



SPELLINGS, PRONUNCIATION AND CMC: A STUDY OF SELECTED NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTION ASPIRANTS' FACEBOOK GROUP POSTS

Festus Moses Onipede and Victoria Oluwakemi Olofin

Department of English, University of Lagos, Akoka.

ABSTRACT: *This paper examines the linguistic features of spelling and pronunciation of Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants' facebook group posts. The features of the spelling and pronunciation are analysed based on phonetic spellings, colloquial spellings, prosodic spellings, and homophone spellings. It uses Herring's (2004) theoretical framework. The data were gathered from different facebook groups of different tertiary institutions (Polytechnics and Universities). The findings showed that the aspirants used different styles of spellings and pronunciation, which could not be found in their mother tongue (MT) or English Language. And the causes of nonstandard spellings and pronunciation are mother tongue interference, aspirant's individualistic style of writing variation and creativity, which feature under phonetic spellings, colloquial spellings (phaeresis, syncope, apocope, acronyms), prosodic spellings, absence/presence of contraction, epenthesis (prosthesis), homophone spellings, phonological spellings, and metathesis.*

KEYWORD: CMDA, Phonetics, Pronunciation, Metathesis, Homophone, Epenthesis, Phaeresis, Aspirants, Tertiary Institution.

INTRODUCTION

Facebook as one of social media platforms, has been a useful channel or medium for dissemination of information. It is a widely used medium of communication between two people or among a group of people. 73% of Nigerian active internet users are active on facebook (Opeibi, 2015: 213). The chatting-spirits of Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants call for attention because they are expected to display some level of competences in the cyber space. The features of the posts of these aspirants can either be termed standard or non-standard because of unstable styles that are linked with computer-mediated communication (henceforth, CMC). This is evident in Crystal (2006: 244) when he argues that the language of the web is difficult because it 'falls uneasily between standard and non-standard. Moreover, the spelling and pronunciation of each word posted by each aspirant on the group chat have different linguistic features - spelling and pronunciation that cannot be linked to either the source language (SL) or target language (TL). For example, a Yoruba-English speaker, who uses spelling and pronunciation that do not belong to either Yoruba or English. The Yoruba name 'omofoso' is spelled 'Hormorforshor' in English. This occurs as a result of using the phonemes of English for Yoruba spelling of the MT, most especially Yoruba names. Mispronunciation at times makes these aspirants to have wrong spellings. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to identify individual cyber spellings and their pronunciations.



LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Plethora of researches have been carried out on the features of CMC. The research includes Jone, L's (2010) 'Language change in progress: Evidence from spelling in CMC. He examined the relationship between spelling systems and CMC, and he concluded that language use in CMC is a partly-isolated linguistic variety, whose frequency of non-standard forms may indicate a future orthographic revolution in a non-computer-mediated communication context. Florence, M, et al (2016) in their paper titled: "Language and Technology: Linguistic features of facebook in Kenya" concluded that Kenya facebook users used conventional internet language including non-standard English, acronyms, emoticons, lengthening practice, which varied in form and frequency. In 2004, Ojo submits that two or more foreign phonemes become one native phone that is entirely different from the input when processed in the recipient language. Again, Samina Dazdarevic (2013) emphasized the standard of English spelling, likewise Scraggy (1974) worked on printing press and its effects upon spellings and individual's social standing. None of these previous researches have examined the spelling and pronunciation of tertiary institution facebook posts in Nigeria context.

Computer-Mediated Communication

Computer-mediated communication has brought some linguistic features as the technologies advance, and it has made the users to develop some kinds of behaviours in term of texting. CMC is now made to be text-based human to human interaction mediated by networked computers or mobile telephone (Herring, 2007). It does not only feature mobile telephone, but is graphic-based (that is, smileys, emoticons and other graphics in CMC).

