

A Comparative Analysis of the Linguistic Features of Selected Text Messages of Undergraduates: Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji Arakeji and Federal University of Technology, Akure, in the Context

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ABSTRACT

This work undertakes the linguistic features of selected text messages from the cellular phones of undergraduates from Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji-Arakeji, Osun State and Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, both in Nigeria. This method of communication is chosen for analysis because it is one of the cheapest mailing services every student can afford. Eighty (80) SMS text messages were collected from the cellular phones of forty (40) students from Joseph Ayo Babalola University Ikeji Arakeji and forty (40) students of Federal University of Technology, Akure. The analyses of data were guided by linguistic principles. The linguistic features like Phonology, graphology, lexis, and semantics of the text messages were identified and analyzed. The phonological analysis reveals that mother tongue interference affects the pronunciations and the writing of some sounds and so some of the sounds are replaced, deleted or represented by some other sounds depending on the tribes using the English Language. The lexical analysis reveals that the rules of structure and word formation in the English Language are broken by the respondents from the two Universities which are allowed by the nature of SMS text messages. The graphological analysis reveals that text messages in Nigeria exhibits some features of the Nigerian English which include coinages or borrowing that reflects the Nigeria socio-cultural context. The semantic analysis reveals the functions and meanings of text messages which include: invitation, information, wishes, love, prayers and inspiration and for keeping friendship to mention but a few.

Keywords: Text Messages, Phonology, lexis, semantic, graphology

INTRODUCTION

Technologies for communication have become an essential feature of both popular and commercial rhetoric about new media cultures and especially of ‘global communications’. According to Ling (2002:2), ‘Mobile phone ownership is universal and people use them constantly’. If you don’t have a mobile phone you’re effectively a non- person. Text messages often bear more resemblance to code than to standard language. A text filled with code language expressions is not necessarily accessible to an outsider (Kasesniemi et al, 2002:2). Code

languages in texting are impenetrable and exclusive to others who are not owners of such messaging and this make young people and adults to have a kind of confidence in text messaging. As with most other services and modules of functionality of the Global System of Mobile communication (GSM) no individual can claim the parenthood of SMS. It might be worthwhile to note this, since such attempt may still be seen also from people that never took part in the GSM work on SMS. The idea of adding text messaging to the services of mobile users was latent in many communities of mobile communication services at the beginning of the 1980s. Short Message Service (SMS) is a service available on most digital mobile phones (and other mobile devices, e.g. a pocket PC, or even desktop computers) that permit the sending of short messages (also known as text messages or colloquially SMSes, or even texts) between mobile phones, other handheld devices and even landline telephones. The term text messaging and its variants are more commonly used in North America, UK, and the Philippines, while most other countries prefer the term SMS. Most thought of SMS as a means to alert the individual mobile user for example an incoming voice mail, whereas others had more sophisticated applications in their minds, e.g. telemetry. However, some believe that SMS could be used as a means of sending text messages from one mobile user to another.

Some Linguistic Features in SMS Texts

In this study, we shall focus on the following aspects of linguistic features:

Phonology

Phonology is the description of the systems and patterns of sounds that occur in a language. (Ladefoged: 1975). Phonology involves studying a language to determine its distinctive sounds and to establish a set of rules that describe the set of changes that take place in these sounds when they occur in different relationships with other sounds. Windowson (1978:17), as cited in Ekundare (1993:5), and Mathews (1974:2), define phonology as a study of how sound units function within the systems of individual languages. For the purpose of this study, we will consider some phonemes and how they are used in the language of SMS text messages. At the phonological level, we will explore how some words are represented with phonetic symbols, deletion of sounds, replacement of sounds with some other sounds, and representation of sounds with letters. For example,

- (1) Replacement of letters with phonetic sounds: “leit”- “late”, “mai”- “my”, “taim”- “time” “laik”- “like”.
- (2) Deletion of sounds: “have” - “av”, “strong” - “strng”, “how” - “hw”, “lds” - “leads”.
- (3) Representation of sounds with Arabic numerals: “2” - “too”, “4rm” - “from”, “2moro” - “tomorrow”, “4lo” - “follow”.

Lexis

Under lexis, we will consider some sentence connection devices as conjunction, substitution and ellipsis.

