Frisian is spoken by a higher number of individuals than Irish and the number of daily speakers of Frisian approximates that of Welsh[47], the minority language hashtags #cymraeg and #gaeilge are much more frequently used than #frysk. This does not necessarily mean that on Twitter more tweets in Welsh and Irish can be found than in Frisian (as not all tweets in minority languages include a minority language hashtag), Other data, however, reveal that the number of tweets in Frisian has been substantially lower indeed than the number of tweets in Welsh and Irish (e.g., Indigenous Tweets n.d.).

The sociolinguistic background of a minority language community affects the use of the minority language on social media. The insights from Frisian presented in this dissertation can therefore not be transferred one-to-one to other minority languages. Social media may have a different effect on the vitality of different minority languages.

RQ5: How are local identities associated with Fryslân constructed in online and offline practices?

This research question was addressed by investigating the linguistic practices of the Frisian dialect pop band *De Hûnekop* in their songs, in onstage and offstage narratives, and on social media (see Chapter 5). The results show that local identities are constructed in both oral and written practices. The construction of local identities is performed through the use of linguistic features of local varieties of Frisian, of standard Frisian and, in some cases, of Dutch. As revealed by the research, identities are flexible, negotiable, relational, and constructed during interaction at all times (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), while identity work is often a performance in which specific features from one's linguistic repertoire are consciously selected (Coupland 2009). This demonstrates that identity construction in online practices does not differ from that in offline practices, and that Frisian and Frisian varieties are as important in online as offline practices in constructing one's identity.

Local identity construction in online practices does not differ from offline practices, while Frisian and Frisian varieties are equally important in both practices. In that sense, social media contribute to the vitality of Frisian.

[47] 10% of the Welsh population use Welsh on a daily basis, which is approximately 316,000 people. 74,000 people use Irish on a daily basis outside educational contexts. Unfortunately, there are no exact figures available for Frisian, but I estimate that most L1 speakers living in Fryslân use Frisian on a daily basis (around 325,000).

To sum up: what is the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages?

The above elaboration shows there is not a straightforward answer to the central research question about the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages. Although the "Response to new domains and media" is positive and Frisian is included on social media, spoken communication in Frisian has been partially replaced by social media messages in Dutch. At the same time, more people write Frisian on social media than in other written media or contexts. This writing practice on social media may well be transferred to other domains, where until recently the use of Dutch has been the standard. An example perhaps is the recent success of Frisian children books, which has been attributed to social media (Claus 2020). Furthermore, regarding "Shifts in domains of language use" as indicator, in the domain of writing social media seem to have fostered the use of Frisian for an increasing number of users.

The issue of the vitality of minority languages in general can only addressed in a preliminary fashion. By and large, there are positive effects on the vitality of minority languages whose speakers have a high literacy. The situation is different, however, for minority languages which are only spoken, which lack a common script or which have low literacy rates. As social media in part have come to replace spoken communication in the minority language, the emergence of social media may threaten the vitality of those minority languages, as messages may be written largely in the language in which speakers have developed literacy instead. Languages that therefore score higher on the "Availability of materials for language education and literacy" will generally profit more from the opportunities offered by social media. An illustration of this is the reported higher number of tweets in Welsh and Irish than in Frisian, even though the number of daily speakers of Welsh and Frisian is about equal while the number of daily speakers of Frisian exceeds those of Irish by far. In addition, the availability of digital technologies to facilitate the online use of the minority languages increases the vitality of languages as well. The languages for which these digital technologies have become available are likely to be used more frequently.

Furthermore, for minority languages whose speakers are geographically spread out, social media have had a positive effect on the vitality of those languages, as more and usually inexpensive possibilities have arisen to use (and learn) the minority language. This is corroborated by observations among Frisians who no longer live in the province of Fryslân (Jongbloed-Faber 2017b).

Moreover, different types of social media have a different impact on language vitality. On social media platforms where it is not possible to differentiate between audience members, only few minority language speakers will start interacting in this language. The presence of audience members who do not speak the minority language, as well as the desire to address an audience as large as possible, will motivate individuals to choose the majority language instead. In contrast, on those social media platforms

where it is possible to differentiate, the minority language is likely to be used more frequently. The vitality of the minority language in question will therefore be affected in line with the kind of social media platforms used most by the minority language community.

Attitudes towards the minority language also influence the vitality of the minority language. While existing language attitudes in society affect the use of a minority language on social media, it may also work the other way around. The presence of a minority language on social media potentially has a positive effect on the attitudes towards a minority language, as the language use on social media may be associated with modernity, and, as a result, this may lead to an increased employment of such language.

The impact of social media use on the vitality of Frisian, the minority language that served as a case study throughout this dissertation, is both positive and negative. The early Internet, which was more or less monolingually English, provided hardly any room for multilingual practices. In this sense, the later rise of social media, and in particular the importance of private social media, has certainly had a positive influence on the vitality of Frisian. Yet in comparison to actual spoken communication with friends and family, Frisian has been used less on social media, where Dutch has in part replaced spoken communication in Frisian. Factors that influence this language shift include insufficient writing skills, the presence of non-Frisian speaking audience members, as well as particular language attitudes. Nevertheless, social media have already caused a surge of the use of Frisian in writing, and this may lead to an increased use of Frisian in writing in general. While in the past, Frisian writing was associated with the so-called elite, such as writers and professionals working with the Frisian language, nowadays writing in Frisian has become part of the repertoire of the general public. This development appears to have a positive impact on the vitality of Frisian. Finally, the introduction of digital tools such as online dictionaries, autocorrect and speech technology will make it easier and faster to use Frisian on social media and might encourage more Frisians to use the language on social media in the future. As a consequence, I expect that the rise of social media will have a sustained positive effect on the vitality of Frisian, also in the long run.

7.2 Directions for future research

This dissertation contains two important observations that should be addressed in future research: Frisian is mostly used in private social media messages and this use is influenced in particular by writing skills. It is necessary to gain more insight into the contemporary language practices of Frisian speakers, also on these private social media platforms. This will increase the knowledge of the present-day use of Frisian, and in particular the use of Frisian on social media. It would provide more insight into how Frisian is written at present, also by non-professional writers, but also increase our understanding of bilingual language use, code-switching, turn alternation, accommodation and language practices. These insights will also be valuable

when developing digital tools for Frisian, such as online dictionaries and autocorrect functions. Such digital tools can support those Frisian speakers who are hindered by their writing skills to use Frisian as often as they would like to. To overcome the inaccessibility of these private social media, several research institutes have set up online databases to which individuals can voluntarily donate their social media messages. Examples are 'What's Up Switzerland' (Ueberwasser & Stark 2017) and 'MoCoDa2' in Germany (Ziegler 2020).

I would like to conclude this chapter by stressing that it is important to continue cooperating with researchers in other minority language communities. This concerns both the study of the multilingual practices on social media. as well as the development of new digital tools and working together in approaching large tech companies to include minority languages in their applications. In the end, all individuals should have the possibility to use their home language on their smartphone, or speak it to their home appliances in the near future.

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Impact paragraph

If it is not on the web, it does not exist. András Kornai, 2013

When I started my research, it was unknown how often Frisian was used on social media. While the role of social media in daily-life communication increased, it was also signalled that the up-come of the Internet could threaten the relevance of approximately 95% of the world's languages (Kornai 2013). Although a few studies had already observed the presence of other European minority languages on social media (see Jones & Uribe-Jongbloed 2013), it was unknown how much Frisian was used. As the sociolinguistic background of Frisian differed much from the contexts of the European minority languages described in those studies, investigating the use of Frisian on social media was an important research topic.

The outcomes of this dissertation are of interest to academics and policy makers in any multilingual society, and all of those who are interested in promoting linguistic diversity on social media. In this impact paragraph I will first summarize the most important results of the dissertation and then describe what the scientific and societal impact is of my PhD research.

Lysbeth's research is indispensable for Fryslân. Her research underlines the vitality and resilience of the Frisian language, including in social and digital media. Her work is not only academically relevant - Lysbeth is a scientist who strives to give her research social value. Her work bridges academic research and the everyday usage of the language. In that role she plays an important part in the Frisian language community, operating in the scientific field and also keeping our language policy up to date and vital.

Harmen Akerboom
Manager Language and Knowledge, Province of Fryslân

Most important outcomes of the dissertation

The results of this dissertation show that Frisian is used on social media. The extent to which Frisian is used, is influenced by several factors. First of all, this dissertation shows that Frisian is used foremost by those who were raised exclusively in Frisian. Nine out of ten Frisian-speaking teenagers use Frisian

on social media and more than half of the Frisian-speaking teenagers use Frisian often or all the time. Secondly, important influential factors are offline language use with peers, writing skills, language attitudes, one's audience on social media and the type of social media. In Figure A, a visual representation of these processes is shown.

Figure A The factors influencing the use of Frisian on social media

In this impact paragraph, I will solely elaborate on writing skills and language attitudes, as those factors are more prone to be influenced by language policies and language promotion.

To elaborate on writing skills: the better one writes Frisian, the more one will use Frisian on social media. This dissertation however shows, as any other research about proficiency in Frisian, that writing skills lag far behind skills in understanding, speaking and reading Frisian, also by those who were raised in Frisian. Although Frisian has been an obligatory subject in the province of Fryslân in primary school since 1980 and in secondary education since 1993, 73% of the primary schools and 61% of secondary schools are not able to offer Frisian writing lessons of sufficient quality to their pupils (Varkevisser & Walsweer 2018: 36,166). This dissertation shows that if all speakers of Frisian would have good writing skills in Frisian, Frisian would be used more on social media as their writing skills would no longer limit their use of Frisian.

Language attitudes are also influential on the use of Frisian on social media: the more positive one's attitude, the more often one will use Frisian on social media. The results show that generally, Frisian-speakers are positive about Frisian while non-Frisian speakers are negative about Frisian. So if an individual has non-Frisian speaking peers, this directly and indirectly

influences one's language use. First, one will use less Frisian, but second, one is also more exposed to negative attitudes about Frisian as well. One then would need to be very confident to still use Frisian on social media.

The impact of writing skills and language attitudes on the use of Frisian on social media, platforms that have become so important in daily life communication, shows the urgency of the current *Taalplan Frysk* that is uptaken by the province of Fryslân to increase the quality of education in Frisian between 2018 and 2030. It is not just important to improve the Frisian skills of pupils, it is important to address language attitudes as well. This has been recognised by the Frisian government and curricula have been developed to address language attitudes next to basic skills. Moreover, digital language tools that enable users with insufficient writing skills to write in Frisian online should remain on the long term language planning agenda. This should enable a sustainable use of Frisian on social media by future generations.

The value of Lysbeth's research is that it shows that Frisian is a living language and has acquired a position in this modern domain. It proves that people would like to use Frisian in their informal contacts although their writing skills are often inadequate. The research is valuable input and gives direction to our language policy. Now that we know that people would like to use Frisian on social media, we can invest in tools to make it easier for people to use the language online.