In order to analyse CMC texts, Herring (2001) applied Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CMDA) as methods adapted from language-focused disciplines such as linguistics, communication and rhetoric to the analysis of CMC. CMDA views online behaviours through the perspectives of language, and its interpretations are based on the sensitive observations about language and language use. When people engage in synchronous or asynchronous communication, there are some linguistic features that set in. These could be on the micro-level linguistic phenomena such as online word-formation processes (Cherny, 1999), lexical choice (Ko, 1996, Yales, 1996), sentence structure (Herring, 1998), and language switching among bilingual speakers (Georgakopoulou, 2001), and community (Cherny, 1999).

The basic objective of discourse analysis is to identify patterns or structure in discourse that are obviously present to the observer or to the discourse participants (Herring, 2001). Using Herring's (2004) third CMDA assumption about online communication, it is obvious that the communication among Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants feature spelling and pronunciation that are unconventional and individualistic when compared to the use of English in Nigerian context. At this juncture, it is our duty to examine the aspirants' cyber spelling and pronunciation behaviours, because computer-mediated discourse may be, but is not inevitably shaped by the technological features of CMC systems (Herring, u.c.).

Facebook Page/Group

Facebook makes it easier for students from different parts of the world to share their posts and have responses from the readers. In Nigeria today, it is easier for students seeking admission into tertiary institutions to make enquiries from the group members. This corroborates with the view of Bodomo (2010), "Facebook, the new CMC medium [has] become one of the most



popular websites... its popularity has increased so much so that not only the youth but some prominent members of oldest generations... use it to get in touch with customer, constituents (p. 316)."

The facebook group depends on the aspirant's chosen institutions- be it polytechnic or university. What an aspirant of any chosen tertiary institution needs, is to send a request to the group or like the page that matches his/her choice. After an aspirant had been added to the page/group, he/she can start posting on a thread. On this note, we need to ask whether the spelling and pronunciation of these posts are standard or non-standard. It was claimed by Danet and Herring (2003) that the early planners of the internet were generally Americans and their focus was to facilitate communication in English. As noted by Danet and Herring above, the thought of American cannot be achieved in a foreign country where English language is not the speakers MT. When a language travels, there is a tendency for varieties as a result of contact between foreign language and the mother tongue; this occurs especially when there is a contact between English language and any of the three predominant Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba). In terms of CMC, there are varieties of spellings and pronunciations that feature in the facebook posts of Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants.

The spelling and pronunciation of Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants call for attention in the cyberspace, because there is no one-to-one correspondence between the alphabets and the phonemes. This is against Roach (1991: 3) who claims that it is important to learn to think of English pronunciation in terms of phonemes rather than letters of alphabet. It has also been observed by some sociolinguists that the language of youth on internet include heavy use of vernacular, preference for local varieties, fondness of slang, heavy use of taboo words and modifications, clipping and syllable re-ordering (Romaine 1984, Eckert 1997, Androutsopoulos and Georgakopoulou, 2003).

Spelling and Pronunciation

Spelling is the act of forming words correctly from the letters or alphabet of any language. Pronunciation deals with the ways or rules in which the word or sound of a particular language is pronounced. Spelling according to Samina Dazdarevic (2013), cited in Gove (1991), is the art and technique of forming words by letters according to accepted usage or standard spelling as formulated by language planners. Gove's definition of spelling cannot be contextualized to CMC domain because of standardization. Thus, spelling can be defined as an individualistic style of forming words by letters which may or may not conform to standard usage. For instance, there are some Yoruba-English speakers that spell their names as: Horlardayor (Oladayo), Horlamyposi (Olamiposi), Horyindamollar (Oyindamola), Hiniholuwa (Inioluwa), Holluwadharmylorlar (Oluwadamilola), Horlarmedey (Olamide), etc. It should be noted thattrewq the names above do not relate to either Yoruba or English spelling. We can only make sense of these words when pronouncing some of them. Although some researches have been carried out to analyse the online spellings of words (Florence et al, 2016; Freiart, 2007; Smith and Schmidt, 1996), but none of these researches explore the spelling and pronunciation features of Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants' posts. Apart from phonetic, colloquial, homophone, phonological and prosodic spellings, there are other features that this paper will examine. The features are epenthesis, contractions, phaearesis, syncope, prosthesis and metathesis.