Conjunction:

By conjunction in the present context we mean the connection of sentences into units of meaning in discourse by using coordinating conjunctions (e.g. and, or, but) or conjuncts (e.g.; however, yet) to make explicit the meaning relationship between sentences. (Aremo, 2004: 618). Conjunction makes clear a relation of concession. We have nine kinds of conjunct among which are enumerative conjunct (e.g. in the first place..., in the second place...) reinforcing conjunct (moreover), result conjunct (as a result), summative conjunct (in all), concessive conjunct (yet, in spite of that), reformulatory conjunct (rather), replacive conjunct (alternatively), antithetic conjunct (on the contrary) temporal transition conjunct (meanwhile). The conjunction 'for' indicates relationship for 'justification'. Examples are:

'For'- *'Fret not thyself becos of evil doers, for they shall soon be cut off'*

Enumerative conjunct-

(4) JABU: *"In the first place, the gift of life starts on the day u were bornay ur hopes & , in the second place, today u are making a remembrance of dis wonderful day, m aspiration be achieved in ur life time"*.

Result Conjunct :

(5) FUTA: *"Mordecai had to b blessed, as a result, the king could not sleep. For ur sake king wil b kept awake becos u have to b blessed everyday."*

Summative conjunct:

(6) FUTA: *"In all make Quran ur veego and pray as u go, make Allah ur network 4 in him, there is no network failure, talk the talk with him and he wil make u glo with pride."*

Substitution:

It is the device whereby an item is replaced by another within or across sentences, usually to avoid undesirable repetition. (Aremo 2004:623). Substitution is used for sentence connection. The substitute is referred to as pro-form. The substitute or pro-form item is always an item that can be fully interpreted only by recourse to some other items, usually an earlier item in the discourse, (Aremo 2004). e.g

(7) Sola is a nice girl

(8) She has given me many gifts

To interpret 'she' in (8) we have to refer to Sola in (7).

Pronouns substitutes:

(9) FUTA : *"Can a woman 4get her nursing child and not have compassion on the son of her womb? God would hv u know he cares 4 u. U are on his mind like a mother remember hr son. He cares."*

Above, 'God' is replaced by the pronoun 'He'

(10) JABU: *Imagine the glory of the sun., it's awesome and unspeakable, it shines 4 everyone 2 see. Ur glory will be unstoppable 4 the enemy becos u re destined to win in Jesus name."*

Above, ‘the glory of the sun’ is replaced by ‘it’

Ellipsis:

It is the omission of an item which is uniquely recoverable from the context. Ellipsis is technically referred to as “substitution by zero (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Ellipsis is the omission of certain items which are recoverable by either looking backward or forward within a text. (Olateju & Oyeleye, 2005). It is usually used to avoid repeating an item unnecessarily. While in substitution, the item is replaced by another item (the pro-form) in ellipsis it is replaced by nothing. (Arema, 2004).

For instance: (11) *The man kissed his wife and his daughter too.*

In the sentence above, it is clear that ‘kissed’, used in the first clause has been ellipted from the second clause.

Semantics

Sense relation is one of the most productive approaches to the semantic analysis of vocabulary and it lends credence to the structuralists ideas that *language is a network of systematic relationships between linguistic units*. Saussure and his followers developed a principle that:

Every linguistic item has its place in a system and its function, or value derives from the relations which it contracts with other units in the system, (Lyons, 1968:443)

Such is the idea of sense relations which means groups of lexemes are related in a sense.

Saheed (2006:54) writes that lexical relations are central to the way speakers and hearers construct meaning. Generally, there are two kinds of semantics relation: one deals with semantic structure, that is, the relationships that hold between lexical items (sense), e.g. (‘narrow’/‘wide’, ‘dead’/‘alive’,). From these lexical items, we find out that there is a sense in which they relate (Palmer, 1996:40), while the other kind of semantic relation deals with meaning in terms of experience outside language. This is the concern of Referential Theory of Meaning. In this study, we are considering meanings inferred from text messages by their readers.

Graphology

This level deals with the way and pattern of putting graphic symbols on paper to encode meaning. These include capital letters, punctuations, abbreviations and the pronoun ‘I’.

Capital letters: They are a form of punctuation in that they help guide the eye and mind through a text. They are used at the beginning of sentences, after full stops, question or exclamation marks and for first word in direct speech. They are used to specify proper names and the pronoun I. (Olateju & Oyeleye 2005: 281)

The Full Stop (.): This is used to cut off a sentence at the required length. Olateju and Oyeleye state that ‘the period denotes the longest pause in the course of reading. It is used to complete sentence which is not a question or an exclamation.

The Comma (,): This is the most frequently used of all the punctuation signs. It is used for marking out items, for marking out the end of the first two clauses linked by a coordinator in a compound or compound-complex sentence, particularly when the coordinator is ‘but’.

