

**LANGUAGE USE PATTERNS OF GENERATION Z: A CASE STUDY OF  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BY**

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**JANUARY, 2025**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS  
STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY. IN  
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA) HONOURS DEGREE IN  
LINGUISTICS.**

**JANUARY, 2025**

## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this project was carried out by **BLESSING AROMEIYE ASHOKO** with the matriculation number **ART2004708** in the Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of (B.A.) Degree in Linguistics.

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## **PLAGIARISM CERTIFICATION**

I, **BLESSING AROMEIYE ASHOKO** with the matriculation number **ART2004708** declare that the title: LANGUAGE USE PATTERNS OF GENERATION Z: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN has successfully passed this anti-plagiarism with the score of % and so does not violate copy right regulation.

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**BLESSING AROMEIYE ASHOKO**

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to God Almighty who gave me strength, knowledge, and understanding to complete this project successfully and to my family.

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of the study was to conduct an in-depth analysis of the language used by the Generation Z, with a focus on its usage in various contexts while its specific objectives are to investigate the distinctive language patterns that define Generation Z's communication style and explore how this language is utilized in different settings. The method of data collection for this study was a mixed-methods approach, combining both primary and secondary language samples. The data was analyzed by using the Speech Act Theory. The findings are: Generation Z's communication style is distinct and nuanced, making it challenging to decipher the intended meaning behind their utterances. If not properly understood, their messages can be misinterpreted, leading to potential miscommunication. In addition, the communication style of Generation Z differs significantly from those of Millennial and previous generations, marked by the seamless integration of slang, indigenous languages, such as Yoruba, and digital language feature characterized by frequent code-switching and code-mixing. Furthermore, their language use patterns are highly adaptive and context-dependent. The study recommends further studies by researchers, scholars or anyone interested in the Language use patterns of Generation z to document and preserve Generation Z's language use patterns, integrate Generation Z' language use patterns into language education, create language archives and databases.*

## CHAPTER ONE

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Language is a complex system of communication that varies across different contexts and social groups. It often serves as a marker of identity, indicating an individual's membership in a particular society or culture (Rabiah, 2018). Generation Z, however, stands out from previous generations in its unique approach to language use. Shaped by social media, technology, and other digital influences, this generation's language patterns diverge from those of older generations (Yadav & Rai, 2017). Notably, Gen Z views language primarily as a tool for communication, rather than a means of preserving cultural identity or tradition.

This research explores the language use of Generation Z (Gen Z), born between the late 1990s and mid-2010s (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, 2022; *Collins Dictionary*, 2024). Gen Z has been dubbed "zoomers," "iGeneration," "Digital Natives," and the "true generation." Their language is distinct, technical, and fascinating, often simplified and unique to their peer group. This language is prevalent in various settings, including schools and markets.

The University of Benin is considered a language community where Gen Z students communicate using language peculiar to their generation. This research aims to

investigate the language use of Gen Z students at the University of Benin, examining how their language is shaped by their context and community.

## **1.1 LINGUISTICS INFORMATION OF GENERATION Z**

Generation Z, (henceforth Gen Z), refers to individuals born between 1997 and 2012, following Millennials and preceding Generation Alpha (Jayatissa, 2023). As the oldest members of Gen Z enter their late twenties, they are becoming young adults, starting families, and establishing their careers. Meanwhile, the youngest members of this generation are just beginning their teenage years. According to Rendon (2024), Gen Z is distinguished by their strong social consciousness and commitment to addressing pressing issues. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation (2021), Gen Zers are particularly focused on seven key areas: access to healthcare, mental health support, affordable higher education, economic security, civic engagement, racial equity, and environmental sustainability.

This generation's dedication to creating a better future is a defining characteristic of their identity. Generation Z, has grown up in a world of rapid technological advancements, social media saturation, and cultural shifts. As a result, their language use is shaped by these influences (McCrindle & Fell, 2019). Gen Z uses a unique digital vernacular, blending online slang, emojis, and abbreviations in their digital communication (Shalevska & Kostadinovska-Stojchevska, 2024). They frequently employ internet slang terms like "lit," "Fam," "Lowkey," and "Highkey" in their online

interactions. Visual content, such as images and videos, is preferred over text-based communication. Shortened words and phrases, like "tbh" (to be honest) and "idk" (I don't know), are also commonly used. Emojis and emoticons are extensively used to convey emotions and tone in digital communication (Erle et al., 2021).

Many Gen Zers are bilingual or multilingual, reflecting their diverse cultural backgrounds, and often blend languages, creating hybrid words and phrases like "Spanglish" (Spanish + English). Informal language is prevalent in both online and offline communication, with regional slang and colloquialisms varying widely across different areas. In general, Gen Z's language use is shaped by their tech-savvy, diverse, and socially connected upbringing, contributing to the evolution of language. This generation has been shaped by the rise of smartphones, social media, and streaming content. They prefer anonymous and ephemeral social media platforms like Snapchat and Whisper, differing from Millennials' more public and personal online interactions.

## **1.2 SCOPE OF STUDY**

This study focuses on Language use patterns of Generation Z: A case study of the university of Benin and it is delimited to the student in the University of Benin and it environ especially the Gen Z's. The research will investigate the distinctive Language patterns that define Generation Z's communication style and explore how this Language is utilised in different settings including social media platforms, Educational institutions and informal conversations. The research would not go beyond this and other language

use patterns used by millennial will not be discussed and no comparison will be drawn between both.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of this study is essentially to provide insights into the Linguistic characteristics of Generation Z and their communication preferences, highlighting both the similarities and differences with previous Generations.

### **1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Generation Z is distinguished by its unique language patterns, which diverge significantly from those of older generations. This generation employs a distinct language style, often incorporating slang, pidgin, and language blending to communicate and interact. This shift in language use can create a barrier for older generations to understand. Unlike their predecessors, who valued language as a means of preserving cultural identity, Generation Z views language primarily as a tool for communication and entertainment. The proliferation of social media has further accelerated this trend, leading many in Generation Z to abandon their native languages in favor of more informal and simplified forms of communication. This research will explore the language use of Generation Z, examining its simplicity, uniqueness, and the implications of this shift in language preferences.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following are the research questions:

1. What are the distinctive language patterns that define Generation Z's communication style?
2. How is this language utilized in different settings?