Phonological Spellings

They are texts or words in which words are presented in a way which closely resemble pronunciation. Words are also written using phonology spelling without reflecting any shortening, e.g, 'dei' for 'dey', 'wen wil u tel her?' for 'when will you tell her?' It is also called **phonological approximation** (Freiert, 2007: 104).

Colloquial Spelling/Contraction

Colloquial spellings deal with the omission of consonant at word initial position (**phaeresis**, e.g, I'm for I am, I'd for I had, I've for I have) or omission at final position (**apocope**, e.g, 'meetin' for meeting, 'goin' for going, 'waitin' for waiting, 'b day' for birthday, 'las born' for last born.) (Salami et al, 2000: 33).

b. Reduction or Omission of Vowel in Spelling. E.g, 'tk' for 'thank', 'frnd' for 'friend', 'pple' for 'people', 'hw' for 'how', 'brk' for 'break.' This is also applicable to abbreviations.

c. Prosodic Spelling: It involves:

(i) Lengthening practice, e.g, 'Hahahaha Great', 'halehalehaleluyah,'

(ii) Capitalisation/ Uppercase, e.g, 'PRAISE JAH!', 'GOOD MORNING,'

(iii) Acronyms: The initial letters of a word is used to form words. E.g, OYO- on your own, OMG- oh my God! LOL- laughing out loud.

Some of these acronyms may have words that contain consonant-vowel structure which is called **exclusive consonants**. For examples: my, fry, sky, pry, dry, why, etc. (Bodomo, 2009: 124).

Homophone Spellings: These involve the pronounceable letters to fill for words based on the resemblance in pronunciation. E.g, 'u' for 'you', 'b' for 'be' or pronounceable numerals that could be pronounced as words or parts of words. For examples: '2mao' for 'tomorrow', 'b4' for 'before', 'aprc8' for 'appreciate', 'h8t' for 'hate', etc.

Epenthesis: This refers to the addition of new segment in an unoccupied position in a morpheme or a word. (Salami et al, 2000: 33). Epenthesis can be **prosthesis** or **anaptyxis**. Prosthesis occurs at the initial position when a segment is inserted. For example, Yoruba-English speakers do insert /h/ at the initial segment of a word before vowels as in 'Holuwartobi', 'Haryormide', 'Homowunmy', 'Horkanlawon', 'all of us' as 'hall of hus' /hl f hs/. The process of inserting /h/ in an h-less words is what Awonusi (2009) called **H-insertion**.

Anaptyx occurs when there is insertion of a vowel between two consonants. This is evident in Yoruba words of English origin with Yoruba influence. E.g, 'doctor' is pronounced as 'dokita', 'sprite' as 'sipiraiti', 'bread' as 'buredi.'

Metathesis: This is the process in which neighbouring speech sounds change places in their chain of speech. E.g, 'aks' for 'ask', 'sumbit' for 'submit.'

Phonetic Spellings: These make use of the representations of standard pronunciation not covered by standard orthography. E.g, 'gud' for 'good', 'dem' for 'them', 'wuz' for 'was', 'cum' for 'come', 'wit' for 'with', etc.



METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were extracted from eleven online facebook groups of 2018/19 tertiary institution aspirants in Nigeria. The researchers sent a request to different groups in order to get their data. The main equipment used were computer and smartphones with internet connection. After extracting the data, we grouped the posts that contain the linguistic features. P stands for post. The data were extracted from the following groups:

1. Federal Polytechnic, Oko Students and Aspirants Forum 2018/19
2. UNIBEN Student/Aspirants Zone
3. Lagos State University Aspirants 2018/19 Group
4. Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro (FPI) Aspirants 2018/19
5. UI Ibadan 2018/19 Aspirants
6. Bayero University (BUK) 2018/19 Aspirants Forum
7. Federal University Oye Ekiti (FUOYE) 2018/19 Real Aspirants Group Chat
8. UNILAG Aspirants 2018/19
9. OAU Great Ife Students and Aspirants Platform (PUTME EXAM PREP)
10. LASPOTTECH Aspirants 2018/19
11. FUNAAB Aspirants 2018/19

These forums serve as social media platforms for discussing admission information.

DATA PRESENTATION

The Data for these Analyses are Presented thus:

P1. lets create a messenger chat **4 UI** aspirants. If you're interested **nd u** will be added to **d** group

P2. **pls**, I can't log into UI portal

P3. **wat** is **ur** browser say**ING**?

P4. Noo, it is **4** everybody, hurry and **d urz b4 D** portal is closed down

P5. Economics aspirants **shud** say hi

P6. **pls** show me **hw u** solve it oo

P7. **lolz** is it **dat** nobody **knws** it

P8. **pls 4wd** to my whatsapp



P9. **pls wen** is our exam date oo

P10. you go to computer, **u** login **ur jamb** registration, it will bring **ur** profile showing all **ur** details- **av u** pay in

bank, e-transact, move slowly down **d** slip **u** print out, **u wi** see **d** date of **ur** exam and **d** batch

P11. **bro**, **av u** seen **urs**

P12. **Motunrhayor Shekhynart: dis z mai no**

P13. they **sed** it next week **buh** I never know **d** particular date

P14. **gud** luck to all the **UI** aspirants maybe **2moro** or next we may start receiving our date and time for the post **utme**

P15. how did **u** pay **4k+**?

P16. **pls** house, **wat z dt** cutoff mark for **dz** course

P17. **Horlamedey**: hope its not more than **dat**

P18. **pls** I did **coi nd** it **hasnt** reflected. **wat** can I do

P19. **tanx 4 dis** information

P20. how **wud dey** admit 14 students only **2** study medicine **nd** surgery last **yr**. **u** are **nt** sure days correct

P21. **Omopholakemie**: hi **rumz**, **wen wil** unilorin finish **deir cbt** exam

P22. **Hormowunmi**: **pls wat zd** cutoff mark **4** industrial Chemistry

P23. **Deybizzy Rokkybee**: is it **d** fulltime or **pt** aspirant

P24. **Adebayor**: **pls wah r** we **goin** to login?

P25. **Holuwartobi Fartunkenzee**: log in **2 d** portal

P26. **Mhiz Dammy**: I **konkor** with **dem**

P27. **Horlamyposi**: **jst** give us **d info**

P28. **wat z** tears of joy? tears of joy is **wen** a car hit **u nd u** saw dangote **cuming** out of **dey** car

P29. **Hardura**: **pls ouse**, **wic** kind cloth can we wear on **d** exam day

P30. **c lyf**...registration suppose to close yesterday

P31. **Hiniholuwa Hester**: **m tru wt mai** registration

P32. **Dahrahsihmih**: I will also **b dere**

P33. **Psalmard**: **wen z d** post **utme**?



P34. **nop**, I'm an **OND** holder in that field as well...I had to rewrite **jamb**

P35. **u** can **trek** it **nt** far

P36. **pls** after **calculatn** my aggregate point if I **didnt** get up to the aggregate point for my aspired course will **unilag** consider me for **anoda** course?