Analysis and Findings

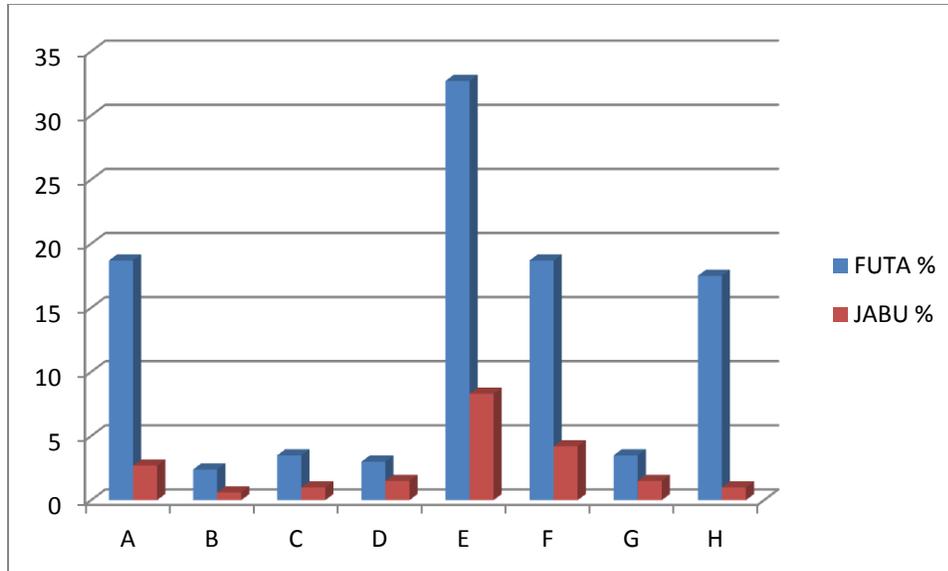
Phonological Analysis

Phonology involves studying a language to determine its distinctive sounds and to establish a set of rules that describe the set of changes that take place in these sounds. It is also the study of how sounds units function within the systems of individual languages. This is seen in the table below:

Phonological Table

Items Analyzed	FUTA %	JABU %
Replacement of Voiced dental fricative	18.7%	16%
Deletion of initial glottal sound /h/	2.4%	3%
Replacement of voiceless dental fricative	3.5%	2.5%
Replacement of letters with phonetic symbols	3.0%	4.5%
Using letters to represent sounds	32.7%	41%
Deletion of vowels	18.7%	14.5%
Replacement of ‘ing’ with velar stop /g/	3.5%	20%
Using figures to represent sounds	17.5%	16.5%

Phonological Figure



A- Replacement of voiced dental fricative /ð / with /d/

B- Deletion of initial glottal sound /h/.

C- Replacement of voiceless dental fricative

D- Replacement of letters with phonetic sounds

E- Representation of phonetic sounds by letters

F- Deletion of vowels

G- Replacement of the velar stop /ŋ / with ‘g’

H- Replacement of phonetic sounds with figures

Replacement of voiced dental fricative / ð / with /d/ as in ‘then’ and ‘den’ and voiceless dental fricative /θ/ with /t/ as in ‘thin’ and ‘tin’

Replacement of voiced dental fricative / ð / with /d/, we observe that undergraduates from the two universities replaced the voiced dental fricative ð / with /d/ and the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ with /t / in their text messages. This might be due to two factors namely: phonological and social factors.

Phonologically, the phonetic environment of /ð/and /d/, and /θ/ and /t / are the same. The places of articulation are different. /ð/ is replaced with /d/ and /θ/ is replaced with / t/ because of the affinity in their pronunciations. For the production of the voiced dental fricative /ð/, the tip of the tongue comes between the upper and the lower teeth, so, it is for the production of the voiceless

counterpart /ə/. For the production of /t/ and /d/ sounds, the tip of the tongue articulates with the upper and the lower teeth put together, /t/ is voiceless and /d/ is voiced. Hence, we can say that because /ð/ and /d/ are both voiced and /ə/ and /t/ are voiceless cause the replacement of one for the other. This has not got any negative effect or implication on SMS usage because SMS is a written text and not speech where phonology is important. Generally, out of all language skills as in listening, speaking, reading and writing, it is only the speaking skill that is affected phonologically.

Socially, the first language interference is another factor that can cause the replacement. The voiced dental fricative /ð/ and the voiceless counterpart /θ/ are absent in most Nigerian languages and so people substitute the two sounds with the available ones in their mother tongue.

In spite of the fact that in speech, many people in Nigeria do not pronounce the initial glottal sound /h/, they write it in their text messages. The data shows that JABU undergraduates' percentage usage was 3% and FUTA undergraduates' was 2.4%. Here, we observe that both universities undergraduates delete the initial glottal sound /h/. Though some tribes in Nigeria, when speaking, do pronounce this sound, but those having Yoruba as their first language, delete the sound when speaking. This might be one of the reasons why we have many of the respondents deleting the glottal sound /h/ in their SMS text messages. Brevity might be another factor for this.