Nienke Jet de Vries
Language policy officer, Province of Fryslân

Scientific and societal activities and results during my PhD

During my PhD, I participated in ten international conferences, seven national conferences and was co-organiser of two conferences as well. In addition, I was an invited speaker for fifteen events such as study days and conferences organised by cultural organisations throughout the Netherlands. Furthermore, I published four papers in scientific journals and three articles/chapters in magazines/books with a more general audience. My intrinsic motivation to deploy my knowledge and skills resulted in the involvement in several work groups related to the Frisian language, and a board position in the *Stichting Nederlandse Dialecten* (Foundation for Dutch dialects). Moreover, I cooperated with researchers outside my own institutes to initiate new research projects. See https://pure.knaw.nl/portal/en/persons/lysbeth-jongbloed-faber for an overview of my 100+ research output and activities.

My research has not stayed unnoticed by the media and it resulted in several interviews in local newspapers, radio and television programmes, and (professional) magazines. Moreover, the study “Local identity construction in dialect pop music: songs, narratives, and social media posts” (Chapter 5) served as inspiration for the documentary *Dat is ús taal* (Werkman 2019) which was broadcast at national television (https://www.npostart.nl/fryslan-dok/14-09-2019/POW_04066681). Finally, my research has made policy makers, influencers and language activists in Fryslân aware that it is more important thát people use Frisian on social media than hów they write it.

Lysbeth’s research about language use on social media by teenagers is of great value to our organisation and activities. It gives us insight in the use of Frisian by this group, and gives us knowledge about what happens and in which situations and on which channels Frisian is used. This enables us to respond better to the needs of our target groups and develop strategies and campaigns to stimulate the use of Frisian by young people.

Mirjam Vellinga
Project Manager Language Promotion at Afûk

Summary

The overall aim of this dissertation is to investigate the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages, in particular Frisian. During the last decade, social media have become an indispensable part of daily communication. While technology and an internet connection make it possible to communicate with anyone in the world at any time, people also use social media to keep in touch with close friends and relatives. For minority languages such as Frisian, the internet and social media are seen as both a threat and an opportunity. On the one hand, unlimited opportunities have become available on the Internet for distributing, consuming and preserving content in any language (Cunliffe & Herring 2005:131). On the other hand, the internet is dominated by only a dozen languages (W3Techs 2020). In particular the online position of languages that mainly have a spoken tradition may be at stake. In order to address the research question, the use of Frisian as a minority language on social media was investigated as a case study. In addition, a comparison of the online use of Frisian to (i) offline practices, and (ii) the online use of Dutch and three other minority languages on social media, i.e. Limburgish, Welsh and Irish, was undertaken.

Summary of the empirical chapters

Chapter 2 explores the use of Frisian on social media by Frisian teenagers. In 2013/14, over 2,000 Frisian teenagers between 14 and 18 years filled in a questionnaire about their language use, language preferences, language attitudes and language proficiency. Results show that, on social media, Frisian is used by more than half of the Frisian teenagers. However, on average, Dutch is used much more frequently than Frisian and Frisian is mainly used by teenagers with Frisian as their sole mother tongue. The teenagers' peer group, language attitudes, and writing proficiency are the most important explanatory factors for the use or non-use of Frisian on social media. Although teenagers do not always follow the official Frisian spelling rules, social media seem to have introduced Frisian into the written domain for an extended group of young people, which is a positive indication of the vitality of the Frisian language.

Chapter 3 addresses the question how the use of Dutch and the regional languages Frisian and Limburgish differ on Twitter and which patterns in language choice can be identified. Generally, the same language choice patterns for Frisian and Limburgish were identified. When a twitterer aims to maximise his/her audience, Dutch is commonly employed. However, as soon as an interpersonal, addressed tweet is formulated, Frisian or Limburgish is often used. General tweets in Dutch may therefore very well get a Frisian or Limburgish response, thereby moving the conversation into the minority language. Another pattern frequently found in tweet responses is that they follow the language used in the original tweet, notwithstanding whether such a tweet was in Dutch or in a regional language. Finally, the data show that

twitterers sometimes construct localness i.e. what is perceived as local culture, through using Frisian or Limburgish exclusively.

In **Chapter 4** the use of hashtags signifying the Welsh/Cymraeg, Frisian/Frysk and Irish/Gaeilge languages on Twitter is explored. The investigation focused on the hashtag and what it could reveal about the social and digital lives of minority languages. This involved the examination of the agents using those hashtags, the topics they discuss, the languages used and the extent to which ambient communities may be formed through their use. The analysis revealed different types of agents who are active and who have a variety of purposes in applying the minority language hashtag – sometimes to promote content in the minority language, more often to draw attention to content about those languages. Comparative analysis between the three language hashtags revealed statistically significant differences along a number of different dimensions, indicating that each minority language hashtag community has its own unique character and the sociolinguistic background of the language communities also led to differences.

Chapter 5 examines the relationship between online identity construction and identity work in offline contexts of the Frisian dialect pop band *De Hûnekop*. The study compared language practices in songs, a live show, an interview, and social media posts. The results show that local identities are constructed through both oral and written language practices. The construction of local identities is performed through the use of linguistic features of local varieties of Frisian, of standard Frisian and, in some cases, of Dutch. As revealed by the research, identities are flexible, negotiable, relational, and constructed during interaction at all times (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), while identity work is often a performance in which specific features from one's linguistic repertoire are consciously selected (Coupland 2009). This demonstrates that identity construction in online practices does not differ from that in offline practices, and that Frisian and Frisian varieties are as important in online as in offline practices in constructing one's identity.

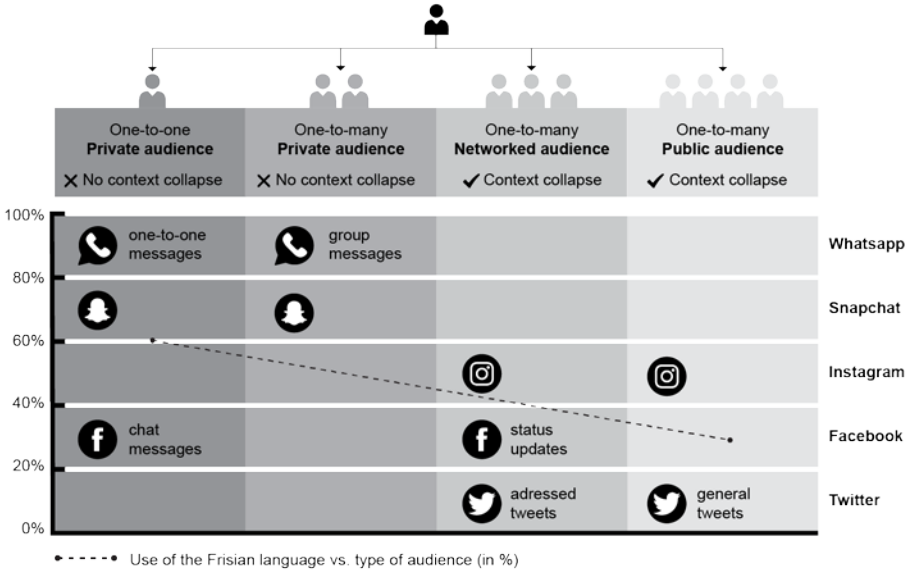
Chapter 6 is a 2019/20 follow-up study of the 2013/14 research presented in Chapter 2. As the use of social media is volatile and many teenagers have given up using Facebook and Twitter, this follow-up study seemed necessary. The study investigated the use of Frisian on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat by almost 2,000 Frisian-Dutch bilingual teenagers. It showed that Frisian has acquired a stable presence on WhatsApp and Frisian-speaking teenagers use Frisian as frequently as they did six years earlier. The use of Frisian on Snapchat is comparable to WhatsApp, while on Instagram Frisian is not used much. Teenagers' use of Frisian on social media is mainly driven by offline speaking practices, their audience, writing skills, attitudes and orientation towards Frisian popular culture.

Answers to the research questions

RQ1: When and how often is Frisian used on social media?

With regards to the central research question 'what is the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages', it was important to find out how often L1 speakers use Frisian on social media. To this end, the research elaborated on L1 speakers only. Nine out of ten L1 teenagers use Frisian on social media. The extent to which they use it varies considerably and depends on several factors (see research question 2 below). Frisian is used most frequently on WhatsApp and Snapchat, and less frequently on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. The more a type of message is an extension of face-to-face communication, the more often Frisian is used. The type of social media and type of message thus has an impact on how often Frisian is used, as does the extent to which it is possible on a particular social media platform to differentiate between different social (audience) groups (the so-called context collapse, Marwick & boyd 2011). Figure I below illustrates this.

Figure I Private-public scale of social media and the use of Frisian



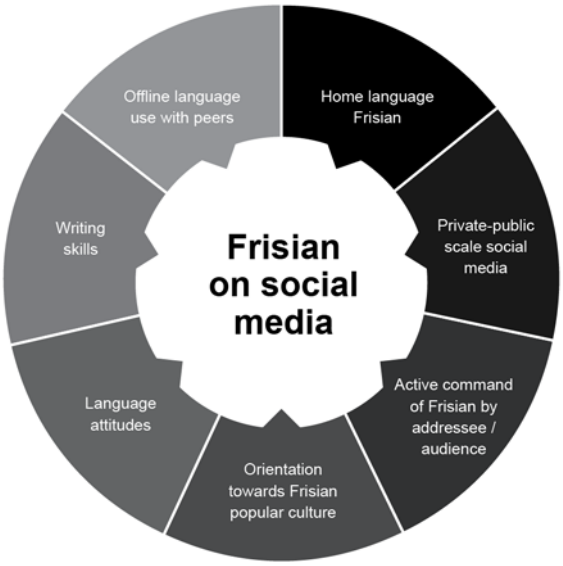
RQ2: Which factors influence the use of Frisian on social media?

The following factors influence the use of Frisian on social media:

- **Home language:** home language has a significant influence on the use of Frisian on social media: it is predominantly L1 teenagers who use Frisian on social media.
- **Offline language use with peers:** the more often an individual speaks Frisian in (offline) daily life, the more frequently one will use Frisian on social media.
- **Audience on social media:** the decision by bilingual speakers on which language to use on social media is influenced by their actual speaking practice with audience members in daily life, rather than by the share of the audience that would understand a social media message.
- **Writing skills:** the better an individual's writing skills in Frisian, the more often they will use Frisian on social media.
- **Attitudes: t**he more positive an individual's attitudes towards Frisian, the more often they will use Frisian.
- **Orientation towards Frisian popular culture:** teenagers who are more oriented towards Frisian popular culture use Frisian more on social media than those with less appreciation for Frisian popular culture.

A visual representation of the factors influencing the use of Frisian on social media is shown in Figure II.

Figure II The factors influencing the use of Frisian on social media



RQ3: How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of the majority language Dutch?