P37. **Hirmahhnuel**: it's out o... I just checked mine now... comment **lemme** check for **u**

P38. where did **u** check and how sef

P39. **pls wat d** minimum post **utme** score **bfore** one can be considered for **admisn**

P40. God I **thnk u** for **dis wan**

P41. **serzly**, **how'd** u check. And **wat** did **u** score

P42. please if **u** log out and **u** didn't **sumbit** will **u** see **ur** result

P43. thank **u nd u** too goodluck

P44. **Oluwateemelehyn**: **pls WATS** the cutoff for **MLS dis** year

P45. **pls frnds** I **ave** a problem concerning my screening **cox** I did change of **cos** in **d** school portal and after **d** whole process is telling me **dat** application not completed, **pls wat shud** I do

46. **pls rummies**, **wax d** cutoff mark for English education in **Fuoye**

P47. please help me **wit dis** 233, b3, c4, c5, b3, b3 **nd 2** sitting

P48. **plz o watz** my point. my course Civil Engineering

P49. **Horyindamollar**: **sori wen** will freshers resume?

P50. **Horlarmzlee**: I pray **u** will **b d** first on **d admsn.dont** be lazy to type amen

P51. **pls oo**, my scratch card is 3 of 5...**pls o**, I **didnt** collect my **waec** identity card **frm** school but my **waec** pin is **insyd d** print out

P52. **rmbr** the portal is closing on Friday!

P53. **u** will get **d** reprint **4** exam date on 26 **buh u** will be given two slips after **yr reg**

P54. please I need help, after registering for **OAU** post **utme**, registration **onlyn** and **everting** was successful. The problem now is I didnt print out **anytin**. Am confused. They said I have **2** check **bk**, is **dat** true **pls**

P55. **ani1 writin** in **oau ICT** centre on **d 3rd of Sept. 8am shud** notify

P56. **OAU** this is wickedness first of September, upon the late registration **deris** God

P57. **sum1** can still obtain it

P58. Direct entry aspirant, am tired of this **OAU** site of a thing who else is **aving** difficulty



-
- P59. **u ar** already admitted
- P60. **wat** course **nd sku**
- P61. you are good **fnks** alot
- P62. Hello guys **hw** can I get my admission letter **pls** no insults
- P63. pay through diamond bank don't go to zenith **coz dey** don't do it
- P64. ok. we **hv** good and bad course. No wonder Nigerians self illeteracy is always **d** order of their day
- P65. **Hakeem: pls z funaab** form out
- P66. **Phykhayor: hw** can I calculate **d** aggregate, **pls**?
- P67. **Adebayor: drop ur no 4 admsn info**
- P68. **Tunjee: pls afta jamb wats d** next step **nd av nt** been **2 d sch**, hope **m** ok
- P69. **Horlarlekan: congrats 2 dose dt av** uploaded **deir** results
- P70. **hav u** got admission
- P71. I like **dat** question **pls** if anybody **knw** share **wit ox**
- P72. am **jst** helping **u guyx**
- P73. **wich u** success
- P74. **d** screening **ix takin** place at **d ckul**
- P75. **u ppl** should chill
- P76. **plx bro** is not too clear can you resend it **plz**
- P77. after seeing **ur** admission on net, **den u** gonna **cum** with **ur credentialz b4 givin u d** original admission copy, **datx ol**
- P78. let wait **n c** for **d** day
- P79. I've tried to open my own but it's not **workin**!
- P80. **r u** not an aspirant?
- P81. **nt** really, just asked on behalf of a **fwend**
- P82. **awaitin** result ends **sept 15, issi** true
- P83. I just tire for **dem**
- P84. they said it next **wk buh** I never **knw d** date
- P85. **Horpeyhem: wen** is d **2nd** batch **comin** out