Replacement of letters with phonetic sounds

Here, texters use the vowels and diphthongs to replace some letters as in 'soprais', for 'surprise', 'laif' for 'life' e.t.c.. We discover that FUTA's percentage usage of replacement of letters with phonetic sounds was lesser than that of JABU undergraduates. FUTA's percentage usage was 3.0% and JABU's percentage usage was 4.5%. The result shows that both universities undergraduates' use phonetic sounds to replace letters of the alphabet in other to utilize minimum space or for economy.

Replacement of phonetic sounds with figures

Texters replace phonetic sounds with figures as in '4' for 'for', '2' for 'too', '4get' for 'forget' e.t.c, FUTA percentage usage was 17.5% and JABU's percentage usage was 16.5%. This can be due to the fact that most users use figures to represent sounds because of minimum space on the handset.

Representation of phonetic sounds by letters

For using letters to represent phonetic sounds as in 'u' for 'you', 'n' for 'and' e.t.c FUTA's percentage usage was 32.7% while JABU's percentage usage was 41%. It is discovered that both universities undergraduates use letters to represent sounds due to brevity, as texters want to be as brief as possible when texting.

Deletion of vowels

For deletion of vowels as in ‘lds’ for ‘leads’, ‘stry’ for story, ‘dy’ for ‘day’, FUTA undergraduates’ percentage usage was 18.7% and JABU undergraduates’ percentage usage was 14.5%. The results show that FUTA undergraduates delete vowels more than JABU undergraduates.

Replacement of the velar stop / ŋ / with ‘g’

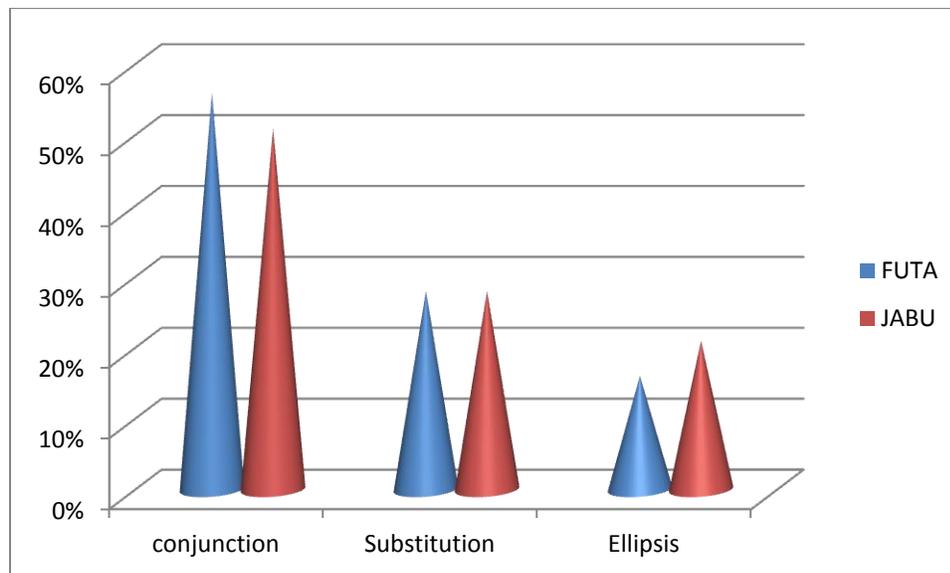
The last item considered was the replacement of the velar stop / ŋ / with ‘g’. The velar stop is actually represented by ‘ing’ in words as in ‘understandg’ instead of ‘understanding’, ‘blessg’ instead of ‘blessing’, ‘comg’ instead of ‘coming’. The percentage usage by FUTA undergraduates was 3.5% and JABU undergraduates’ percentage usage was 2.0%. This might also be due to economy of words.

Lexical Analysis

Lexical Table

	FUTA	JABU
conjunction	56%	51%
Substitution	28%	28%
Ellipsis	16%	21%

Lexical Figure



On the use of conjunctions in the data collected, FUTA undergraduates’ percentage usage was 56% and JABU undergraduates’ percentage usage was 51%. In the use of substitution, we discovered that FUTA students’ percentage usage was 28% and JABU students’ percentage usage was 28%. Ellipsis, which is the third item analyzed under lexical analysis, FUTA students’ percentage usage was 16% and JABU students’ percentage usage was 21%.