On average, Dutch is used much more than Frisian on social media, including by L1 speakers. The differences in use are smaller on WhatsApp, Snapchat and addressed tweets, and largest for Instagram, Facebook and general tweets. Not all L1 teenagers use Dutch more often than Frisian. Approximately a quarter of the L1 teenagers use more Frisian than Dutch on WhatsApp and Snapchat, and one third use Frisian as often as they use Dutch. On Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, these proportions are much lower and the majority of L1 teenagers use more Dutch than Frisian. Language patterns identified on Twitter show that in social media messages in which it is not possible to differentiate between audience members, the default language is Dutch. Only when a minority language speaker addresses another minority language speaker, is Frisian used more frequently alongside Dutch.

RQ4: How does the use of Frisian differ from the use of other regional or minority languages?

The use of Frisian on Twitter displays some similarities with the use of other minority languages. However, although generally the same language choice patterns can be identified, the sociolinguistic background of the specific language communities may also lead to differences. Each language community (re)produces its own sociolinguistic space with its own characteristics. The sociolinguistic background of a minority language community affects the use of the minority language on social media. The insights from Frisian presented in this dissertation can therefore not be transferred directly to other minority languages. Social media may have a different effect on the vitality of different minority languages.

RQ5: How are local identities associated with Fryslân constructed in online and offline practices?

Identity construction in online practices does not differ from that in offline practices. Frisian and Frisian varieties are as important in constructing one's identity in online practices as they are in offline practices.

Main RQ: what is the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages?

There is not a straightforward answer to the main research question on the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages. By and large, there are positive effects on the vitality of minority languages whose speakers have a high literacy in that language. The situation is different, however, for speakers of those minority languages which are only spoken, which lack a common script or that are read and written by only a small subset of the

speakers. As social media have in part replaced some functions of spoken communication in the minority language, social media may threaten the vitality of those minority languages, as messages may be written largely in the language in which speakers have developed literacy instead. Languages with rich educational materials to learn the language and develop literacy in that language will generally profit more from the opportunities offered by social media. An illustration of this is the reported higher number of tweets in Welsh and Irish than in Frisian, even though Welsh and Frisian have an equal number of daily speakers, and the number of daily speakers of Frisian by far exceeds those of Irish. In addition, the availability of digital technologies to facilitate the online use of the minority languages increases the vitality of languages as well. The languages for which these digital technologies have become available are likely to be used more frequently.

Furthermore, for minority languages whose speakers are geographically spread out, social media have had a positive effect on the vitality of those languages, as more and usually inexpensive possibilities have arisen to use (and learn) the minority language.

Moreover, different types of social media have a different impact on language vitality. On social media platforms where it is not possible to differentiate between audience members, only few minority language speakers will start interacting in their language. The presence of audience members who do not speak the minority language, as well as the desire to address an audience as large as possible, will motivate individuals to choose the majority language instead. In contrast, on those social media platforms where it is possible to differentiate, the minority language is likely to be used more frequently. The vitality of the minority language in question will therefore be affected in line with the kind of social media platforms used most by the minority language community.

Attitudes towards the minority language also influence the vitality of the minority language. While existing language attitudes in society affect the use of a minority language on social media, it may also work the other way around. The presence of a minority language on social media potentially has a positive effect on the attitudes towards a minority language, as the language use on social media may be associated with modernity, and, as a result, this may lead to an increased employment of such language.

The impact of social media use on the vitality of Frisian, the minority language that served as a case study throughout this dissertation, is both positive and negative. The early Internet, which was more or less monolingually English, provided hardly any room for multilingual practices. In this sense, the later rise of social media, and in particular the importance of private social media, has certainly had a positive influence on the vitality of Frisian. Yet in comparison to actual spoken communication with friends and family, Frisian has been used less on social media, where Dutch has in part replaced spoken communication in Frisian. Factors that influence this language shift include insufficient writing skills, the presence of non-Frisian speaking audience members, as well as language attitudes. At the same time, more people write Frisian on social media than in other written media or contexts. This writing

practice on social media may well be transferred to other domains, where until recently the use of Dutch has been the standard. Finally, the introduction of digital tools such as online dictionaries, autocorrect and speech technology will make it easier and faster to use Frisian on social media and might encourage more people to use Frisian on social media in the future. As a consequence, this dissertation predicts that the rise of social media will have a sustained positive effect on the long-term vitality of Frisian.

Samenvatting

Het doel van dit proefschrift was om te onderzoeken welke impact het gebruik van sociale media heeft op de vitaliteit van minderheidstalen, en in het bijzonder van het Fries. In de laatste tien jaar zijn sociale media een onmisbaar deel geworden van dagelijkse communicatie. Terwijl technologie en een internetverbinding het mogelijk maken om op elk moment van de dag met iedereen ergens op de wereld te communiceren, gebruiken mensen sociale media ook om in contact te blijven met vrienden en familie. Voor minderheidstalen zoals het Fries worden het internet en sociale media tegelijkertijd als een bedreiging en als een kans beschouwd. Enerzijds zijn de kansen oneindig geworden om informatie in elke taal te verspreiden, consumeren en bewaren (Cunliffe & Herring 2005:131). Aan de andere kant domineren een stuk of tien talen het internet (W3 Techs 2020). Vooral de online positie van talen die niet (veel) geschreven worden staan onder druk. Om de onderzoeksvraag te beantwoorden, heb ik het gebruik van Fries op sociale media onderzocht. Tevens heb ik het online gebruik van Fries vergeleken met (i) offline gebruik, en (ii) online gebruik van het Nederlands en drie andere minderheidstalen op sociale media, namelijk Limburgs, Welsh en Iers.

Samenvatting van de empirische hoofdstukken

In **hoofdstuk 2** werd het gebruik van Fries op sociale media door Friese tieners onderzocht. In 2013/14 vulden ruim tweeduizend Friese tieners tussen de 14 en 18 jaar een vragenlijst in over hun taalgebruik, taalvoorkeuren, taalattitudes en taalbeheersing. De resultaten laten zien dat meer dan de helft van de tieners Fries op sociale media gebruikt. Gemiddeld wordt Nederlands echter veel vaker gebruikt dan Fries, en Fries wordt voornamelijk gebruikt door jongeren die uitsluitend in het Fries zijn opgevoed. De peergroep, taalattitudes, en schrijfvaardigheid van tieners zijn de factoren die de mate van gebruik het beste verklaren. Alhoewel tieners niet altijd de officiële spellingsregels voor het Fries volgen, heeft het Fries een plek verworven op sociale media. Sociale media lijken voor een groeiende groep jongeren het Fries te hebben geïntroduceerd in het geschreven domein, wat een positieve indicatie is van de vitaliteit van het Fries.

Hoofdstuk 3 is de vraag onderzocht hoe het gebruik van Nederlands en de regionale talen Fries en Limburgs verschilt en welke patronen in taalkeuze kunnen worden geïdentificeerd. In het algemeen zijn de geïdentificeerde taalkeuzepatronen voor Fries en Nederlands gelijk. Wanneer een twitteraar zijn publiek wil maximaliseren, wordt meestal Nederlands gebruikt. Zodra er echter een interpersoonlijke, geadresseerde tweet wordt geformuleerd, wordt er vaak Fries of Limburgs gebruikt. Algemene tweets in het Nederlands kunnen dus een Fries of Limburgs vervolg krijgen. Een ander mechanisme dat regelmatig werd gevonden in reactietweets is het volgen van de taal waarin de oorspronkelijke tweet is opgesteld, onafhankelijk of die tweet in het

Nederlands of een regionale taal was. Tenslotte laten de data zien dat twitteraars soms plaatselijkheid construeren, c.q. wat wordt gevoeld als lokale cultuur, door exclusief Fries of Limburgs te gebruiken.

In **hoofdstuk 4** werd het gebruik van de hashtags Welsh/Cymraeg, Fries/Frysk en Iers/Gaeilge op Twitter onderzocht. We concentreerden ons daarbij op wat de hashtags zeggen over de sociale en digitale levens van minderheidstalen. We onderzochten de gebruikers van de hashtags, de onderwerpen die werden besproken, de talen die werden gebruikt en de mate waarin het gebruik leidt tot nieuwgevormde gemeenschappen. De analyse onthulde verschillende type gebruikers met verschillende doelen om de minderheidstalenhashtag toe te passen – soms om informatie in de minderheidstaal te promoten, maar vaker om aandacht te vragen voor informatie over die talen. Een vergelijkende analyse tussen de drie minderheidstalenhashtags liet statistisch significante verschillen zien bij diverse dimensies, wat aanduidt dat iedere minderheidstalenhashtagcommunity haar eigen unieke karakter heeft waarbij de sociolinguïstische achtergrond van de taalgemeenschappen tot verschillen leidt.

Hoofdstuk 5 onderzocht de relatie tussen online identiteitsconstructie en identiteitswerk in offline contexten door de Friese dialectpopgroep *De Hûnekop*. De studie vergeleek de talige praktijken in songs, een optreden, een interview, en socialemediaposts. De resultaten laten zien dat lokale identiteiten worden geconstrueerd door zowel mondelinge als schriftelijke talige praktijken. De constructie van lokale identiteiten wordt tot uitdrukking gebracht door het gebruik van talige kenmerken van lokale variëteiten van het Fries, van standaard Fries, en in sommige gevallen van het Nederlands. Het onderzoek laat zien dat identiteiten flexibel, onderhandelbaar, en relationeel zijn, en altijd gedurende interactie worden geconstrueerd (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), terwijl bij identiteitswerk vaak specifieke kenmerken uit iemands talige repertoire bewust geselecteerd worden (Coupland 2009). Bovendien verschilt identiteitsconstructie online niet van offline, en Fries en Friese varianten zijn net zo belangrijk in online als offline interacties om iemands identiteit te construeren.