## **1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this study is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the language use by the Generation z, with a focus on its usage in various contexts. The objectives of this research is to:

1. investigate the distinctive language patterns that define Generation Z's communication style.
2. explore how this language is utilized in different settings.

## **1.7 METHODOLOGY**

The data for this research was collected from Generation Z speakers within the age ranges of 16-20, 21-24, 25-29, and 30-35 corresponding to individuals born between the late 1990s and mid-2010s, thereby providing accurate insights into the language patterns and characteristics of Generation Z.

This research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both primary and secondary language samples. For primary data collection, Primary data collection was conducted through participant observation, where the researcher is immersed in the University of Benin's environment, observing daily interactions and events in key locations such as food vendors (Buka), hostels, faculty car parks, and classrooms. This approach enabled the researcher to gather detailed, accurate, and contextualized data, providing a rich understanding of the research context.

Additionally, secondary data collection methods were used, involving online research and analysis of various media sources, such as videos, talk shows, and reality shows produced by and for Generation Z. These sources provided valuable examples of slang usage and language patterns among this age group.

It is important to note that both primary and secondary data collection methods served as the foundation for gathering the majority of language samples used in this research. By combining these approaches, the research aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of Generation Z's language use and practices.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

This research on Generation Z's language use illuminates the concept of sociolinguistics, a vital aspect of language study that bridges the gap between language and society. By highlighting the interactions and differences between language use in

older generations and Generation Z, this study demonstrates the significance of sociolinguistics in understanding the dynamic nature of language. The research reveals that language use varies depending on the user's preoccupation, a notion justified through a thorough analytic and descriptive study. This investigation contributes significantly to the understanding of language variation and the communicative function of language, making it a valuable contribution to the field of Linguistics.

This study is essential for language students, society students, and future researchers who will build upon this work to explore related topics. As a resourceful reference point, this research will contribute to the advancement of sociolinguistics, a vital branch of linguistics that examines the intricate relationship between language and society. Sociolinguistics studies the structure and use of language in social and cultural contexts, focusing on the link between language and society. By investigating language use in various settings, sociolinguistics reveals how language reflects and shapes social identity, power dynamics, and cultural norms.

In conclusion, this research demonstrates the importance of sociolinguistics in understanding the complex relationship between language and society, making a significant contribution to the field of Linguistics.

## **1.9 LIMITATION OF STUDY**

This study encountered several limitations that impacted its scope and depth. The most significant constraint was the time allocated for the research, which proved insufficient to comprehensively cover all aspects of the research topic.

Another limitation was the availability and accessibility of informants. The University of Benin students who participated in the study had limited time and availability, making the data collection process challenging and protracted.

Furthermore, the scarcity of existing research on this specific topic posed a significant challenge. This lack of relevant literature and studies made it difficult to establish a theoretical framework and methodological approach. The few available materials provided limited guidance, which constrained the study's development and analysis.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, relevant studies that have been done on the research topic as well as related topics are reviewed. We also examine as well as explain the basic concepts of this research. This explanation and examination of the basic concepts is done in the first section of this chapter while the review of relevant literature are done in the second section of this chapter. The third section of this chapter consists of the concern of the present study.

#### **2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

Conceptual review has to do with the highlighting and explanation of the basic terms of any study or research. The fundamental concepts of this research are therefore reviewed properly in this section. This review is very important since it aids the understanding of this study thereby making the research explicit and understandable.

### 2.1.1 Language

Language permeates our lives from birth to death . It is a system of communication that consists of a set of rules, conventions, and symbols used to convey meaning and express thoughts, ideas, and feelings. It can take various forms, such as speech, writing, signing, or gesturing, and is a fundamental aspect of human society and culture. Language enables us to share knowledge, negotiate meaning, and establish relationships with others. It a dynamic and constantly evolving tool that adapts to the needs of it users and the context in which it is used.

Sapir (1921:8) defines language "as purely human and non-intinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols". Edward Sapir's definition of language highlights its unique human capacity, non-instinctive nature, and role in communicating ideas, emotions, and desires. He emphasizes that language is a learned skill, acquired through culture and social interaction, and is produced voluntarily through a system of symbols. This system is shared by a community of speakers and is used to convey meaning. Sapir's definition emphasizes the creative and flexible nature of language, and how it is shaped by culture and history.

Language is part of the culture of a given people thus language cannot be separated from the culture of people (speakers). The relationship between users of a language and the people is very close that one cannot exist without the other. Sociolinguists are of the

view that the easiest way to kill the culture of a given people is to strip them off their language. Also it is with language, corporation between humans are made possible. Littlewonder, Bloch and Trager (1942:5) assert that "Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbol by means of which a social group corporates". The above postulation emphasizes on the social function of Language. The implication of this is that without language, human co-existence will be difficult if not impossible.

Scholars in the 21st century have shared their various views on what language is all about. According to Graddol (2004), languages evolve and diversify over time, and the history of their evolution can be reconstructed by comparing modern languages to determine which traits their ancestral languages must have had in order for the later developmental stages to occur. A group of languages that descend from a common ancestor is known as a language family; in contrast, a language that has been demonstrated not to have any living or non-living relationship with another language is called a language isolate (Graddol,2004). There are also many unclassified languages whose relationships have not been established, and spurious languages may have not existed at all.

Language according to Evans and Levinson (2009) is the primary means by which humans convey meaning, both in spoken and signed forms, and may also be conveyed through writing. Human language is characterized by its cultural and historical diversity, with significant variations observed between cultures and across time.

Human languages possess the properties of productivity and displacement, which enable the creation of an infinite number of sentences, and the ability to refer to objects, events, and ideas that are not immediately present in the discourse. The use of human language relies on social convention and is acquired through learning. Language is a means of communication; language is a means of expression; language creates reality; language masters our own personal life (Levi, 2020).

The statement by Levi (2020) asserts that language is a fundamental tool for communication and personal expression, shaping how we convey ideas and emotions. It also highlights that language plays a critical role in creating and defining our understanding of reality, suggesting that our perception of the world is influenced by the linguistic structures we use. Furthermore, it emphasizes that language can govern and influence our personal experiences, reflecting its deep impact on our self-perception and narrative. Recently, Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024) defined language as a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures, or marks having understood meanings.

The definition from Merriam-Webster (2024) captures the essence of language by emphasizing its systematic nature and its role in communication. It effectively highlights the diversity of language forms, including signs, sounds, gestures, and marks, and underscores the importance of conventional understanding for meaningful interaction. This

definition is broad yet precise, encompassing both verbal and non-verbal elements of language, which reflects its multi faceted role in human communication.