From the above result, the first observation is that we have many linguistic features that SMS messages writers have used to break the rules of structure and word formation in the English Language, e.g Awonusi (2004) and Chilwa (2008).

The most striking discovery which emerges however, under lexical analysis is that text messages exhibit features distinct from all other discourse types. For instance, presupposition is a feature of discourse and not found in SMS messages. Grice (1975) cooperative principle (implicatures) and inference are features in discourse and are also not found in SMS messages.

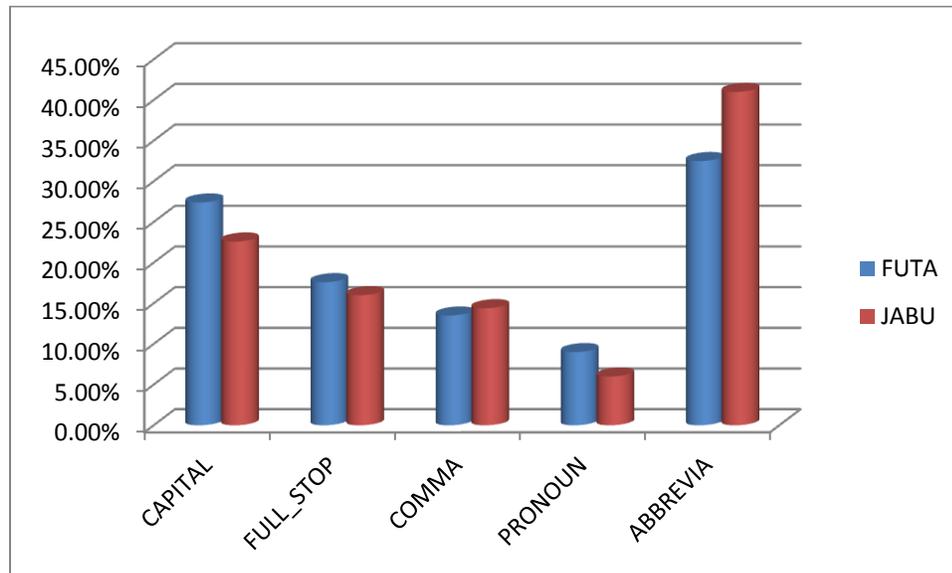
In a nut shell, lexical analysis show that undergraduates in the two Universities use connective devices adequately and as at when needed. It also reveals that rules of structure and word formation are broken.

Graphological Analysis

Graphological Table

	CAPITAL	FULL_STOP	COMMA	PRONOUN	ABBREVIA
FUTA	27.40%	17.60%	13.50%	9%	32.50%
JABU	22.60%	16%	14.40%	6%	41%

Graphological Figure



On the usage of capital letters, the data shows that FUTA students' percentage usage was 27.4% and JABU students' percentage usage was 22.6%. This result shows that everyone wants to communicate meaning.

In the use of punctuations: Full Stop- in the use of full stops, FUTA students' percentage usage was 17.6% and JABU students' percentage usage was 16%. In the use of comma, FUTA students' percentage usage was 13.5% and JABU students' percentage usage was 14.4%. The results here show that all the respondents from the two universities want to be clear and precise in their messages so as to be easily understood as punctuation are significant for meaning.

In the use of the pronoun 'I', FUTA students' percentage usage was 9% and for JABU, it is 6%. The difference was 3%. The result shows that the percentage difference was small. This might be due to the tendency of 'ego' found in individuals.

In the use of abbreviations which are used to maximize the space by the frequent use of incomplete sentences, condensed expressions, letter/number homophones and non-conventional spellings, FUTA students' percentage usage was 32.5% and JABU students' percentage usage was 41%. This result might be due to space on cellphones, brevity and speed.