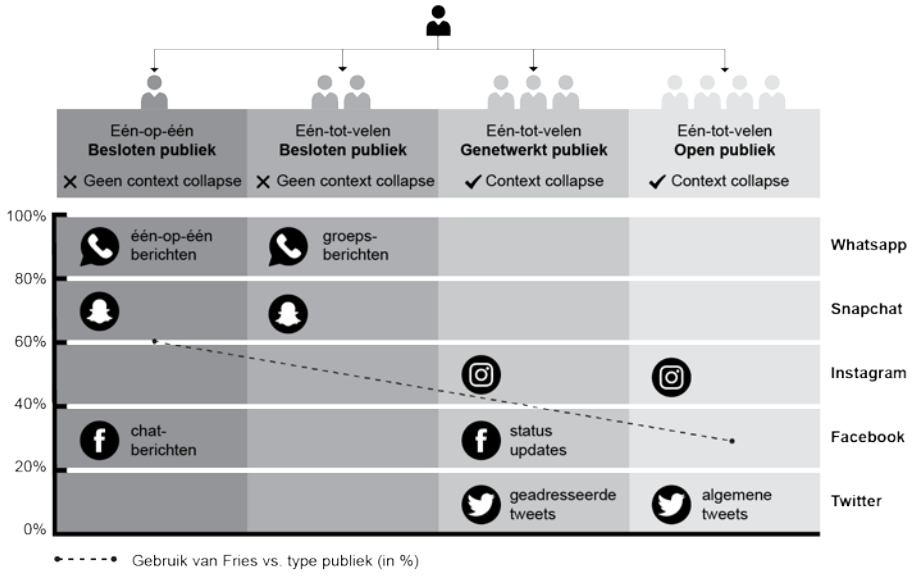
Hoofdstuk 6 is een vervolgstudie van het in 2013/14 uitgevoerde onderzoek naar Fries op sociale media door Friese tieners (gepresenteerd in hoofdstuk 2). Deze vervolgstudie, uitgevoerd in 2019/20, leek noodzakelijk aangezien het socialemediagebruik heel vluchtig is en veel tieners Facebook en Twitter niet meer gebruiken. De studie onderzocht het gebruik van Fries op WhatsApp, Instagram en Snapchat door bijna 2000 Fries-Nederlands tweetalige tieners. Het liet zien dat het Fries een stabiele plek op WhatsApp heeft verworven en dat Friestalige tieners het Fries net zoveel gebruiken als zes jaar eerder. Het gebruik van Fries op Snapchat is vergelijkbaar met WhatsApp, terwijl het Fries op Instagram niet veel wordt gebruikt. Het gebruik van Fries door de tieners wordt voornamelijk beïnvloed door iemands taalgebruik in het dagelijks (offline) leven, iemands publiek, schrijfvaardigheid, attitudes en oriëntatie op Friese populaire cultuur.

Antwoord op de onderzoeksvragen

Onderzoeksvraag 1: Wanneer en hoe vaak wordt Fries gebruikt op sociale media?

Voor de overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag 'wat is de impact van sociale media gebruik op de vitaliteit van minderheidstalen' was het belangrijk om uit te zoeken hoe vaak L1 sprekers (individuen die zijn opgevoed in het Fries) Fries gebruiken op sociale media. Daarom heb ik onderzoeksvraag 1 uitsluitend voor L1 sprekers uitgewerkt. Negen van de tien L1 tieners gebruiken Fries op sociale media. De mate waarin ze Fries gebruiken varieert veel en hangt af van diverse factoren (zie onderzoeksvraag 2 hieronder). Fries wordt het meest gebruikt op WhatsApp en Snapchat, en minder vaak op Instagram, Facebook en Twitter. Hoe meer het soort bericht een extensie van persoonlijke (offline) communicatie is, hoe vaker Fries wordt gebruikt. Het type socialemediaplatform en het type bericht beïnvloeden dus hoe vaak Fries wordt gebruikt. Ook de mate waarin het mogelijk is om op een socialemediaplatform onderscheid te maken tussen verschillende sociale groepen / toehoorders van het publiek beïnvloedt het gebruik (c.q. *context collapse*, Marwick & boyd 2011). Figuur I illustreert de privé-publieke schaal van sociale media en het gebruik van Fries.

Figuur I Privé-publieke schaal van sociale media en het gebruik van Fries



Onderzoeksvraag 2: Welke factoren beïnvloeden het gebruik van Fries op sociale media?

De volgende factoren beïnvloeden het gebruik van Fries op sociale media:

- **Thuistaal:** de thuistaal heeft een significante invloed op het gebruik van Fries op sociale media: voornamelijk L1 tieners gebruiken Fries op sociale media.
- **Offline taalgebruik met peers:** hoe vaker iemand Fries spreekt in het dagelijkse leven, hoe vaker iemand Fries zal gebruiken op sociale media.
- **Publiek op sociale media:** de beslissing van tweetalige sprekers over welke taal te gebruiken op sociale media wordt beïnvloed door hun taalgebruik met hun socialemediapubliek in het dagelijks leven, in plaats van het aandeel van het publiek dat een bericht op sociale media zou kunnen verstaan.
- **Schrijfvaardigheid:** hoe beter iemands schrijfvaardigheid in het Fries, hoe vaker iemand Fries zal gebruiken op sociale media.
- **Attitudes:** hoe positiever iemands attitudes ten opzichte van het Fries, hoe vaker iemand Fries zal gebruiken.
- **Oriëntatie op Friese populaire cultuur:** tieners die meer gericht zijn op Friese populaire cultuur gebruiken vaker Fries op sociale media dan tieners die Friese populaire cultuur minder waarderen.

Een visuele representatie van de factoren die het gebruik van Fries op sociale media beïnvloeden staat in Figuur II.

Figuur II De factoren die het gebruik van Fries op sociale media beïnvloeden

Onderzoeksvraag 3: Hoe verschilt het gebruik van Fries van het gebruik van Nederlands?

Nederlands wordt gemiddeld veel vaker gebruikt dan Fries, ook door L1 tieners. De verschillen zijn kleiner op WhatsApp, Snapchat en in geadresseerde tweets, en het grootst op Instagram, Facebook en algemene tweets. Niet alle L1 tieners gebruiken vaker Nederlands dan Fries. Ongeveer een kwart van de L1 tieners gebruikt vaker Fries dan Nederlands op WhatsApp en Snapchat, en een derde gebruikt evenveel Fries als Nederlands. Op Instagram, Facebook en Twitter zijn deze aandelen veel lager en gebruikt de meerderheid van de L1 tieners meer Nederlands dan Fries. Geïdentificeerde taalpatronen op Twitter laten zien dat in socialemediaberichten waar het niet mogelijk is om een onderscheid te maken tussen de toehoorders van iemands publiek de standaardtaal Nederlands is. Alleen wanneer een spreker van een minderheidstaal een andere minderheidstalenspreker adresseert op Twitter, wordt Fries vaker naast het Nederlands gebruikt.

Onderzoeksvraag 4: Hoe verschilt het gebruik van het Fries van het gebruik van andere regionale en minderheidstalen?

Het gebruik van Fries op Twitter laat een aantal overeenkomsten zien met het gebruik van andere minderheidstalen. Alhoewel in het algemeen dezelfde taalpatronen kunnen worden geïdentificeerd, kan de sociolinguïstische achtergrond van de taalgemeenschappen ook leiden tot verschillen. Elke taalgemeenschap (re)produceert haar eigen sociolinguïstische ruimte met unieke kenmerken. De sociolinguïstische achtergrond beïnvloedt dus het gebruik van een minderheidstaal op sociale media. De inzichten verworven in dit proefschrift kunnen dus niet één-op-één worden overgenomen voor andere minderheidstalen en socialemediagebruik kan een verschillend effect hebben op de vitaliteit van verschillende minderheidstalen.

Onderzoeksvraag 5: Hoe worden lokale identiteiten geassocieerd met Fryslân geconstrueerd in online en offline uitingen?

Identiteitsconstructie in online uitingen verschilt niet van offline uitingen. Fries en Friese varianten zijn even belangrijk in het construeren van iemands identiteit, zowel off- als online.

Overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag: welke impact heeft socialemediagebruik op de vitaliteit van minderheidstalen?

Er is geen eenduidig antwoord op de overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag welke impact socialemediagebruik heeft op de vitaliteit van minderheidstalen. Er zijn positieve effecten op de vitaliteit van minderheidstalen waarvan de sprekers goede geletterdheid in die taal hebben ontwikkeld. De situatie is anders voor sprekers van die minderheidstalen die alleen worden gesproken, die geen standaard schrijfwijze hebben of die door slechts een klein gedeelte van de sprekers gelezen en geschreven worden. Aangezien sociale media sommige functies van gesproken communicatie in de minderheidstaal gedeeltelijk hebben vervangen, kunnen sociale media de vitaliteit van die minderheidstalen bedreigen wanneer berichten grotendeels zouden kunnen worden geschreven in de taal waarin de sprekers hun geletterdheid hebben ontwikkeld. Talen met goed onderwijsmateriaal om de taal te leren en geletterdheid te ontwikkelen zullen in het algemeen meer profiteren van de mogelijkheden die sociale media bieden. Een illustratie hiervan is het hogere aantal gerapporteerde tweets in het Welsh en Iers ten opzichte van het Fries, alhoewel het Welsh en Fries ongeveer een gelijk aantal dagelijkse sprekers hebben en het aantal dagelijkse sprekers van Fries veel hoger ligt dan van Iers. Daarnaast verhoogt ook de beschikbaarheid van digitale technologieën om het online gebruik van minderheidstalen te vergemakkelijken de vitaliteit van talen. De talen waarvoor digitale technologieën ontwikkeld zijn worden waarschijnlijk meer gebruikt.

Voor minderheidstalen wiens sprekers geografisch verspreid zijn, hebben sociale media een positief effect gehad op de vitaliteit van die talen, omdat meer en vaak goedkope mogelijkheden zijn ontstaan om de minderheidstaal te gebruiken (en leren).

Verder hebben verschillende types sociale media een verschillende impact op taalvitaliteit. Op socialemediaplatformen waar het niet mogelijk is om onderscheid te maken tussen verschillende toehoorders van het publiek, zal slechts een klein gedeelte van de sprekers van minderheidstalen in hun taal beginnen. De aanwezigheid van toehoorders die de minderheidstaal niet spreken alsmede de wens om een zo groot mogelijk publiek aan te spreken, zal individuen motiveren om de meerderheidstaal te kiezen. Daarentegen, op socialemediaplatformen waar het wel mogelijk is om onderscheid te maken tussen verschillende toehoorders, zal de minderheidstaal vaker gebruikt worden. De vitaliteit van de betreffende minderheidstaal zal daardoor worden beïnvloed door het type socialemediaplatformen die het meest worden gebruikt door de minderheidstalengemeenschap.

Attitudes ten opzichte van de minderheidstaal beïnvloeden ook de vitaliteit van de minderheidstaal. Terwijl bestaande taalattitudes in de samenleving het gebruik van een minderheidstaal op sociale media beïnvloeden, kan het ook andersom werken. De aanwezigheid van een minderheidstaal op sociale media kan een positief effect hebben op de attitudes ten opzichte van een minderheidstaal, aangezien taalgebruik op sociale media kan worden geassocieerd met moderniteit. Dit zou kunnen leiden tot een toegenomen gebruik van de taal.

De impact van sociale media op de vitaliteit van het Fries, de minderheidstaal dat als een casestudie diende in dit proefschrift, is zowel positief als negatief. De vroege vorm van het internet, die min of meer eentalig Engels was, boden bijna geen ruimte voor meertalige uitingen. Wat dat betreft heeft de opkomst van sociale media, en in het bijzonder de belangrijke plek die de private sociale media innemen, zeker een positieve invloed gehad de vitaliteit van het Fries. Echter, in vergelijking met gesproken communicatie met vrienden en familie valt op dat Fries minder vaak wordt gebruikt en dat Nederlands een deel van de gesproken communicatie in het Fries heeft vervangen. Factoren die deze verschuiving in taalgebruik beïnvloeden zijn onderontwikkelde schrijfvaardigheid, de aanwezigheid van toehoorders in het socialemediapubliek die geen Fries spreken en taalattitudes. Tegelijkertijd, veel meer mensen schrijven Fries op sociale media dan in andere geschreven media of contexten. De schrijfgewoonte op sociale media zou heel goed kunnen worden overgedragen naar andere domeinen, waar tot voorkort het gebruik van Nederlands de standaard was. Tenslotte zal de introductie van digitale toepassingen zoals online woordenboeken, autocorrect-functies en spraaktechnologie het makkelijker en sneller maken om Fries te gebruiken op sociale media en dit zou meer mensen kunnen aanmoedigen om in de toekomst het Fries op sociale media te gebruiken. Daarom verwacht ik dat de opkomst van sociale media op de lange termijn een duurzaam positief effect zal hebben op de vitaliteit van het Fries.