- P86. **dat yu wan** pay... which course are **yu** offering?
- P87. no, **u wnt dem 2** plant flower **wit ur** money
- P88. after **payin** acceptance, **u** are going to use **d RRR** given to **u** in bank to reprint **ur** receipt online and admission letter
- P89. for **nd pt** are we going to **d sku** to submit our o level result at the admission office **plc** urgent answer
- P90. **plzz** to that **hv** paid their acceptance fee, how much is it **nd d sch** fees
- P91. **y** scaring him
- P92. no. **somtin dat** it will **jst** fry **ur** stomach
- P93. what **bout** person **dat doesnt** write **jamb**
- P94. **pls** can **sum1** who did **nt** pick it apply
- P95. **wot** is the school cutoff mark for mass com
- P96. **Hardeyemi: wat iz d** cutoff mark **4** Microbiology **plss**
- P97. let me put it **lyk dis, wat** is the school cutoff mark
- P98. admission form is **nw** out my **ppl** go **nd** collect **ur** form **nw nd** again if anybody hear any information he/she **shuld** pass it **pls**
- P99. **owk nw**
- P100. **wu av** try his or her own registration again today?
- P101. **Hormotosoh Holuwafhysirhomy: xame** here,**pls**
- P102: we can do **dat togeda**
- P103. **plz cn** somebody help me check my own exam date too
- P104. **pls chk 4 me 2**

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Phonetic Spellings are used thus:

In P7, the dental sound /ð/ in 'dat' is substituted for 'd' in 'that'. P12 had /d/ substituted for dental alveolar /ð/ in 'this' and the voiced fricative /z/ is substituted for voiceless fricative /s/. In P31, /t/ in 'tru' is substituted for voiceless dental fricative /θ/ in 'through' /θru:/. In P87, /t/ in 'wit' is substituted for either the voiced or voiceless dental fricative /ð/ in 'with' /wi/. P69 has /d/ in 'dose' substituted for voiced dental fricative /ð/ in 'wish' /wi/. P73 has 'ch' in 'wich' substituted for voiceless palato-alveolar /tʃ/ in 'wish' /wi/. P83 has /d/ in 'dem' substituted for voiced dental fricative /ð/ in them /ð em/. Also in P77, the voiceless alveolar stop /d/ in 'den' is substituted