### **2.1.2 Language Use**

Language use refers to the communicative meaning of language, distinguishing it from usage, which encompasses the rules and structure of language. Examining language use patterns enhances our understanding of human communication and the primary purposes of each language. Notably, language cannot be used in isolation, as humans are social beings who rely on language to communicate within their societies. Effective communication requires shared ideas, values, and beliefs among individuals in a society. Pickering and Garrod (2004) suggest that conversational coordination is achieved through interactive alignment at various levels of language use, including lexicon, syntax, speech rate, and accent.

Moreover, repeated linguistic practices within a community can significantly influence thoughts and actions, as proposed by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Sapir,1921;Whorf,1956). This highlights the profound impact of language use on human communication and social relationships.

### **2.1.3 Language Use Patterns**

Language use Patterns also known as Linguistic patterns refer to the predictable and recurring formations of words, phrases, sentences, and structures that comprise a language, conveying meaning and shaping communication.

Language use patterns also refer to the consistent ways in which people use language in various social contexts, cultures, and situations, employing predictable formations that construct words, sounds, and meaning. These patterns encompass idioms, colloquial expressions, pragmatic markers, discourse structures, turn-taking patterns, politeness strategies, and register variation, which depend on the situation. As noted by Thornborrow and Wareing (1998), language patterns are recurring linguistic formations used by specific communities or writers for textual analysis. People adapt their language use to suit different audiences and purposes, using more formal language when speaking to someone important and more casual forms with friends and family. By examining language use patterns, we can enhance our communication skills, appreciate linguistic diversity, and accurately interpret language in different contexts, ultimately strengthening our understanding of human communication and the primary purposes of language.

#### **2.1.4 Generation Z**

Generation Z, also known as Gen Z or Zoomers, consists of individuals born between 1996 and 2010. Recent research has shifted its focus to the youngest generation due to their increased interest in the internet and social media. According to Vladimirova et al. (2022), the members of this group, dubbed “the generation that has never been

offline," have never been offline. Generation Z is distinct from its predecessors, called "the Millennials." This generation consists of individuals who were born between 1980 and 1995. The defining characteristic of Millennials is that they were not exposed to information and communication technology (ICT) and the internet from birth but rather during their formative years. As a result, the world view of Generation Z is strikingly distinct from that of all preceding generations. According to Albescu (2022), Generation Z is also referred to as the first digital native generation. This group is distinguished by their youth and desire to engage in play and other forms of enjoyment. As a result, they conduct all of their daily activities, from banking to shopping, on the internet. This generation performs all tasks from the convenience of their devices.

According to Bulut and Maraba (2021), the diverse social, economic, and historical experiences that Generation Z members had as a result of the era in which they were raised have shaped their routines and personality traits. Technology has played a significant role in shaping Generation Z, characterised by its technological expertise, individualism, business acumen, financial awareness, and ability to multi task. In addition to working together, they value individual freedom. According to Kaloeti et al. (2021), they are generally naive and vulnerable; therefore, it is essential to investigate the factors contributing to this vulnerability to develop preventative strategies. This vulnerability was also documented by Dunmade (2022). The exposure is especially true when one considers the significant roles that technology and its defining component, the internet,

play in shaping the perceptions, traits, attitudes, and levels of awareness of this generational cohort.

These social networking generations are the most technically savvy and fashion-conscious of all preceding generations. Generation Z's primary motivation for online social networking is to be involved and informed by others. These 14- to 25-year-old members of Generation Z are more likely than other generations to prefer online social networks for communication and interaction with acquaintances. They value the opinions of others and consider it essential to actively provide feedback and comments about the brands, services, and issues in which they are directly or indirectly involved (Maizaud,2022). This generation has a strong gravitational pull toward online communication and prefers to participate and remain connected through technology. They are active contributors, avid online content consumers, creative thinkers, and mash-up experts.

## **2.2 PREVIOUS STUDIES**

This part of the work discusses and highlights previous studies related to this research.

Nandhakumar (2019) explores how Generation z learn and their views on educational curriculum, delivery methods and infrastructure. As cited from his work, teaching the current generation, the Gen-z (born between 1997-2010) is a challenging task. This is because the level of intellectual possess by the current generation is better than the

millennial. This is majorly due to the abundant resources available around them to enrich their knowledge base. The smartphone, with 24/7 internet, social media like facebook, whatsapp, phone, Instagram, Twitter and so forth have been making them occupied. Hence, the educationists have to explore 360 degrees to acquire strong subject contents to teach the current generation.

Similarly, Nguyen Thi Gia Dinh (2024) states that to effectively teach Gen Z students, educators must harness technology and understand their digital-native mindset. Leveraging educational software, such as Google Classroom, enhances engagement and streamlines learning. This platform allows teachers to create and manage lessons, provide feedback, and communicate with students seamlessly. Integrating multimedia resources, collaborative tools, and interactive applications fosters personalized learning experiences. By updating their technical skills and balancing technology with traditional methods, educators can create an immersive learning environment that resonates with Gen Z's unique characteristics.

Oguniran et al. (2023) study explored Nigerian Gen Z undergraduates' perspectives on social media's impact on higher education learning, addressing a significant research gap. As viewed from their work, social media has transformed the learner-teacher dynamic, enabling convenient communication, information sharing, and access. Academics increasingly use social media for after-hours support, lecture delivery, information dissemination, and online discussions. Their search investigated Gen Z

undergraduates' social media usage patterns, perceived benefits and challenges, and the influence on teacher-student and student-student interactions. By understanding students' perspectives, educators can develop effective strategies to leverage social media, enhance learning outcomes, and inform policy decisions.

Ganita and Ardianto (2024) in their study explored the dynamics of code-switching used in Generation Z's (Gen-Z) communication practices, revealing it as a dynamic and adaptive strategy employed in diverse social contexts. As cited in their work, Gen-Z's exhibit context-specific types of code-switching, utilizing informal and casual forms, such as slang and non-formal language, in peer interactions. Within familial settings, a seamless transition between formal and informal language aligns with established family norms, while professional environments witness the use of formal and professional language. They asserted that the strategic use of code-switching and slang by Gen-Z's serve as a nuanced communication approach, catering to specific social scenarios. In informal peer contexts, the incorporation of slang fosters a sense of camaraderie, while code-switching acts as a tool for expressing emotions and personal identity, reflecting individuals' comfort in conveying specific feelings or ideas in a chosen language. The research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of Gen-Z's language practices, showcasing their adeptness in navigating diverse linguistic landscapes, expressing identity, and adapting to social expectations.