Gearfetting

It doel fan dit proefskrift is om te ûndersykjen hokker ympakt oft it brûken fan sosjale media hat op de fitaliteit fan minderheidstalen, en benammen op dy fan it Frysk. Yn de lêste tsien jier binne sosjale media in ûnmisber diel wurden fan deistige kommunikaasje. Wylst technology en in ynternetferbining it mooglik meitsje om op alle mominten fan de dei mei eltsenien op 'e wrâld te kommunisearjen, brûke minsken sosjale media ek om yn kontakt te bliuwen mei freonen en famylje. Foar minderheidstalen lykas it Frysk, wurde it ynternet en sosjale media tagelyk as in bedriging en as in kâns beskôge. Oan de iene kant binne de kânsen ûneinich om ynformaasje yn elke taal te fersprieden, te konsumearjen en te bewarjen (Cunliffe & Herring 2005:131). Oan de oare kant dominearje in stik of tsien talen it ynternet (W3Techs 2020). Benammen de online posysje fan talen dy't net (folle) skreaun wurde, stiet faai. Om de ûndersyksfraach te beänderjen, haw ik it gebrûk fan Frysk op sosjale media ûndersocht. Fierder haw ik it online brûken fan it Frysk fergelike mei (i) offline gebrûk, en (ii) online gebrûk fan it Nederlânsk en trije oare minderheidstalen op sosjale media, nammentlik Limboarchsk, Welsk en Iersk.

Gearfetting fan de empiryske haadstikken

Yn **haadstik 2** haw ik it brûken fan Frysk op sosjale media troch Fryske jongeren ûndersocht. Yn 2013/14 hawwe mear as twatûzen Fryske jongeren tusken de 14 en 18 jier in fragelist ynfolle oer harren taalgebrûk, taalfoarkarren, taalhâlding en taalbehearsking. De resultaten lieten sjen dat mear as de helte fan de jongeren Frysk op sosjale media brûkt. Yn trochsneed wurdt it Nederlânsk lykwols folle faker brûkt as it Frysk en wurdt it Frysk benammen brûkt troch jongeren dy't Frysk as memmetaal hawwe. De peergroep fan de jongerein, taalhâlding foar it Frysk oer, en skriuwfeardigens binne de faktoaren dy't de fariaasje yn it brûken it bêste ferklearje. Alhoewol't jongeren net altyd de offisjele stavering folgje, hat it Frysk in plak krigen op sosjale media. Sosjale media lykje it Frysk yntrodusearre te hawwen yn it skreaune domein foar in groeiende groep jongerein, en dat is in positive ûntjouwing foar de fitaliteit fan it Frysk.

Haadstik 3 ûndersiket de fraach hoe't it brûken fan it Nederlânsk ferskilt fan it gebrûk fan de regionale talen Frysk en Limboarchsk op Twitter en hokker taalkarpatroanen oft der identifisearre wurde kinne. Yn it algemien binne de identifisearre taalkarpatroanen foar Frysk en Limboarchsk gelyk. As in twitterder syn publyk maksimalisearje wol, wurdt meastentiids Nederlânsk brûkt. Sadree't der lykwols in ynterpersoanlike, adressearre tweet skreaun wurdt, wurdt der faak Frysk of Limboarchsk brûkt. Algemiene tweets yn it Nederlânsk kinne dus in Frysk of Limboarchsk ferfolch krije. In oar meganisme dat geregeld fûn waard yn reaksjetweets is it folgjen fan de taal dêr't de oarspronklike tweet yn opsteld is, ûnôfhinklik oft dy tweet yn it Nederlânsk of in regionale taal wie. Fierder litte de data sjen dat twitterders somtiden mei help fan de taal ferbining mei de lokale kultuer meitsje troch eksklusyf it Limboarchsk of Frysk te brûken.

Yn **haadstik 4** wurdt it brûken fan de heksteks (*hashtags*) Cymraeg (Welsk), Frysk en Gaeilge (Iersk) op Twitter ûndersocht. Wy hawwe ús dêrby op de heksteks konsintrearre en wat dy sizze oer de sosjale en digitale libbens fan minderheidstalen. Wy ûndersochten de brûkers fan de heksteks, de ûnderwerpen dy't besprutsen waarden, de talen dy't brûkt waarden en yn hokker mjitte oft it gebrûk liedt ta nije mienskippen. De analyze liet sjen dat der ferskillende type brûkers aktyf binne dy't ferskate doelen hawwe om de minderheidstalehekstek ta te passen – somtiden om ynformaasje yn de minderheidstaal te befoarderjen, mar faker om omtinken te freegjen foar ynformaasje oer dy talen. In fergelykjende analyze tusken de trije minderheidstalehekstekmienskippen liet sjen dat elke sosjolinguistyske eftergrûn fan de taalmienskippen ek ta ferskillen liedt.

Haadstik 5 ûndersiket de relaasje tusken online identiteitskonstruksje en identiteitswurk yn offline konteksten troch de Fryske dialektpopgroep De Hûnekop. De stúdzje fergelike de talige uteringen yn harren nûmers, in optreden, in ynterview, en sosjalemediaposts. De resultaten litte sjen dat lokale identiteiten konstruearre wurde troch sawol mûnlinge as skriftlike uteringen. De konstruksje fan lokale identiteiten wurdt ta útdrukking brocht troch it brûken fan talige skaaimerken fan lokale fariëteiten fan it Frysk, fan Standertfrysk, en yn guon gefallen fan it Nederlânsk. It ûndersyk lit sjen dat identiteiten fleksibel en relasjoneel binne, dat der oer ûnderhannele wurde kin en dat se altyd yn ynteraksje konstruearre wurde (Bucholtz & Hall 2005), wylst der yn it gefal fan identiteitswurk faak spesifike skaaimerken út jins talige repertoire bewust selektearre wurde (Coupland 2009). It ûndersyk lit ek sjen dat online identiteitskonstruksje net ferskilt fan offline, en dat Frysk en Fryske farianten like wichtich binne yn online as offline ynteraksjes om ien syn identiteit te konstruearjen.

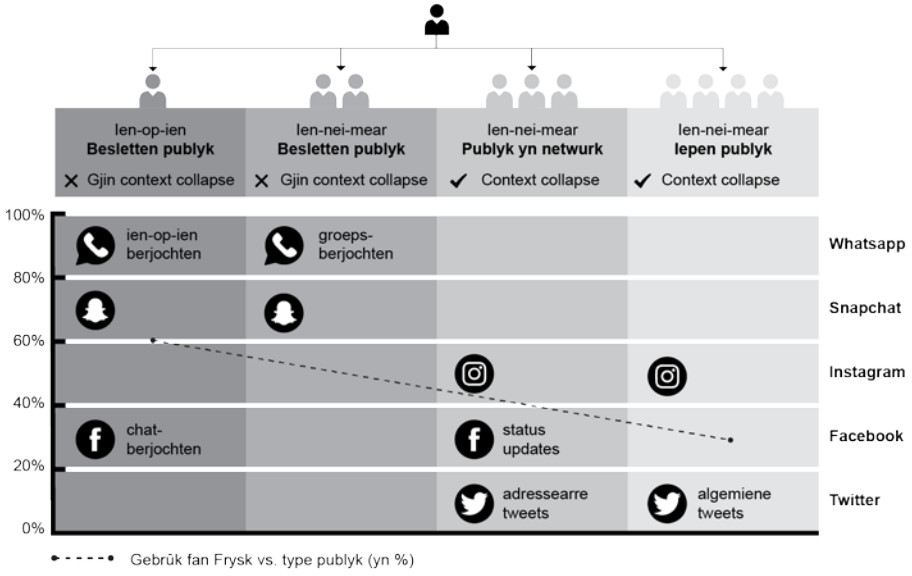
Haadstik 6 is in ferfolchstúdzje fan it 2013/14 ûndersyk (presintearre yn haadstik 2) dat yn 2019/20 útfierd is. Dy ferfolchstúdzje like needsaaklik om't it sosjalemediagebrûk hiel flechtich is en in soad jongerein Facebook en Twitter net mear brûke. De stúdzje ûndersocht it brûken fan Frysk op de WhatsApp, Instagram en Snapchat fan sawat 2000 Fryske jongeren. It liet sjen dat it Frysk in stabyl plak op de WhatsApp krigen hat, en dat Frysktalige jongerein it Frysk likefolle brûkt as seis jier earder. It brûken fan Frysk op Snapchat is te fergelykjen mei WhatsApp, wylst it Frysk op Instagram net in soad brûkt wurdt. It brûken fan Frysk wurdt benammen beynfloede troch it deistige taalgebrûk fan de jongeren, harren publyk, harren skriuwfeardigens, harren hâlding foar it Frysk oer en harren oriïntaasje op de Fryske populêre kultuer.

Antwurd op de ûndersyksfragen

Undersyksfraach 1: Wannear en hoe faak wurdt it Frysk brûkt op sosjale media?

Foar de oerkoepeljende ûndersyksfraach 'hokker ympakt hat it sosjalemediagebrûk op de fitaliteit fan minderheidstalen' wie it belangryk om út te finen hoe faak oft L1 sprekkers (yndividuën dy't opgroeid binne yn it Frysk) Frysk brûke op sosjale media. Dêrom haw ik ûndersyksfraach 1 allinne foar L1 sprekkers útwurke. Njoggen fan de tsien L1 jongeren brûke it Frysk op sosjale media. Hoe faak oft se Frysk brûke fariearret in soad en hinget ôf fan in stikmannich faktoaren (sjoch ûndersyksfraach 2 hjirûnder). Frysk wurdt it meast brûkt op WhatsApp en Snapchat, en minder faak op Instagram, Facebook en Twitter. Wat mear oft it berjocht in útwreiding fan persoanlike (offline) kommunikaasje is, wat faker oft der Frysk brûkt wurdt. It type sosjale media en it type berjocht beynfloedet dus hoe faak oft Frysk brûkt wurdt. Ek de mjitte wêryn't it mooglik is om op in sosjalemediaplatfoarm ûnderskied te meitsjen tusken ûnderskate sosjale groepen / harkers beynfloedet it brûken fan Frysk (saneamde *context collapse*, Marwick & boyd 2011). Figuer 1 yllustrearret de private-publike skaal fan sosjale media en it brûken fan Frysk.