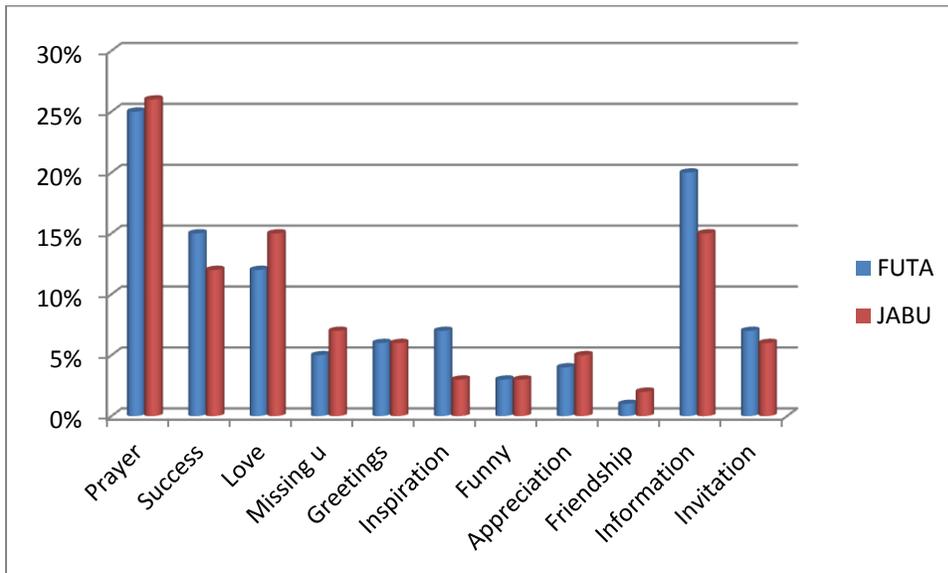
In conclusion, text messages in Nigeria exhibit features of Nigeria English especially lexical items, coinages or borrowing that reflect the Nigerian socio-cultural context. Generally, messages have various ways of alleviating people's problems of mailing. SMS is a cheap and fast mailing system of passing information from one person to the other and from one place to the other. This makes it useful to the old and young, educated and semi-literate.

Semantic Analysis

Semantic Table

Items Analyzed	FUTA	JABU
Prayer	25%	26%
Success	15%	12%
Love	12%	15%
Missing u	5%	7%
Greetings	6%	6%
Inspirational	7%	3%
Funny	3%	3%
Appreciation	4%	5%
Friendship	1%	2%
Information	20%	15%
Invitation	7%	6%

Semantic figure



Here, we take a look at the meanings and functions of the texts investigated. The functions of the texts include prayers, success wishes, love and affection, greetings, humour, inspiration, appreciation, friendship, information and invitation. Above are the table and the figure for analysis of these types of texts collected from the two Universities.

Prayer-Based Texts

JABU: May all the promises of God for u be fulfilled, may his mercies be upon u in all ur endeavours dis yr. As u’ve entered into ur yr of breakthrough & abundant blessing.

JABU: As another wonderful yr of fulfillment, accomplishment & dream come true has ended. Once more in ur beautiful life & yet another new & expectant year has just began. May God perfect ur life. May all opportunity lost in the previous years be abundantly regained in dis year of ur life, may everything u lay hands on prosper.

FUTA: O Allah, touch d people I care for with your mercy. Keep them safe and happy remind them of your love. Guide and bless them greatly, especially the one reading this message.

FUTA: Omniscience God be at ur sides. U wil never encounter memory failure and ur cyber will never be down in Jesus name.

The above are some of the texts that are prayer based collected from the two universities. The analysis shows that FUTA’s percentage usage of prayer based texts was 25% and JABU’s percentage usage was 26%. This result shows that prayer is a universal thing and a practice by all religion.

Success-Based Texts

These texts depict success wishes.

JABU: As kings don't beg to rule, Prince [six] don't beg for honour, a lion doesn't beg its prey for food, u will never beg to succeed in life in Jesus name.

JABU: D higher u go, Geography claims d cooler it becomes, even as u go a semester higher may u find ur academic work easier and at d end excel in flying colours. Amen.

FUTA: With I heart.....

5 litres of blood

206 bones.....

5.6 millions red blood cell.....

60 trillions DNA's.....

I wish u all d best in ur exams. See u on Sunday.

FUTA: I can hear drums of uncommon success and record breaking excellence. Alas, the chorus is chantin ur name! Are u ready to dance? It's ur turn to excel. All the best in ur exams.

The result shows that FUTA's percentage usage was 15% and JABU's percentage usage was 12%. The result shows that success is also a universal phenomenon that those who love one wish one.

Love-Based Texts

These are texts sent by lovers to loved ones to express their minds and feelings to one another. Some of the examples from the texts collected are:

JABU: I really ur luv nd care 2wards me, u r in a position that without u ma dream come thru, no I cn eva take ur place in ma life cos u r irreplaceable. Lv u so much.

JABU: Anytime I remember u ar a caring, handsome, charming nd lovin hobby, I fl so hapi, u mn d wl world 2 me, ma ndls lv, no I can take me away frm u, u r d bst, ma luv 4 u is real.

FUTA: Adam and Eve ate luv, Romeo & Juliet made love, Julius Ceaser fought 4 luv, while Samson die 4 luv, Valentine also did, what can you do to reciprocate my lov.

FUTA: Love is blind bcos it cannot see the imperfection of its partners. And love can see bcos it can only love one person perfectly at a particular time.