Telaumbanua et. al (2024), carried out a qualitative study examined the language styles used by Generation Z teenagers on Instagram and the factors that influence them. The research found that Gen Z teens predominantly use casual language in their Instagram posts, featuring slang, colloquialisms, abbreviations, and informal greetings. The study identified technological, social, and linguistic factors that shape these language styles. The findings contribute to our understanding of language evolution in digital contexts, highlighting the impact of social media on language use and the emergence of new linguistic trends among digital natives.

### **2.3 CONCERN OF PRESENT STUDY**

This study examines the language use patterns of Generation Z students at the University of Benin, with a focus on understanding how socio-linguistic factors, technological advancements, and cultural identity shape their communication. Specifically, the research explores how Gen Z students' language use varies across social contexts, how technology influences their language choices, and what attitudes and perceptions they hold towards language use. The study also examines the implications of these patterns for language teaching and learning in higher education. By examining the language use patterns of Gen Z students, this research aims to provide insights into the evolving nature of language, its relationship with identity and culture, and the ways in which language education can adapt to meet the needs of younger generations.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework for the research on "Language Use Patterns of Generation Z (Gen Z): A case study of the university of Benin. The theoretical framework to be employed in the research is the "Speech Act Theory" by Austin (1962).

#### **3.1 Speech Act Theory**

Speech Act Theory, propounded by Austin and later built upon by John Serle, explores how Language does not only serve as a means of conveying information but also to execute actions. Austin's pivotal discovery revealed that speech encompasses more than mere factual statements, instead facilitating a wide range of actions, including promises, commands, questions and apologies. The key concepts are; Locutionary Acts (the act of saying something), Illocutionary acts (the act performed in saying something), and perlocutionary acts (the effects of saying something on the listener). These actions are formally recognized as illocutionary acts, which constitute the core of Speech Act Theory.

For example, when a Priest says “ I now declare you man and wife”, he is not just making a statement, but making a declaration. Austin argued that understanding language requires recognizing the speaker’s intent and the action they are performing through words. Building on Austin’s foundation, Searle developed a comprehensive framework that categorizes speech acts into five distinct types: assertive, which are statements that describe or assert facts about the world (e.g., “The sky is blue”); directives, which are utterances that aim to influence the listener’s actions or behavior (e.g., “please bring my bag”); commissives, which are speech acts where the speaker commits to a future action or obligation (e.g.,” I will make a first class”); expressive, which are statements that convey the speaker’s emotions, feelings, or attitude (e.g., “I’m sorry for your loss”); declarations, which are utterances that bring about a change in the world simply by being stated (e.g.,” I name this child, Grace”). In addition, Searle’s speech act theory extends beyond illocutionary acts to include perlocutionary acts, which refer to the effects or responses elicited in the listener as a consequence of the speaker’s utterance. Examples of perlocutionary acts include persuading, surprising, or convincing someone. By incorporating both illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, speech acts theory highlights the dynamic and action-oriented nature of language. This framework demonstrates how language not only conveys information but also shapes relationships, influences behavior and constructs social realities.

### **3.2 Application of the Theory**

The Speech Act Theory provides a valuable framework for examining language use beyond mere information conveyance. In the context of Language use pattern of Generation z: a case study of the University of Benin, this theory can be applied to understand distinctive language use patterns of Generation z. As a unique demographic cohort, Gen z differs significantly from Millennial, including in their language use. The language patterns of Gen z, characterized by the frequent use of slangs and specialized lexicon, serve not only to convey information, but also to establish a sense of belonging within their social group.

For this research, the Speech Act Theory will be employed to analyze the language use patterns of Gen z, focusing on three primary acts: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. This research will investigate how the illocutionary act transforms into a perlocutionary act, shedding light on the complex dynamics of language use among Gen z.

### **3.3 Relevance/Justification of the Theory**

Speech Act Theory is highly relevant to the language use patterns of Generation z, as exemplified in this case study of the University of Benin. This theoretical framework provides a structured approach to analyzing language functions that extend beyond mere information conveyance. By focusing on how speakers perform a wide range of functions beyond simple communication and actions through language, such as making requests, issuing commands, expressing intentions, and establishing social bonds.

This theory is particularly useful for examining how Gen z utilize language to forge social relationships, express themselves through novel lexicons or slangs, and convey meanings that transcend surface-level interpretations. Furthermore, Speech Act Theory enables the analysis of how this unique language patterns trigger listeners to respond, interpret intended meanings beyond literal interpretations, and perform actions that align with the speaker's intentions, even when the literal meaning of the utterance suggest otherwise. Finally, context is vital. Context is crucial for understanding the full meaning of an uttrance.

Below is a sample data to show how the theory is justified for the research.

1. Cap - lies/ false

“ You just dey cap vertical”.

**Locutionary act:** Holding a cap vertically

**Illocutionary act:** Telling lies or cooking up untrue story

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels he is a liar and shows a sense of sadness for being referred to as a liar.

The illocutionary of using the word “*cap*” to refer to what the listener has said as being untrue indirectly sees the listener as a liar. This indirectness triggers a perlocutionary effect, where the listener perceives the underlying meaning and responds

with emotions like sadness, disappointment. The subtlety of the word influences the listener's emotional reaction or understanding, bringing about a change in the state of affairs. This is because it is about the speaker's intention and the type of act they are performing.

2. Drip - a cool sense of style

“ I dey feel your drip my guy”.

**Locutionary act:** liquid falling in drops

**Illocutionary act:** admires what the listener is putting on

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of satisfaction as is pleased with his fashion sense.

The illocutionary act of using the word “*drip*” to show admiration, being assertive, indirectly shows that the listener has a sense of fashion. This indirectness triggers a perlocutionary effect, where the listener perceives the underlying meaning and responds with emotions like satisfaction. The subtlety of the word influences the listener's emotional reaction or understanding. They are not inherent in the utterance above, but depend on the context and the listener's interpretation.

## CHAPTERFOUR

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This section will present and analyze the data using the "Speech Act Theory" by Austin (1962). This part of the work is broken down into three: data presentation, data analysis and the discussion of findings. The analysis will reflect the specific objectives of this work using the aforementioned theoretical framework.