Figuer I Private-publike skaal fan sosjale media en it brûken fan Frysk



Undersyksfraach 2: Hokker faktoaren beynfloedzje it brûken fan Frysk op sosjale media?

De folgjende faktoaren beynfloedzje it brûken fan Frysk op sosjale media:

- **Thústaal:** de thústaal hat in signifikante ynfloed op it brûken fan Frysk op sosjale media: benammen L1 jongeren brûke it Frysk op sosjale media.
- **Offline taalgebrûk mei freonen:** wat faker oft ien Frysk praat yn it deistich libben, wat faker oft ien Frysk brûke sil op sosjale media.
- **Publyk op sosjale media:** it beslút fan twatalige sprekkers oer hokker taal te brûken op sosjale media wurdt beynfloede troch harren taalgebrûk mei de sosjalemediapublyk yn it deistich libben, yn stee fan it part fan it publyk dat in berjocht op sosjale media begripe kinne soe.
- **Skriuwfeardigens:** wat better oft jins skriuwfeardigens yn it Frysk is, wat faker oft ien Frysk brûke sil op sosjale media.
- **Taalhâlding:** wat positiver oft jins hâlding foar it Frysk oer, wat faker oft ien Frysk brûke sil.
- **Oriïntaasje op Fryske populêre kultuer:** jongerein dy't mear rjochte is op Fryske populêre kultuer brûkt faker Frysk op sosjale media as jongerein dy't Fryske populêre kultuer minder wurdearret.

In fisuele represintaasje fan de faktoaren dy't it brûken fan Frysk op sosjale media beynfloedzje stiet yn Figuer II .

Figuer II De faktoaren dy't it brûken fan Frysk op sosjale media beynfloedzje

Undersyksfraach 3: Hoe ferskilt it brûken fan Frysk mei it brûken fan Nederlânsk?

Nederlânsk wurdt yn trochsneed folle faker brûkt as Frysk, ek troch L1 jongeren. De ferskillen binne lytser op WhatsApp, Snapchat en yn adressearre tweets, en it grutst op Instagram, Facebook en algemiene tweets. Net alle L1 jongeren brûke faker Nederlânsk as Frysk. Sawat in kwart fan de L1 jongeren brûkt faker Frysk as Nederlânsk op WhatsApp en Snapchat, en in tredde brûkt likefolle Frysk as Nederlânsk. Op Twitter, Facebook en Instagram binne dizze oandielen folle leger en brûkt de mearderheid fan de L1 jongeren mear Nederlânsk as Frysk. Identifisearre taalpatroanen op Twitter litte sjen dat yn sosjalemediaberjochten dêr't it net mooglik is om in ûnderskied te meitsjen tusken de harkers fan jins publyk, de standerttaal Nederlânsk is. Allinnich as in sprekker fan in minderheidstaal in oare sprekker fan dyselde minderheidstaal adressearret op Twitter wurdt Frysk faker njonken it Nederlânsk brûkt.

Undersyksfraach 4: Hoe ferskilt it brûken fan Frysk mei it brûken fan oare regionale en minderheidstalen?

It brûken fan Frysk op Twitter lit in stikmannich oerienkomsten sjen mei it brûken fan oare minderheidstalen. Hoewol't oer it generaal deselde taalpatroanen identifisearre wurde kinne, kin de sosjolinguistyske eftergrûn fan de taalmienskippen ek liede ta ferskillen. Elke taalmienskip (re)produsearret syn eigen sosjolinguistyske romte, mei syn eigen unike skaaimerken. De sosjolinguistyske eftergrûn beynfloedet dus it brûken fan in minderheidstaal op sosjale media. De ynsjoggen wûn yn dit proefskrift kinne dus net ien-op-ien oernommen wurde foar oare minderheidstalen en it gebrûk fan sosjale media kin in oar effekt op de fitaliteit fan ferskillende minderheidstalen hawwe.

Undersyksfraach 5: Hoe wurde lokale identiteiten assosjearre mei Fryslân konstruearre yn online en offline uteringen?

Identiteitskonstruksje yn online uteringen ferskilt net fan offline uteringen. It Frysk en Fryske farianten binne like belangryk yn it konstruearjen fan jins identiteit, sawol yn offline as online uterjen.

Oerkoepeljende ûndersyksfraach: hokker ympakt hat it brûken fan sosjale media op de fitaliteit fan minderheidstalen?

Der is gjin iensidich antwurd op de oerkoepeljende ûndersyksfraach hokker ynfloed oft it brûken fan sosjale media hat op de fitaliteit fan minderheidstalen. Der binne positive effekten op de fitaliteit fan minderheidstalen dêr't de sprekkers in goede taalfeardigens, c.q. lês- en skriuwfeardigens, yn dy taal ûntwikkele hawwe. De sitewaasje is oars foar sprekkers fan dy

minderheidstalen dy't allinne praat wurde, dy't gjin standert skriuwwize hawwe of dy't troch mar in lyts part fan de sprekkers lêzen en skreaun wurde. Om't sosjale media guon funksjes fan sprutsen kommunikaasje yn de minderheidstaal foar in part ferfongen hawwe, kin it brûken fan sosjale media de fitaliteit fan dy minderheidstalen bedriigje as berjochten foar it grutste part skreaun wurde yn de taal dêr't de sprekkers har taalfeardigens yn ûntwikkele hawwe. Talen mei goed ûnderwiismateriaal om de taal te learen en de taalfeardigens te ûntwikkeljen sille oer it generaal mear profitearje fan de mooglikheden dy't sosjale media biede. In yllustraasje dêrfan is it hegere tal rapportearre tweets yn it Welsk en Iersk as yn it Frysk, hoewol't it tal deistige sprekkers fan it Welsk en it Frysk sawat like grut is en it tal sprekkers fan it Frysk folle heger leit as fan it Iersk. Dêrneist ferheget ek de beskikberens fan digitale technologyen om it online brûken fan minderheidstalen makliker te meitsjen de fitaliteit fan talen. De talen dêr't digitale technologyen foar ûntwikkele binne wurde nei alle gedachten mear brûkt.

Foar minderheidstalen waans sprekkers geografysk ferspraat binne, hawwe de sosjale media in posityf effekt hân op 'e fitaliteit, om't der mear en faak goedkeape mooglikheden ûntstien binne om de minderheidstaal te brûken (en te learen).

Fierder hawwe ûnderskate soarten fan sosjale media in ferskillende ympakt op taalfitaliteit. Op de sosjalemediaplatfoarmen dêr't it net mooglik is om ûnderskied te meitsjen tusken de harkers fan it publyk, sil mar in lyts part fan de sprekkers fan minderheidstalen yn harren taal begjinne. De oanwêzigens fan taharkers dy't de minderheidstaal net prate, en ek de winsk om in sa grut mooglik publyk oan te sprekken, sil yndividuën motivearje om de mearderheidstaal te kiezen. Dêrfoaroer sil op sosjalemediaplatfoarmen dêr't it wol mooglik is om ûnderskied te meitsjen tusken ferskate taharkers, de minderheidstaal faker brûkt wurde. De fitaliteit fan de oanbelangjende minderheidstaal sil dêrtroch beynfloede wurde troch it type sosjalemediaplatfoarmen dy't it meast brûkt wurde troch de minderheidstaalmienskip.

De hâlding foar de minderheidstaal oer beynfloedet de fitaliteit fan de minderheidstaal ek. Wylst de besteande taalhâlding yn de maatskippij it brûken fan in minderheidstaal op sosjale media beynfloedzje, kin it ek oarsom wurkje. De oanwêzigens fan in minderheidstaal op sosjale media kin in posityf effekt op de attitudes foar de minderheidstaal oer hawwe, om't taalgebrûk op sosjale media mei modern en hip assosjearre wurde kin. Dat soe liede kinne ta in tanommen brûken fan de Fryske taal.

De ympakt fan sosjale media op 'e fitaliteit fan it Frysk, de minderheidstaal dy't as casestúdzje tsjinne yn dit proefskrift, is sawol posityf as negatyf. Yn it begjinstadium fan it ynternet, dy't min ofte mear ientalich Ingelsk wie, wie hast gjin romte foar meartalige uterings. Wat dat oangiet hat de opkomst fan sosjale media, en yn it bysûnder it belangrike plak dat de private sosjale media ynnimme, in positive ynfloed hân op de fitaliteit fan it Frysk. Lykwols, yn ferliking mei sprutsen kommunikaasje mei freonen en famylje falt op dat it Frysk minder faak brûkt wurdt en dat Nederlânsk in part fan 'e sprutsen kommunikaasje yn it Frysk ferfongen hat. Faktoaren dy't dizze

ferskowing yn taalgebrûk beynfloedzje binne ûnderûntwikkele skriuwfeardigens, (in diel fan) jins publyk op sosjale media dat gjin Frysk prate en taalattitudes. Tagelyk, folle mear minsken skriuwe Frysk op sosjale media as yn oare skreaune media of konteksten. De gewoante om Frysk te skriuwen op sosjale media soe bêst oerdroegen wurde kinne nei oare domeinen dêr't oant foar koart it brûken fan Nederlânsk de standert wie. Fierder sil de yntroduksje fan digitale tapassings, lykas online wurdboeken, autocorrect-funksjes en spraaktechnology it makliker en flugger meitsje om Frysk te brûken op sosjale media en dat soe mear minsken oanmoedigje kinne om yn ’e takomst Frysk op sosjale media te brûken. Dêrom tink ik dat de opkomst fan sosjale media op de lange termyn in duorsum posityf effekt hawwe sil op de fitaliteit fan it Frysk.

About the author

Lysbeth Jongbloed-Faber was born on 7 May 1976 in Bitgummole (Fryslân, the Netherlands). After a bachelor in Business and Languages (Noordelijke Hogeschool Leeuwarden) she obtained her masters in Communication and Information Sciences at the University of Groningen in 2001. First, Lysbeth pursued a career in business, working both in Fryslân and abroad. Only in 2013 she made the switch to science when she started working for Mercator Research Centre, part of the Fryske Akademy. After having worked as a researcher for 2,5 years, in November 2015, she started her PhD at Maastricht University, co-financed by the Fryske Akademy. During her academic career she published in both national and international journals, and regularly presented her work to both academics and non-academics, in Fryslân, elsewhere in the Netherlands and abroad. She soon discovered that her heart lies with applied sociolinguistics and that she wanted to strengthen small languages and their communities with her research and knowledge. As a result, she has built up a worldwide network of researchers and language activists. In Fryslân, she participated in many work groups to disseminate her knowledge. Moreover, in 2018, she became a board member of *Stichting Nederlandse Dialecten*. Since January 2021 Lysbeth works as a language policy advisor for the province of Fryslân: the ideal place to employ her knowledge and skills to strengthen the position of the Frisian language.

Appendix A: Questionnaire Chapter 2

Welcome to the survey about language use of Frisian teenagers on social media. Your participation is anonymous. There are no right or wrong answers. For our research it is only important that you are honest! Thank you very much for your cooperation!