FUTA's percentage usage was 12% and 15% was percentage usage for JABU. This result shows that everyone wants to be loved and cared for and that youths take love affairs very seriously that they devote much time on it.

Affection-Based Texts

Affection-based texts are texts written to show or express care and affection at the levels of missing one another. Some examples from the texts are:

JABU: Emptiness isn't loneliness; it's the missing of you.

JABU: After a year of having to live without u. I ‘ve realized, I lost me when I lost u: I miss u, I don’t miss u & u alone, I miss u & m together.

FUTA: The sun rises in the sky with the warmest smile, he wishes u a good morning, hoping dt u have d perfect day. Take care and missed u.

FUTA: Thousands of pages of SMS cn eva b enf 2 express ma lv 4 u, out of a thousand of girls u choose me nd made me proud, 4 eva wil I lv nd aprct u ma prince. Miss U too.

The percentage usage for FUTA is 5% while for JABU, it is 2%. The difference on this between the two universities is not much. This may be as a result of sustenance of relationships since affectionate texts are written to express the depth of one’s love to the other and for assuring the parties in love.

Greetings-Based Texts

Greetings texts are the texts sent to exchange greetings with friends and relations. These are written at any season of the year, Just to say hello

JABU: As the dew falls upon all weeds without apologies so shall the Lord honour u without seeking ur permission. Merry Xmas.

JABU: There is a master key dat opens all doors and gates. Take it along as u journey this new month. Remain blessed.

FUTA: Wishing u the merriest Xmas n the happiest new year 2, noI deserves it any more than a wonderful person like u.

FUTA: I painted a beautiful picture of u this murnin and I coloured u brightly 2 match d brightness of ur tomorrow. So go ahead and shine. Av a nice evening

Under this, FUTA percentage usage was 6% and JABU’s percentage usage was 6%. The result here shows that there is no difference in the percentage usage of the two universities. This might be because greeting is part of Nigerian’s culture and most of the time it is done to inquire of people’s condition or state of being.

Inspirational –Based Texts

Inspirational texts are texts written to gear up souls that are down to encourage and to counsel.

JABU: Our business in life isn’t to get ahead of odas but to get ahead of ourselves to break our records, to outstrip our yesterday by our today, so change from yesterday.

JABU: Fret not thyself becos of evildoers, for dey shall soon be cut down like the grass & wither as the green herb bcos u have trust in the Lord.

FUTA: Remember dat young Jewis lad with 2 fish & 5 loaves, then realize worth of dat little ting in ur hands, let ur faith take u somewhere.

FUTA: Each dy carries a gift, wat u do daily is a future story, learn from yesterday, liv for 2day & dream of 2moro bliv me, u ‘ill get the best of 2dy, Jesus cares 4 u.

Here, FUTA’s percentage usage was 7% and JABU’s percentage usage was 3%.

Funny/Humorous Texts

Funny or humorous text messages are also examined. These are texts that gladden the heart of the receiver. These texts make the receivers to laugh or smile on impulse.

JABU: Ah I forgot ur name, can I call u mine? And in case u forget my name too, call me urs.

JABU: Who do u tnk u're so important dt I can't do without u, now listen & listen good, if u tnk I miss you or kia about u, u're absolutely rite

FUTA: When I saw ur eyes, the shape of ur lips, the way u smile..., the colour of your ur teeth & and the figure of ur body, I found out that a famous saying is really true! Nobody's perfect!

FUTA: I'm so angry that u of all people could keep such a big secret 4 me, I thought we are friends, imagine, it is sumbody else who told me dat condom is now 50k.

Under this, FUTA undergraduate percentage usage was 3% while JABU undergraduate's percentage usage was 3%. This result shows that there was no difference in the percentage usage of the universities undergraduates. This may be due to the fact that funny texts are for relaxation and make people laugh and ease out tension.

Texts of Appreciation

Texters also text to show appreciation to whoever deserves it, this may be to appreciate one's beauty or what one has done. Some examples from the collected texts are:

JABU: I was thinking of those who make yr 2013 meaningful 2 me who else should I acknowledge if not u? Thanks.

JABU: Beautiful for my text mates. Blessed are u who send a smile, a hug, a laugh, a thought to inspire & lift me out of my blue moods. Blessed are u who texts God's speeches to me, blessed are u, u let me know I'm not alone. Thank u 4 being part of my life.

FUTA: Three reasons why I text u, u make me feel welcome (I assume). I make u smile (I guess). U think I'm cute (I'm sure).

FUTA: Some day, if u're thinking of the people who made u smile I hope my name would come up on ur list. I may be last but at least I did something to make u smile. I appreciate u dear. Good mornng.

