For minority languages, the internet and social media are seen as both a threat and an opportunity. On the one hand, unlimited opportunities have become available for practices in any language. On the other hand, the internet is dominated by only a dozen languages. The online position of predominantly spoken languages particularly is precarious.

This dissertation investigates the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages, in particular Frisian. Several research methods were employed to answer the research questions. Two thousand teenagers reported on their language use on social media twice. First on their language use on Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp, and six years later on WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat. The use of Frisian is also compared with other minority languages by examining language practices on Twitter.

The results show that the impact of social media use on the vitality of minority languages is mixed. The majority of Frisian-speaking teenagers use Frisian on social media and frequently so on more private social media. However, Frisian is not used as much on social media as in offline conversations. Insufficient writing skills, the presence of audience members who do not speak Frisian, as well as language attitudes have a dampening effect on the use on social media. Nevertheless, more people write Frisian on social media than in other written contexts. Future digital tools may further encourage greater use of Frisian. Consequently, this dissertation predicts that social media will have a sustained positive effect on the long-term vitality of Frisian.