1. What is your sex?
0 Male
0 Female

2. How old are you?
0 12 years old
0 13 years old
0 14 years old
0 15 years old
0 16 years old
0 17 years old
0 18 years old
0 19 years old
0 20 years or older

3. In which town or village do you live? _____
(if you have more than one place residence, please write down the name of the town / village where you stay most frequently)

4. What type of education are you attending? _____

5. What year are you in?
0 1
0 2
0 3
0 4
0 5
0 6

6. Which school do you attend? _____

7. What is your mother tongue (the language you learned from your parents/caretakers as a child)?
0 Both parents/caretakers Frisian
0 Both parents/caretakers Dutch
0 Both parents/caretakers a dialect spoken in Fryslân (such as Bildts or Stellingwerfs)
0 One parent/caretaker Frisian, one parent/caretaker Dutch
0 One parent/caretaker Frisian, one parent/caretaker a dialect spoken in Fryslân

0 One parent/caretaker a dialect spoken in Fryslân, one parent/caretaker Dutch
0 Other, namely _____

8. What language do you prefer to speak?
0 Frisian
0 Dutch
0 Frisian or Dutch, it does not matter to me
0 A dialect spoken in Fryslân
0 English
0 Another language, namely _____

9. If you chose a dialect spoken in Fryslân, which dialect is it?
0 Bildts
0 Stellingwerfs
0 Another dialect, namely _____

10. Which language do you speak with your friends?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Dutch				
Frisian				
A dialect				

11. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?
0 Primary education
0 Secondary education
0 Vocational education
0 Higher education (Bachelor / Masters)
0 I don't know
0 Other, namely _____

12. What is your father's profession?_____

13. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?
0 Primary education
0 Secondary education
0 Vocational education
0 Higher education (Bachelor / Masters)
0 I don't know
0 Other, namely _____

14. What is your mother's profession?_____

15. How proficient are you in Frisian?
    1 = not at all 2 = with difficulty 3 = reasonably 4 = well 5 = very well

Language	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Frisian	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

16. How do you feel about the Frisian language?

Ugly	0	0	0	0	0	Beautiful
Does not belong to me	0	0	0	0	0	Does belong to me
Not useful for later	0	0	0	0	0	Useful for later
Formal	0	0	0	0	0	Informal
Whiny	0	0	0	0	0	Hip
Dull	0	0	0	0	0	Cool
Strange	0	0	0	0	0	Familiar
Not useful with friends	0	0	0	0	0	Useful with friends

17. How important is proficiency in Frisian/Dutch/English to find a job according to you?

	Not important at all	Not important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Frisian					
Dutch					
English					

18. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements?

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
Anyone living in Fryslân should be able to speak Frisian.					
Anyone living in Fryslân should be able to understand Frisian.					
Frisian speaking parents should speak Dutch with their children.					
It is useful for all children growing up in Fryslân to get Frisian classes at school.					

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
A bilingual upbringing is beneficial for a child's development.					
Frisian speaking children perform less well at school than Dutch speaking children.					

19. How many hours a day do you spend on social media such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp (reading/watching what others are doing and responding yourself)?

0 I am not on social media
0 I am not active on social media on a daily basis
0 0 to 1 hour a day
0 1 to 2 hours a day
0 2 to 4 hours a day
0 Over 4 hours a day
0 Only when I am asleep, I am not active on social media

20. What devices to you use to access social media?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Mobile phone				
Ipad/tablet				
Laptop				
Ordinary computer				

Please indicate how often you use Frisian, Dutch or other languages in the following situations:

21. Phone calls

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

22. Text messages (sms)

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

23. E-mails

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

24. Chatting through Skype, Facebook or other sites

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

25. If you chose other languages, which language(s) are you using?

_____

26. How often do you use WhatsApp?

0 As often as I can: only when I am asleep, I am not active
0 A few times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 I do not use WhatsApp

27. How often do you use the following languages in group messages on WhatsApp?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

28. How often do you use the following languages in private messages on WhatsApp?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

29. If you use other languages, which language(s) are you using?

_____

30. How often do you use Facebook?
0 As often as I can: only when I am asleep, I am not active
0 A few times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 I do have a Facebook account

31. How often do you use the following languages in status updates on Facebook?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

32. How often do you use the following languages in private messages through Facebook?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

33. If you use other languages, which language(s) are you using?

_____

34. How often do you use Twitter?
0 As often as I can: only when I am asleep, I am not active
0 A few times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 I do not have a Twitter account

35. How often do you use the following languages to send a regular Tweet?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

36. How often do you use the following languages in Tweets to someone (starting with @) or in direct messages?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				
English				
Other languages				

37. If you use other languages, which language(s) are you using?

_____

38. Do you use apps/programmes/websites to check your spelling before you put something online?
0 Always
0 Often
0 Now and then
0 Never

39. Do you ever mix languages in one message and how often do you do that?

	Every day	A few times a week	Every week	Now and then	Never
Dutch-Frisian					
Dutch-English					
Frisian-English					
Other combinations					

40. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements on your personal use of social media?

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
The language I use on social media is the same as the language I usually speak with my friends.					
I think it is not important to write without errors, people will understand what I mean.					
I do not have secrets for social media.					
I get stressed sometimes if I cannot read a message right away.					
If I wake up in the middle of the night, I'll check to see if I have new messages.					
I think it is cool when schools/teachers use social media in teaching.					
I sometimes have contact with teachers through Facebook/Twitter.					
I sometimes see nasty messages about other people on social media.					
I felt unhappy after negative messages about me on social media.					

41. On social media, I:
0 Use Frisian all the time.
0 Use Frisian a lot.
0 Use Frisian now and then.
0 Never use Frisian.

42. I do not use Frisian on social media (you may choose several items), because:
0 It is not my mother tongue.
0 Not all my friends understand it.
0 I find writing Frisian difficult and I do not want to make mistakes.
0 I find Dutch easier.
0 Writing Dutch feels more natural to me than writing Frisian.

43. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements on Frisian and your personal use of social media?

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
I write messages in Frisian less often than I would like to, because I find writing in Frisian difficult and I do not want to make mistakes.					
I use Frisian on social media because I can express myself better than in Dutch.					
I write Frisian the way I pronounce it.					
I think it is too much work to type diacritics.					
I do not really know when I need to use diacritics in Frisian.					
I have only started to write Frisian when I started using social media.					
When someone sends a Frisian message, I will send a message in Frisian back.					
I am not really consistent in using Frisian on social media: I send Frisian messages to some friends, while to other (Frisian speaking) friends I send Dutch messages.					

44. Did your teachers in primary school speak Frisian to you or your class mates?

0 Never
0 Now and then
0 Often
0 All the time

45. How many of your class mates in primary school spoke Frisian?

0 (almost) Nobody
0 Less than half
0 Over half
0 (almost) Everyone

46. How often do you have Frisian classes at school nowadays?
0 None.
0 Approximately one hour a week.
0 Approximately one morning/afternoon a week.
0 Approximately one day a week.
0 Over one day a week.
0 Other, namely _____

47. Which language do you currently speak with your teachers?

	All the time	Often	Now and then	Never
Frisian				
Dutch				

48. How fun is it to learn the following languages?

	No fun at all	No fun	Neutral	Fun	Very fun
Frisian					
Dutch					
English					

49. How difficult is it to learn the following languages?

	Not difficult at all	Not difficult	Neutral	Difficult	Very difficult
Frisian					
Dutch					
English					

50. How important is it to learn the following languages?

	Not important at all	Not important	Neutral	Important	Very important
Frisian					
Dutch					
English					

51. What should be the position of Frisian in secondary education?
0 All classes in Dutch, Frisian as a seperate course (obligatory)
0 All classes in Dutch, Frisian as a seperate course (by choice)
0 Bilingual education, classes in English and Dutch, Frisian as a seperate course (obligatory)
0 Bilingual education, classes in English and Dutch, Frisian as a seperate course (by choice)
0 Trilingual education, classes in English, Dutch and Frisian
0 Other, namely _____

52. How often do you watch television programmes on Omrop Fryslân (Frisian broadcaster)?
0 Every day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Every month
0 Hardly ever
0 Never
0 Other, namely _____

53. How frequently do you listen to Frisian radio?
0 Every day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Every month
0 Hardly ever
0 Never
0 Other, namely _____

54. How often do you go to websites that spread regional news, such as those of Omrop Fryslân or Wâldnet?
0 Every day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Every month
0 Hardly ever
0 Never
0 Other, namely _____

55. Which websites? _____

56. Which Frisian(s) could persuade you to use the Frisian language more often? _____

This is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your cooperation! If you have any comments, you can write them down here.

Appendix B: Appendices Chapter 4

Appendix B1 – agent coding list

Political individual	Publically recognisable people - politicians, council members, party leaders, former politicians
Public individual	Publically recognisable people - celebrities, sports people, musicians, writers…
Private individual	A private citizen
Language promotion organisation	Organisations whose remit is to promote the minority language
Government organisation	Part of national/local government, local councils
Political party	Official political parties, not pressure groups
Media organisation	Television company, newspaper, recognised online media organisation (such as Huffington Post or local equivalent)
Educational organisation	Schools, colleges, universities, community classes
Commercial organisation	A company, business, service provider…
Other organisation	NGOs charities, museums, events, community groups etc. (none of the above)

Appendix B2 – language coding list

Minority	Text in minority language only (Welsh, Irish, Frisian)
Majority	Text in majority language only (English or Dutch)
Bilingual	Majority and minority language used, same concepts expressed in both languages
Mixed	Majority and minority language used, different concepts or number of concepts expressed in each language
Other	Other languages or language combinations which may or may not include the majority and/or minority language
None	No original text content, may be non-original text content, original non-text content or original hashtags

Appendix B3 – topic coding list

First Level	Second Level	
The language		
	Learning and teaching the language	How to learn the language, how to teach the language, where to learn the language, learners' experiences
	Language policy	Official language policy, policy related issues, implementation and extension of policy
	Promoting the language	Language politics, language activism, language in use
	Promoting the language internationally	Language promotion, language learning, language teaching, language in use, outside the home territory of the language.
	Metalanguage	Evaluating or discussing the language, its value, its purpose, its status
	Teaching the language via Twitter	Specific use of Twitter to teach the language - e.g. word of the day - aimed at learners
	Expanding the language via Twitter	Specific use of Twitter to improve the language skills of speakers - e.g. specialised vocabulary, neologisms
Social		
	Personal family / friends	Social messages typically aimed at named individuals
	Community	Social messages with a wider or undefined audience
	Humour	
Media		
	TV	
	Radio	
	Print	Newspapers, magazines, books
	Online	Recognised online media organisation (such as Huffington Post or local equivalent)
News / politics		

/current affairs		
	Domestic	
	International	
Promotion		
	Company / Organisation	
	Product / Service	
	Event	
	Vacancies	
History		
Culture / sport / celebrities		
Nature / Environment		
Education		Other than that specifically teaching the language
Technology		
	Software / Apps	
	Social Media	
	Wikipedia local version	
Unclassified		Anything which cannot be coded using one of the above codes

Appendix C: Questionnaire Chapter 6

You are invited to participate in research about language use on social media by teenagers in Fryslân. Your participation is completely anonymous. There are no right or wrong answers. For our research it is only important that you are honest! Your answers will be used for scientific research by Lysbeth Jongbloed-Faber, PhD at the Fryske Akademy and Maastricht University. If you have questions about the research, you can contact Lysbeth personally by email if she is not present at your school today. Her contact details are given at the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

1. I give permission to use the information I provide in the questionnaire for scientific research. I understand that my answers will be processed anonymously and cannot be connected back to me in any way.
- 0 Yes
- 0 No

How unfortunate that you do not give permission. By giving permission also your answers will be included in the research. If many teenagers do not give permission, the results will not be a trustworthy representation of all teenagers in Fryslân. To make sure you really do not want to give permission, I will ask you one more time. If you do not give permission, you should go to your teacher and ask for a different assignment.