for voiced dental fricative /ð/ in then /ðen/. P46 has 'x' in 'wax' pronounced as voiceless alveolar stop /t/ in what /wDt/. Likewise, P101 has 'x' in 'xame' pronounced as voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ in same /seim/. This shows that the users knowledge of English as an inconsistent language makes him/her realise 'x' as 's' in 'xame.' In P21/69, the voiced alveolar stop /d/ in 'deir' is substituted for voiced palato-alveolar fricative in 'their.' In P71, the lax back vowel sound /D/ in 'ox' is substituted for schwa sound /ə/ in us /s/. In this post, the correct pronunciation of 'x' should have been pronounced as /ks/, that is, the consonant cluster, but because of the user's incompetence, it cannot be an acceptable pronunciation. In P77, the aspirant should have pronounced the plural marker 's' in 'credentials' as voiced alveolar fricative /z/ phonetically, instead, the aspirant substituted the /z/ for /s/ in the spelling. In P77, 'd', 'x' and 'o' in 'that is all' are substituted for /, z, / in that is all /ðætsəl/. In P96, the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ in 'is' is substituted for voiced alveolar fricative in is /iz/. This shows the aspirants pronunciation of plural marker 's' as 'z.' In P36, the voiced alveolar stop /d/ in 'anoda' is substituted for 'th' in another /ænððə/. This is an instance of mother tongue interference. P66 for an instance has 'phy, 'kh' and 'or l' substituted for /f, k and o/ in Fikayo. The user makes use of English spelling to represent the sound in Yoruba. We know that Yoruba syllable structure does not allow consonant cluster; therefore, spelling 'Fikayo' as 'Phykhayor' is non-Yoruba. In P67, the 'or' in 'Adebayor' is substituted for /o/ in Adebayo. Yoruba words do not end in vowel; therefore, 'Adebayor' is not a standard Yoruba spelling. P68 has 'ee' in 'Tunjee' substituted for /i/ in Tunji. We know that Yoruba language does not differentiate long and short vowel, but the user's knowledge of long and short vowel reflected in 'Tunjee' because the 'ee' is long version of /i/, that is, /i:/. Again, in P23, 'dey' and 'zzy' in 'Debizzy' are substituted for 'de' and 'si' in Debisi. It shows that the user's pronunciation of some English graphemes makes him/her substitutes the sounds. Although it is not an acceptable spelling of Yoruba but it approximates the sounds. In P23, 'kky' and 'bee' are substituted for 'kee' and 'bat' in Rokeebat. Rokeebat is an Arabic name but the user has substituted similar sound in English for its spelling and pronunciation. In P25, 'far' and 'zee' in 'Fartunkenzee' are substituted for 'fa' and 'sin' in Fatunkesin. There is no resemblance between the sounds because the 'ar' in 'far' is a long vowel sound which is not in Yoruba language. Also, 'zee' is a wrong substitute for 'sin' in Yoruba language. In P26, 'mh' in 'mhiz' is substituted for voiced bilabial nasal /m/ in miss /mis/. We observe that some users use varieties of spelling to save time but in this context, the user did not use abbreviation but stylistically spelled his/her word that way. In P26 also, the user substitutes 'y' in Dammy for front vowel sound /i/ in Dami. This shows the dominance of English spelling on Yoruba spelling. In P32, /a/ and /i/ in Dahrahsihmih' are realised as 'ah' and 'ih' in Darasimi. From P33, the voiceless alveolar stop /p/ is silent in 'Psalmard' but this does not conform to Arabic writing system, instead, the user substitutes 'ps' for /s/ as in the Arabic spelling of Samad. It shows that the inconsistent of English spelling is creating challenges for second language (L2) speakers. In P12, the rhotic sound /r/ in 'Motunrhayor' is realised as 'rh' and 'o' as 'or' instead of the Yoruba spelling of Motunrayo. P12 has the voiceless velar stop /k/ substituted for 'khy' and /a/ for 'ar' in Sekinat. In P21, 'ph' in 'Omopholakemie' is realised as voiceless labio fricative /f/ in Omofolakemi. This shows that the user mixes English and Yoruba spelling, and this leads to mispronunciation in the target language. In P45, the phoneme /b/ is realised as /ɔ:/ in course /kɔ:s/. This spelling shows the user's wrong use of /ɔ:/ for /b/. The 'x' in 'guyx' (P72) which should be phonetically realised as /z/ is wrongly substituted for 'x'. Orthographically, the word should be spelled 'guys' not 'guyx'.



Colloquial Spellings

This section analyses the colloquial spellings viz phae-resis, syncope, apocope, acronyms, prosody, omission of apostrophe and prosthesis. Under phae-resis, the aspirants of the posts omitted the first letter of the words as in P11 ('av' for 'have'), 'is' for 'z' (P33), 'm' for 'am' (P29), 'ouse' for 'house' (P29), 'aving' for 'having' (P39), 'nd' for 'and' (P60/68), 'ave' for 'have' (P45), 'bout' for 'about' (P93), 'coz' for 'because' (P63), and 'cox' for 'because' (P45/73). These features show the aspirants' level of competence in pronunciation because they drop some alphabets at the beginning of each word that is not acceptable in English.

Furthermore, the aspirants used spellings and pronunciation that do not conform to either the source language (SL) or the target language (TL). The aspirants mixed the spelling and pronunciation of Yoruba and English together. The spelling and pronunciation of each word (name) do not reflect the original words in the two languages. For examples: 'Horlameydey' is written as 'Olamide' (P17), 'Omowunmi' as 'Hormowunmi' (P22), 'Oluwatobi' as 'Holuwatobi' (P25), 'Olamiposi' as 'Horlamyposy' (P27), 'Adura' as 'Hardura' (P29), 'Inioluwa' as 'Hinioluwa' (P31), 'Esther' as 'Hester' (P31), 'Emmanuel' as 'Hirmahnuel' (P37), 'Oyindamola' as 'Horyindamolla' (P49), 'Olamisile' as 'Horlarmzlee' (P50), 'Olakemi' as 'Horlakemie' (P50), 'Opeyemi' as 'Horpeyemi' (85), 'Adeyemi' as 'Hardeyemi' (P96), and 'Olalekan' as 'Horlalekan' (P69).