The result here shows that FUTA's percentage usage was 4% while JABU's undergraduate's percentage usage was 5%. The result shows that appreciation texts percentage usage was at the same level by the two universities. This might be because appreciation is a moral issue and since the setting is an academic environment where we have people that understand what it means to be appreciative.

Texts of Relationship/ Friendship

Texts depicting friendship were examined. These are texts explaining what friendship is, what it entails, how those that are engaged in it feel and the gains in friendship. Some examples from the collected texts are:

JABU: Friendship is a collection of hrts ready 2 give, share n understand. It neva fades nor ends. It only reminds us dt life is nt perfect without a friend like u. Thanks for ur text.

JABU: Friendship is vast like universe, deep like ocean, high like sky, strong like iron, kind like mother, cute like me & sweet like u.

FUTA: A friend is like a book dt has to be read to appreciate its beauty. As such, u're one of the finest book eva written. How I wish u could be reprinted.

FUTA: A single candle cn illuminate an entire room. A true friend lights up an entire life taim, thanks for the bright light of your friendship.

Here, FUTA's undergraduates' percentage usage was 1% and JABU's percentage usage was 2%. The difference here is very small; this might be because every human being has the tendency of engaging in one relationship or the other. In other words, human beings are social being and SMS is the cheapest and the fastest means to pass information to maintain relationship.

Information Texts

Texts are often written to pass information to people. Information giving texts are those texts written to give information on the happenings around the writers and the receivers of such texts. Some texts belonging to this category are:

JABU: U better go n submit dat man assaiment bcos once it is 8.30am he will not collect it again.

JABU: Tunde, can u remember I told u dat Yetunde will still fuck up? At last she has. See u for full story.

FUTA: AY I am sorry I won't be able 2 return ur notebook 2night, I will bring it 2 class 2moro mornng, tanx.

FUTA: Anty, if u are chanced dis wkend try 2 come home becos Baba is somehow sick.

The result here shows, FUTA's undergraduates' percentage usage was 20% and JABU's percentage usage was 15% and the difference was 5%. From the data, it was discovered that, in most of the informative texts, change of lecture halls, change in examination venue, change in time tables, change in lecture hours or time are often expressed.

Invitation Texts

Texts are also used for invitation to meetings, ceremonies and programmes. Invitation texts are also written as reminders of meetings, ceremonies and programmes. Some of such texts are:

JABU: Akoko-Edo students hold their meeting at Oba Oladele Olosore Auditorium, on Sunday, 1st September, 2013 by 3.30-5pm. Pls we are sorry 4 time scheduled.

JABU: Hello sir, thank u 4 your interest in bee-keeping, we want 2 inform u dat d training starts dis Sat at the Chemistry Lab, pls submit ur form b4 wed 6th same ven.

FUTA: New life supt. meeting is holding this frid. 11th August, FAHEDI 3pm we enjoian all members to be around. Let's come with d envelopes nd d money collected thanks. FAHEDI

FUTA: Ecclesiastic greeting to u. How are things generally? By God's grace, Re-union 2013 tagged "Complete Sight" II kings 6:7 holds on Sept. 26-28, 2013. Reg. fees: single 500, couple 900. Incessant holiday has deeply affected us.

Under this, the percentage usage of FUTA undergraduates was 7%, while that of JABU students was 6% and the difference was 1%. This shows that it is a common thing that undergraduates in both universities use SMS for invitation.

As a way of rounding off my discussion on semantic /functional analysis, we observe that Palmer (1996) supports Grice cooperative principle that, most of the SMS are as informative as possible (quantity maxim). Most of the SMS are relevant, clear, not ambiguous, brief and orderly (manner maxim).

Results and Summary

The phonological analysis reveals that mother tongue interference affects the pronunciations and the writing of some sounds and so some of the sounds are replaced, deleted or represented by some other sounds depending on the tribes using the English Language. The lexical analysis reveals that the rules of structure and word formation in the English Language are broken by the respondents from the two Universities which are allowed by the nature of SMS text messages. The graphological analysis reveals that text messages in Nigeria exhibits features of Nigerian English which include coinages or borrowing that reflect the Nigeria socio-cultural context. The semantic analysis reveals the functions and meanings of text messages which include: invitation, information, wishes, love, and prayer and for keeping friendship to mention but a few.

Recommendations

There would always be area(s) that need to be looked into in language study. Language is used for diverse purposes and is functionally dynamic, thus new ideas are bound to come forth. Although this study examined some linguistic features in some selected text messages, it will be interesting to do further research work into rank-shifting of clauses in text messages as this will shed more light on functional roles of textual organization as a determiner of speaker's or writer's intention.

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