2. I give permission to use the information I provide in the questionnaire for scientific research. I understand that my answers will be processed anonymously and cannot be connected back to me in any way.
- 0 Yes
- 0 No

3. How old are you?
- 0 12 years old
- 0 13 years old
- 0 14 years old
- 0 15 years old
- 0 16 years old
- 0 17 years old
- 0 18 years old
- 0 19 years old
- 0 20 years old
- 0 21 years old
- 0 22 years old
- 0 Older than 22 years

4. What is your sex?
- 0 Male
- 0 Female
- 0 Other than above
- 0 I don't want to say that

5. In which town or village do you live? _____
(if you have more than one place residence, please write down the name of the town / village where you stay most frequently)

6. In my hometown people speak:
- 0 Predominantly Frisian
- 0 More Frisian than Dutch
- 0 Equally Frisian and Dutch
- 0 More Dutch than Frisian
- 0 Predominantly Dutch

7. Where would you like to live when you are an adult?
- 0 In the town I currently live
- 0 In a village close to where I currently live
- 0 In a big(ger) town close to where I currently live
- 0 In a village elsewhere in Fryslân
- 0 In a big(ger) town elsewhere in Fryslân
- 0 Outside Fryslân
- 0 Outside the Netherlands

8. Which school do you attend? _____

9. What type of education are you attending? _____

10. What year are you in?
- 0 1
- 0 2
- 0 3
- 0 4
- 0 5
- 0 6

11. Which language(s) do you speak at home?

	Dutch	Frisian	Me Dutch, the other Frisian	Me Frisian, the other	Equally Frisian and Dutch	Other language / dialect	n.a.
With your dad							
With your mum							
With your older brother(s)							
With your older sister(s)							
With your younger brother(s)							
With your younger sister(s)							
With the new partner of your dad							
With the new partner of your mum							

12. What language do you prefer to speak?

0 Dutch
0 Frisian
0 Frisian or Dutch, it does not matter to me
0 City Frisian
0 Bildts
0 Stellingwerfs
0 Another language, namely _____

13. How proficient are you in Frisian?

1 = not at all 2 = with difficulty 3 = reasonably 4 = well 5 = very well

Language	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Frisian	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Please indicate how often you use Frisian, Dutch or other languages in the following situations. If you do not use a particular language, you can skip that language.

14. Which language do you speak with your classmates?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language / dialect				

15. Which language do you speak with your friends you meet outside school?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language / dialect				

16. Phone calls

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language / dialect				

17. Text messages

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language / dialect				

18. E-mail

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language / dialect				

19. Gaming

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language / dialect				

20. If you chose other language/dialect, which language/dialect are you using? _____

21. How often do you look at WhatsApp?
- 0 All day long
- 0 Several times a day
- 0 At least once a day
- 0 A few times a week
- 0 Every week
- 0 Less than once a week
- 0 I do not use WhatsApp

22. How often do you write messages on WhatsApp?
- 0 All day long
- 0 Several times a day
- 0 At least once a day
- 0 A few times a week
- 0 Every week
- 0 Less than once a week
- 0 Hardly ever, I just watch

23. How often do you use the following languages when writing 1-to-1 messages on WhatsApp?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language/dialect				
Just emojis				

24. How often do you use the following languages when writing group messages on WhatsApp?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language/dialect				
Just emojis				

25. How often are the following languages used in your family group messages on WhatsApp?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
Another language/dialect				

26. How often are the following languages used in your best friends' group messages on WhatsApp?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
Another language/dialect				

27. How often are the following languages used in your classes group messages on WhatsApp?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				

28. How often do you look at Instagram?

0 All day long
0 Several times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 I do not use Instagram

29. How often do you post a picture/movie on Instagram?

0 All day long
0 Several times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 Hardly ever, I just watch

30. How often do you use the following languages when you post a picture/movie on Instagram?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language/dialect				
Just emojis				

31. How often do you respond to posts of others on Instagram?

0 All day long
0 Several times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 Hardly, I just watch

32. How often do you use the following languages when responding to another's post on Instagram?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language/dialect				
Just emojis				

33. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements about your use of Instagram?

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
I often watch funny memes/movies on Instagram.					
I follow Frisian accounts on Instagram who share funny Frisian memes/movies.					

34. How often do you look at Snapchat?

0 All day long
0 Several times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 I do not use Snapchat

35. How often do you post a picture on Snapchat?

0 All day long
0 Several times a day
0 At least once a day
0 A few times a week
0 Every week
0 Less than once a week
0 Hardly ever, I just watch

36. How often do you respond to Snapchat posts of others?
- 0 All day long
- 0 Several times a day
- 0 At least once a day
- 0 A few times a week
- 0 Every week
- 0 Less than once a week
- 0 Hardly, I just watch

37. How often do you use the following languages on Snapchat?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time
Dutch				
Frisian				
English				
Another language/dialect				
Just emojis				

38. If you chose other language/dialect on WhatsApp, Instagram and/or Snapchat, which language/dialect are you using?
_____

39. Which social media do you use most often to 'talk' to friends?
- 0 WhatsApp
- 0 Instagram
- 0 Snapchat
- 0 Other, namely _____

40. Which social media do you use most often to ask practical questions/announce things? (think of homework, lecture times, dinner etc.)
- 0 WhatsApp
- 0 Instagram
- 0 Snapchat
- 0 Other, namely _____

41. How often do you look at the following social media?

	All day long	Several times a day	At least once a day	A few times a week	Every week	Less than once a week	Do not use it
YouTube							
Facebook							
Twitter							
Tiktok							
Discord							
Telegram							

42. How often do you post on the following social media?

	All day long	Several times a day	At least once a day	A few times a week	Every week	Less than once a week	Hardly, I just watch	Do not use it
YouTube								
Facebook								
Twitter								
Tiktok								
Discord								
Telegram								

43. How often do you see social media posts in Frisian?

	Never	Now and then	Often	All the time	Do not use it
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Snapchat					
YouTube					
Facebook					
Twitter					
Tiktok					
Discord					
Telegram					

44. What proportion of your contacts can speak Frisian (estimate)?
(you can skip the social media that you do not use)

	(hardly) anybody	Less than half	About half	Over half	(almost) all
Classmates					
Friends whom you meet outside school					
WhatsApp contacts					
Instagram contacts					
Snapchat contacts					

45. What proportion of your contacts can understand Frisian (estimate)? (you can skip the social media that you do not use)

	(hardly) anybody	Less than half	About half	Over half	(almost) all
Classmates					
Friends whom you meet outside school					
WhatsApp contacts					
Instagram contacts					
Snapchat contacts					

46. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements.

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
When I post a message on social media, I sometimes doubt about the language I will use.					
The language choice of my post depends on who I want to reach / from whom I would like a reaction.					
The language I use on social media is the same as the language I speak with the receiver.					
When I post a message on social media, I do not think about who will see the message.					

47. How beautiful do you find Frisian? Give between 1 to 10 smileys, where I smiley means not at all beautiful and 10 smileys means very beautiful.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

48. How beautiful do you find Dutch? Give between 1 to 10 smileys, where I smiley means not at all beautiful and 10 smileys means very beautiful.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

49. How beautiful do you find English? Give between 1 to 10 smileys, where I smiley means not at all beautiful and 10 smileys means very beautiful.

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

50. How do you feel about the Frisian language?

Does not belong to me	0	0	0	0	0	Does belong to me
Not useful for later	0	0	0	0	0	Useful for later
Rigid	0	0	0	0	0	Relaxed
Whiny	0	0	0	0	0	Happy
Dull	0	0	0	0	0	Cool
Strange	0	0	0	0	0	Familiar
Not useful with friends	0	0	0	0	0	Useful with friends
Ugly	0	0	0	0	0	Beautiful
Old-fashioned	0	0	0	0	0	Modern
Unimportant	0	0	0	0	0	Important

51. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements?

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
Anyone living in Fryslân should be able to understand Frisian.					
Anyone living in Fryslân should be able to speak Frisian.					
It is important to understand Frisian to find a job in Fryslân later.					
It is important to speak Frisian to find a job in Fryslân later.					
It is useful for all children growing up in Fryslân to get Frisian classes at school.					
A bilingual upbringing is beneficial for a child's development.					
Frisian speaking parents should speak Dutch with their children.					
Fryslân is the most beautiful province in the Netherlands.					
I like popular Frisian music such as de Hûnekop, the Bounty Hunters or de Doelleazen.					

52. On social media, I:
- 0 Never use Frisian.
- 0 Sometimes use Frisian.
- 0 Regularly use Frisian.
- 0 Use Frisian all the time.

53. I do not use Frisian on social media (you may choose several items), because:
- 0 It is not my mother tongue.
- 0 I find Dutch easier.
- 0 Not all my friends understand Frisian.
- 0 It costs too much time.
- 0 I find writing in Frisian difficult.
- 0 I do not like Frisian.
- 0 Writing in Dutch feels more natural to me.
- 0 Another reason, namely _____

54. I write social media messages in Frisian less often than I would like to, because

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
I do not want to make mistakes.					
I find writing in Frisian difficult.					
It costs too much time.					
I would like everyone to understand my messages.					
The autocorrect on my smartphone corrects Frisian words all the time.					

55. To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements?

	I don't agree at all	I don't agree	Neutral	I agree	I fully agree
The hurdle to use Frisian on social media is lower than in other written texts.					
I use Frisian on social media because I can express myself better than in Dutch.					
Writing messages in Dutch is easier than in Frisian.					
I write Frisian the way I pronounce it.					
I think it is too much work to type diacritics.					
I do not really know when I need to use diacritics in Frisian.					
When someone sends a Frisian message, I will send a message in Frisian back.					
I am not really consistent in using Frisian on social media: I send Frisian messages to some friends, while to other (Frisian speaking) friends I send Dutch messages.					

56. I write (some) social media messages in Frisian, because
_____
_____
_____

57. This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for participating. If you have any remarks, you can write them down here. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact me at ljongbloed@fryske-akademy.nl