#### 4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

This section presents the data for this research. A total of fifty data are presented here.

3. *E choke* - To mean something is overwhelming or impressive

4. *Aza* - bank account

5. *Sapa* - This slang is used to describe a state of brokenness or extreme poverty

6. *Ment* - An abridged version of " mental". This slang is often used to question a person's sanity.

7. *Japa* - This Yoruba word means " to flee, escape or run".

8. *Jackophite* - someone that reads for lengthy hours.
9. *Jacking* - Reading for lengthy hours.
10. *Ajebutter* - This slang describes people born with silver spoon.
11. *Faa aluta* - To cause chaos leading to the school's closure or a strike.
12. *Fresher* - A new student.
13. *Omo iya mi* - A Yoruba slang as the English variant of " my bro". Often used between guys whose relationship has grown out of ordinary friendship.
14. *Idan* - A young guy who has it all. He works hard and plays even harder, never saying no to an opportunity to make extra money. In essence, a streetwise brother.
15. *Mafo* - This is a slang used to tell someone not to be intimidated, bothered or rattled.
16. *Otilo* - This Yoruba slang means " it has gone".
17. *O por* - This slang means "it's plenty". Usually used when you are impressed.
18. *God, abeg* - You're tired and you need God to do something about it fast.
19. *We meuve* - This slang means "life goes on". Often used when trying to offer some motivation to yourself or others irrespective of the situation or circumstance.
20. *We outside*: This is what Gen Z's say anytime they come out to party.

21. *Baddie*: A girl who is highly confident and does things her own way without minding others. She dresses differently, has a different mindset from others.
22. Trenches - The ghetto.
23. Stan - Refers to an extremely or excessively enthusiastic and devoted fan.
24. Advance - move forward.
25. Movement - Used to signal your exit.
26. Disembark - To stop or go away.
27. *Who goes?* - This is your go- to slang for " who is that?".
28. *E don cast* - This slang is used to express disappointment or frustration. Nigerians often use it when something goes wrong or doesn't turn out as expected.
29. *Dey play* - This slang is being used to suggest that something is unrealistic or delusional.
30. *No gree for anybody* - It is used to challenge someone superior or more powerful than you are.
31. *Adam go stain your white* - In this context, Adam means " man". It is another word for " break up".
32. *Dey play my fans* - Be serious and don't waste your time.

33. Groceries, floating berries, sweetener and bright serum: That is, garri(cassava flakes), groundnut, sugar and milk. It is used to connote not to directly say you are getting garri, groundnut, sugar and milk.
34. Let the poor breathe, no suffocate them - It is used to show how impressive something is or to express frustration about a rough situation.
35. No evidence - when you try to convince someone and you don't have proof to prove what you are saying is true.
36. *Zaddy* - A handsome, fashionable, older man.
37. Drag - To mock or humiliate someone.
38. Hits differently - When something " hits differently ", it impacts you in a way that is better than in normal circumstances.
39. It's giving - Carries positive connotations. It is often used to refer to someone's fashion.
40. Savage - " Savage" is a Gen Z slang used to describe something as harsh or brutal.
41. Shade - To throw " shade" at someone is to disrespect or disapprove of someone.
42. Bombastic side eye - In social media, a sideeye us response to show you are disapproving, suspicious, or sceptical of a situation or person.

43. Snatched - Another way to compliment someone's appearance or outfit. Saying they look "snatched" is to say they look great and "on point".

44. Green flag/ red flag : Green flag is a positive sign, whereas a red flag is a negative sign. It is often used in the dating scene to describe whether a potential partner is showing promise or not.

45. *Fam* - *Fam* derived from family, is used to refer to friends, colleagues or anyone who feels like family or whom you are close to.

46. Ate - Nothing to do with eating but describes when someone delivers on something in a good way and can be used in a variety of contexts, like referring to someone's performance or fashion style.

47. Clout - Refers to influence, fame, or social status, often gained through social media. People chase "clout" by doing things to get attention and increase their visibility or popularity online.

48. Lit - Describes something that is fun, exciting or amazing.

49. *Lowkey* - A way to describe something discreetly or subtly.

50. *Periodt* - This word is to emphasise a point or make it clear that there's nothing more to discuss.

## 4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

This part of the work analyzes the data presented in 4.1. The analysis will be guided by the speech act theory (Austin, 1962). The data will first be classified into eight (8) scenarios where it was gotten from the Uniben community. They are gotten from: classroom conversations, school hostels, food canteen (Buka, Uniben), academic registration centres (Exams and Records), hall 2 car park (hostel), exam hall, and Faculty of Arts car park.

### 4.2.1 Classroom Conversations

3. E choke - To mean something is overwhelming or impressive.

" omor, the test *e choke*"

**Locutionary act:** Difficulty in breathing

**Illocutionary act:** overwhelming or impressive

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a form of agreement with what has been said and understands the nature of the test to be overwhelming.

4. Aza - bank account

" I go paste *aza* now make you send am".

**Locutionary act:** I will stick digit of numbers onto something

**Illocutionary act:** I will call out or write out his bank details

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener gets a paper or listens attentively to the bank details.

5. *Sapa* - This slang is used to describe a state of brokenness or extreme poverty.

"sapa, don dey use you play".

**Locutionary act:** You are playing with grape juice

**Illocutionary act:** a broke person

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels financially incapable or understands the subtle implications of poverty.

6. *Otilo*-This Yoruba slang means "it has gone".

"just forget am, otilo."

**Locutionary act:** Just forget it has gone

**Illocutionary act:** let it go, there is no other way out

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels sad and finds it so hard to let go.

7. *No gree for anybody*-it is used to challenge someone superior or more powerful than you are.

"no gree for anybody o".

**Locutionary act:** Do not agree with anyone

**Illocutionary act:** Do not be scared of anyone irrespective of their status or stature.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels more confident about himself

8. Movement-used to signal your exit.

"once dis lecturer comot for class, omor, na movement o".

**Locutionary act:** Once the lecturer leaves the class, I will move my body.

**Illocutionary act:** Once the lecturer leaves the class, I will take my leave

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener is also making preparation to exit the class too when the lecturer leaves.

#### 4.2.2 HOSTEL (HALL 2)

9. Ment - An abridged version of " mental ". This slang is often used to question a person's sanity.

" You dey ment? For hostel wey I pay for.

**Locutionary act:** Taken to be "meant"

**Illocutionary act:** You are crazy to tell me to leave the hostel I paid for.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of anger.

10. Baddie- A girl who is highly confident and does things her own way without minding others. She dresses differently, has a different mindset from others.

"dat girl for room 409, na baddie o.

**Locutionary act:** That girl in room 409 has a bad character

**Illocutionary act:** That girl in room 409 is a role model to many.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener looks surprised and astonished

11. Stan- Refers to an extremely or excessively enthusiastic and devoted fan.

"I stan sexual purity".

**Locutionary act:** I stand for sexual purity

**Illocutionary act:** I am extremely, excessively, enthusiastic and devoted fan of sexual purity.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener looks in admiration

12. God, abeg: You're tired and you need God to do something about it fast.

"God, abeg, strength don leave my bodi".

**Locutionary act:** God, please I do not have strength

**Illocutionary act:** God, please this is beyond my control, I am weak

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels sorrowful and shows a sign of pity.

13. *Adam go stain your white*-In this context, Adam means "man". It is another word for breakup.

"Girl, *Adam go stain your white*".

**Locutionary act:** Girl, the man called Adam will get you dirty

**Illocutionary act:** Girl, men will use and dump you.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows defiance and unwillingness to heed to the advice.

14. *Zaddy*-A handsome, fashionable, older man.

"e no old, na *zaddy*".

**Locutionary act:** He is not old, He is a father

**Illocutionary act:** He is not old; he is a handsome, fashionable, old man

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of disgust

15. *it's giving* - Carries positive connotations. It is often used to refer to someone's fashion.

"*it's giving* Yoruba vibes".

**Locutionary act:** It giving me a sense of belonging to the Yorubas

**Illocutionary act:** It is making you look like a Yoruba.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels pleased.

16. Snatched- Another way to compliment someone's appearance or outfit. Saying they look "snatched" is to say they look great and "on point".

"see the way you look snatched in that outfit."

**Locutionary act:** see the way you looked like you were dragged or pushed roughly in that outfit

**Illocutionary act:** see the way you look good in that outfit.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of satisfaction choosing the right outfit.

17. Green flag/red flag- Green flag is positive sign, whereas a red flag is a negative sign. It is often used in the dating scene to describe whether a potential partner is showing promise or not.

"The guy wey get money na green flag but those ones wey no get money na red flag."

**Locutionary act:** The guy with lots of money is holding a green flag while the guy with no money is holding a red flag.

**Illocutionary act:** The guy with lots of money shows a positive sign of a potential, while the guy with no money shows a negative sign of a potential partner.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a sign of agreement and affirmation

18. Clout- Refers to influence, fame, or social status, often gained through social media. People chase "clout" by doing things to get attention and increase their visibility or popularity online.

"some girls in class are just chasing clout".

**Locutionary act:** Some girls in class are just chasing power or influence

**Illocutionary act:** Some girls in class are just chasing social media fame.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of disgust

19. Shade- to throw "shade" at someone is to disrespect or disapprove of someone.

"Those tiktok girls in class are throwing shades".

**Locutionary act:** Those tiktok girls in class are throwing shades of different colours

**Illocutionary act:** Those tiktok girls are showing a sign of disrespect or disapproval

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of irritation.

#### 4.2.3 FOOD CANTEEN (BUKA, UNIBEN)

20. *Japa* – This Yoruba word means "to flee, escape or run".

"I don dey plan to japa."

**Locutionary act:** I am planning to run

**Illocutionary act:** I am planning to flee, run or escape

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a sign of excitement

21. *Omo iya mi* – A Yoruba slang as the English variants of "my bro". Often used between guys whose relationship has grown out of ordinary friendship.

"omo iya mi no dey do like stranger".

**Locutionary act:** My mother's child, do not act like a stranger.

**Illocutionary act:** My friend be comfortable around me, I am not a stranger to you

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of comfort.

22. Trenches-The ghetto

"person wan go trenches again".

**Locutionary act:** Someone wants to return to the ditch again

**Illocutionary act:** Some wants to return back to the ghetto again

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of reluctance.

23. Advance-move forward

"you don dey advance for this crypto o"

**Locutionary act:** You are making progress in this crypto

**Illocutionary act:** You are moving forward in this crypto

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of satisfaction knowing that he is moving forward.

24. *Dey play my fans*-Be serious and don't waste your time.

*"dey play my fans*, ASUU dey laugh you say you dey graduate next year.

**Locutionary act:** My fans are playful and cheerful and ASUU is included.

**Illocutionary act:** ASUU will hinder your plans to graduate next year, do not waste your time planning to graduate next year.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener is discouraged and he resigns to fate.

#### 4.2.4 LIBRARY- LINGUISTICS LIBRARY

25. Jackophite -someone that reads for lengthy hours.

*"Jackophite"*ma!!!

**Locutionary act:** A virus

**Illocutionary act:** She reads for lengthy hours.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels excited and wants to be showered more praise because of her academic excellence.

26. Jacking-Reading for lengthy hours.

"Bro, na jacking things so"

**Locutionary act:** Bro, we have to lift up something

**Illocutionary act:** Bro, we have to read for lengthy hours.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows resilience and he is ready to read.

#### **4.2.5 ACADEMIC REGISTRATION CENTRES (EXAMS AND RECORDS).**

27. *Ajebutter*-This slang describes people born with silver spoon.

"I no sure, na ajebutter she be".

**Locutionary act:** I am not sure she is a brand of butter

**Illocutionary act:** I am not sure she is born with a silver spoon

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener examines the lady to confirm what has been said.

28. Fresher-A new student.

"you be fresher abi?"

**Locutionary act:** A new person

**Illocutionary act:** A new student

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels shy

#### 4.2.6 HALL 2 CAR PARK (HOSTEL).

29. *Idan*-A young guy who has it all. He works hard and plays even harder, never saying no to an opportunity to make extra money. In essence, a street wise brother.

"The guy na *idan* o".

**Locutionary act:** Street boy

**Illocutionary act:** The guy works and makes his transactions on the street. He never misses any deal or opportunity to be reach.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels inquisitive and is willing to get more information about the guy.

30. *We outside*-This is what GenZ's say anytime they come out to party.

"we outside for the birthday girl."

**Locutionary act:** We are staying outside

**Illocutionary act:** We are going to party with the birthday girl.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listeners show excitement are ready to have fun.

31. *Dey play* –This slang is mostly used to suggest that someone is being unrealistic or delusional.

"dey play"you wey no get work.

**Locutionary act:** Continue playing, you do not have any work to do

**Illocutionary act:** You do not have a job and you want to earn or be financially stable, you are just being delusional.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels sorrowful and shows a state of sober reflection.

32. *Let di poor breathe, no suffocate them* –it is used to show how impressive something is or to express frustration about a rough situations.

"let the poor breathe, no suffocate them".

**Locutionary act:** Let the poor breathe in filtered air.

**Illocutionary act:** You are not capable financially or otherwise and you should not be intimidated by others who are.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels sympathy or understands the subtle implications of poverty without direct reference to it.

33. *Lit*-Describes something that is fun, exciting or amazing.

"The FYB picnic was lit".

**Locutionary act:** The FYB picnic was colorful

**Illocutionary act:** The FYB picnic was fun, exciting or amazing.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener expresses a feeling of excitement.

#### 4.4.7 EXAM HALL

34. *E don cast* -This slang is used to express disappointment or frustration. Nigerians often use it when something goes wrong or doesn't turn out as expected.

"*omor, e don cast*".

**Locutionary act:** It has been filmed

**Illocutionary act:** Exposed or bursted

**Perlocutionary act:** The speaker shows a feeling of frustration and disaapointment.

35. *Periodt*-This word is to emphasise a point or make it clear that there's nothing more to discuss.

"I am coming out with first class honour and that's on *periodt*".

**Locutionary act:** I am coming out with first honour in this period or season

**Illocutionary act:** I am coming out with first class honour and that is final or there are no two ways about it.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener stops the conversation and makes no further contribution to the discussion.

#### 4.2.8 FACULTY CAR PARK.

36. Faa Aluta - To cause chaos leading to the school's closure or a strike.

(shouts) "*faa aluta*". We no go gree

**Locutionary act:** danger looming

**Illocutionary act:** we will not succumb, we are going to protest

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels motivated and the spirit of protest is ignited.

37. M̀̀fo - This Yoruba slang is used to tell someone not to be intimidated, bothered or rattled. "*m̀̀fo*, anything wey wan happen, I gallant".

**Locutionary act:** do not break anything

**Illocutionary act:** do not be intimidated, I am with you no matter the outcome

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels safe, secure and protected.

38. O por - This slang means "it's plenty". Usually used when you are impressed.

"*O por* I dey feel you".

**Locutionary act:** the feeling I have for you is plenty.

**Illocutionary act:** I am impressed by you

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels fulfilled and accomplished

39. We meuve - This slang means " life goes on ". Often used when trying to offer some motivation to yourself or others irrespective of the situation or circumstance.

" regardless, we meuve ".

**Locutionary act:** regardless, we are moving forward.

**Illocutionary act:** regardless, life goes on.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener understands that he needs to brace up and he shows a feeling of hope.

40. Disembark - "to stop or go somewhere ".

"we no go disembark from this protest until Vc answer us.

**Locutionary act:** we are not leaving this protest until we get answers from the Vc.

**Illocutionary act:** we are not willing to stop this protest until the Vc comes in terms with us

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a resilient spirit and he is willing to see the protest till the very end.

41. Who goes? - This is your go- to slang for " who is that?"

"*who goes* you?"

**Locutionary act:** who is going out? or where are you going?

**Perlocutionary act:** who is that?

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels intimidated and shows a feeling of fear.

42. Groceries, floating berries, sweetener and brighten serum - That is, garri (cassava flakes), groundnut, sugar and milk. It used for connotations not to indirectly say you are getting garri, groundnut, sugar and milk.

" omor, na to run groceries, floating berries, sweetener and brighten serum o".

**Locutionary act:** To run to a store to buy groceries, floating berries, sweetener and brighten serum

**Illocutionary act:** To sip garri(cassava flakes) mixed with groundnut, sugar and milk

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of satisfaction and understands what the speaker has said without direct reference to it.

43. No evidence - when you try to convince someone and you don't have proof to prove what you are saying is true.

" dat lecturer just dey talk, no evidence ".

**Locutionary act:** The lecturer is speaking with no valid proof

**Illocutionary act:** The lecturer is speaking with no valid proof or concrete evidence to buttress his point

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of unbelief

44. Drag - To mock or humiliate someone

" see as dey drag Barcelona today".

**Locutionary act:** see the way they pulled Barcelona

**Illocutionary act:** see the way Barcelona was humiliated

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener feels sympathy or understands the subtle feeling of being humiliated.

45. Hits differently - when something hits differently, it impacts you in a way that is better than in normal circumstances.

" reading and passing all your papers without carryover hits differently".

**Locutionary act:** reading and passing all your papers is unexpected

**Illocutionary act:** reading and passing all your papers is unusual and gives a feeling of fulfillment

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener understands what it means to read and pass all papers

46. Savage - Savage is a Gen Z slang used to describe something as harsh or brutal.

" the comment the lecturer made today sounds like savage ".

**Locutionary act:** the lecturer comment shows lack of civilization

**Illocutionary act:** the comment made by the lecturer is harsh or brutal

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a sign of disgust or displeasure

47. Bombastic side eye - In social media, a bombastic side eye is a response to show you are disapproving, suspicious or sceptical of a situation or person.

" I saw the way you gave that lecturer bombastic side eye ".

**Locutionary act:** looks in a way that makes the eyes want to explode

**Illocutionary act:** stares at the lecturer in a disapproving way

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a feeling of disgust

48. Fam - Fam derived from family, is used to refer to friends, colleagues or anyone who feels like family or whom you are close to.

" How are you doing fam?"

**Locutionary act:** to know the well being of someone close

**Illocutionary act:** to know how the listener is faring or coping

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows that he is healthy or doing well

49. Ate - Nothing to do with eating but describes when someone delivers on something in a good way and can be used in a variety of contexts, like referring to someone's fashion style.

" Faculty of Arts Mr. Fresh ate and left no crumbs."

**Locutionary act:** past tense of "eat"

**Illocutionary act:** he delivered in a good way.

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener knods in support of what has been said.

50. Lowkey: A way to describe something discreetly or subtly.

"lowkey, I just wan dey on my own"

**Locutionary act:** I want to be on a low side.

**Illocutionary act:** I want to just be on my own

**Perlocutionary act:** The listener shows a sign of pity

### 4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

As seen from the analysis above, the findings revealed that there are various Language use patterns used by University of Benin Students used in the University community. A total of eight (8) settings where these Language patterns were used were discussed in the analyses above. The language use patterns of Generation Z were found to be more prevalent in hostel settings within the University of Benin and its environs. This can be attributed to the demographic composition of the hostel, where Generation Z individuals reside and frequently interact with one another. The informal setting of the hostel encourages the use of colloquialisms, slang, and other distinctive features characteristic of Generation Z's language use, facilitating discussions on various subject matters.

Another significant finding in this research is that Generation Z demonstrates an acute awareness of contextual appropriateness in their language use. Observations from the faculty car park setting revealed that Gen Z's language patterns were employed strategically, often for intimidation or to exert influence. Notably, these same patterns were not observed in more formal settings like classrooms or libraries. This distinction highlights Gen Z's ability to adapt their language use to suit the context, underscoring the importance of considering both verbal and non-verbal cues in understanding their communication styles.

The research reveals that Generation Z's distinctive language use patterns are exclusive to their demographic, rendering them incomprehensible to other generations, including Millennials. Gen Z has developed a unique communication style that is endemic to their age group. Consequently, attempting to use these patterns in interactions between Gen Z and Millennials would result in miscommunication, as the nuances and context-specific meanings would be lost. In contrast, when Gen Z individuals interact among themselves, these unique language patterns facilitate effective communication, underscoring the importance of generational context in understanding language use.

Lastly, Code-switching is a notable feature of Gen Z's communication style, as they seamlessly switch between English, slang, and Yoruba languages. This linguistic flexibility adds to the uniqueness of their communication. Notably, Yoruba is a tonal language, where the correct pronunciation of words relies heavily on tone. Mispronunciation can significantly alter the intended meaning, potentially leading to miscommunication. Gen Z's adeptness in navigating these linguistic nuances highlights their impressive communicative dexterity.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter exposes us to the summary, findings, conclusion and possibly proffer recommendations for this research.

#### 5.1 Summary

This chapter attempts to summarize the previous chapters of the study on Language use patterns of Generation z: a case study of the university of Benin as well present the findings, draw some conclusions and recommendation and suggestions for further study.

This project was designed to look into the language use patterns of Generation z: a case study of the university of Benin. The research started with the background of the study. It was noted that two major problems have been identified with the Language use patterns of Generation z , that is the shift of Generation z from their culture and language to a language used mostly on social media and Generation z seeing language as just a means of communication unlike the millennial that saw language as a means of preserving their culture

Also, the research talked about the aim and specific objectives of the study as well introduce the topic and the linguistic information of Generation z . The research looked at the statement of the research problem and the significance of the study. The method of data collection was analyzed by conducting interviews with students in university of Benin and it environ as well as sourcing existing data base from social media and entertainment to serve as aid to the research on Language use patterns of Generation z: a case study of the university of Benin.

Furthermore, the research reviewed some relevant literature on Language use patterns. The chapter was broken down into three main sub-sections, they are: conceptual review, previous study, and concern of present study after which a summary was given.

The research also focused on the theoretical framework which was to be used for the research. The theoretical framework used for the research was "Speech Act Theory" which was associated with the work of Austin, who proposed it in the 1962.

Lastly, the research analyzes and discussed the data. The analysis was drawn from the presented data. The theoretical framework which is the Speech Act Theory was used to organize and analyze the data. The findings reveals that the language use patterns of Generation z is different from those used by millennial. These language use patterns are unique to Generation z and they use it in their everyday communication and interactions. It shows that they belong to one social group.

## 5.2 Findings

### Findings in Response to Objectives

#### Objective 1: Investigate Distinctive Language Patterns of Generation Z

The analysis reveals that Generation Z's language use patterns are distinctly different. Notably, effective communication and interaction using these language patterns are largely exclusive to individuals within this social group.

#### Objective 2: Explore Language Utilization in Different Settings

This study identifies various contexts in which Generation Z utilizes their unique language patterns within the University of Benin and its surroundings. These settings include:

- Classrooms
- School hostels
- Food canteens (Buka)
- Academic registration centers (exams and records)
- Hall 2 car park (hostel)
- Exam halls

- Faculty of Arts car park

The study observes that Generation Z's language use patterns vary depending on the context. For instance, language patterns used in hostels differ from those used in car parks. Furthermore, the highest frequency of language use patterns is observed in hostels, where students reside and interact regularly.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The linguistic patterns of Generation Z are a distinctive feature of their communication style. This age group has developed a unique language use pattern that is exclusive to them, making it challenging for other generations, including Millennials, to comprehend and utilize.

Students at the University of Benin and its surrounding environment have seamlessly integrated these language use patterns into their daily lives, employing them in various settings such as classrooms, hostels, and exam halls. This shared language has fostered a sense of unity and belonging among Generation Z, empowering them to confidently identify with their social group.

Interestingly, Generation Z often borrows from languages like Yoruba to enrich their language use patterns, resulting in code-switching and code-mixing when communicating. For them, these language use patterns serve not only as a marker of identity but also as the most convenient means of communication.

The widespread use of social media platforms by Generation Z has further amplified the significance of these language use patterns. They utilize these platforms to communicate, access entertainment, and stay informed, underscoring the integral role of technology in their lives.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

Here are some recommendations for language use patterns of Generation Z, based on the case study of the University of Benin:

1. Integrate Generation Z's language use patterns into language education: Language educators should acknowledge and incorporate Generation Z's unique language patterns into their teaching methods.
2. Develop language policies that accommodate Generation Z's language use: University administrators and policymakers should consider developing language policies that recognize and support Generation Z's language use patterns.
3. Document and preserve Generation Z's language use patterns: Researchers and linguists should work to document and preserve Generation Z's language use patterns, including their slang, indigenous language usage, and code-switching practices.
4. Create language archives and databases: Institutions should establish language archives and databases to store and make accessible Generation Z's language use patterns for future research and reference.

5. Code-switching awareness: Encourage students to be aware of their code-switching habits and to use it strategically in different contexts.
6. Language pride: Promote language pride among students, encouraging them to value and take pride in their indigenous languages.
7. Multilingualism: Foster a culture of multilingualism, where students are encouraged to learn and use multiple languages, including Nigeria Languages and English.

## References

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