The insertion of **H** at the initial position of each name does not conform to the Yoruba writing system, because these aspirants deliberately inserted it to show their creativity. It is obvious that Nigerian tertiary institution aspirants, most especially Yorubas, inserted **H** before any syllable that starts with /o, a, i, o, e/. This insertion of **H** in an h-less word by these aspirants supported Jowitt (1991: 79) that /h/ is rare in Yoruba because he sees this as an h-less word. The dropping of **H** is also evident in 'av', 'ouse', 'aving' and 'ave.' (categorical H-dropping, Awonusi, 2009; absence of glottalisation, Adegbija, 2004).

Also, the aspirants make use of syncope, that is, the omission of internal sound for quick typing. These are evident in 'hw' for 'how' (P6), 'knws' for 'know' in P7, 'pls' for 'please' in P28, 'admsn' for 'admission' in P67, 'thnk' for 'thank' in P40, 'sef' for 'self' in P38, 'calculatn' for 'calculation' in P36, 'jst' for 'just' in P27, 'bfore' for 'before' in P39, 'fnks' for 'thanks' in P61, 'hv' for 'have' in P64, 'ppl' for 'people' in P75, 'yr' for 'year' in P53, 'admsn' for 'admission' in P67, 'yp' for 'yeap' in P73, 'knw' for 'know' in P71, 'rmbr' for 'remember' in P52, 'evting' for 'everything' (the voiceless fricative /ç/ is substituted for voiceless alveolar stop /t/. In P54, 'bk' is written as 'book', 'wk' for 'weak' in P84, 'nw' for 'now' in P99, 'chk' for 'check' in P103, 'cn' for 'can' in P103, 'pple' for 'people' in P98, 'serzly' for 'seriously' in P41. The /s/ in 'seriously' is substituted for voiced alveolar fricative /z/; therefore, rendering the spelling and pronunciation unconventional. In P45, 'frnds' is written as 'friends', and 'frm' for 'from.' We observed that the shortening of 'everything' does not conform to the standard pronunciation of 'everything.' Therefore, the aspirants substitute /ç/ for /t/ in everything/evriçin/.

More so, apocope is evident in deletion of the last syllable of some words which are not conventional. This deletion can confuse the readers. For examples, /t/ is deleted from 'want' in P86, 'roblem' from 'problem' in P34, 'mation' from 'information' in P27. The voiced velar stop /g/ is deleted from the last syllable of the following words: 'workin' for 'working' (P79), 'givin' for 'giving' (P77), 'anytin' for 'anything' (P54), 'writin' for 'writing' (P55), 'awaitin' for 'awaiting' (P82), 'payin' for 'paying' (P88), 'comin' for 'coming' (P85), 'sometin' for 'something' (P92), and



'goin' for 'going' (P24). We can say that the deletion have similar pronunciation orthographically, but 'anytin' and 'sontin' contrast with the standard pronunciation because the voiceless dental sound /t/ in 'sontin' is substituted for voiceless alveolar stop /t/. Likewise, the shortened form of 'school' in P68 has 'ool' deleted, therefore making 'sch' wrong pronunciation.

Again, acronyms used by the aspirants are gaining acceptability based on the context of use. The full meaning of the acronyms are as follows:

Lolz (P7) - laughing out louds; coi (P18) - change of institution ; jamb (P68) - Joint Admission and matriculation Board; cbt (P21) - computer base test; Ict (P55) - Information communication technology; rrr (P88) - remita retrieval reference; ui (P1) - University of Ibadan; Funaab (P65) - Federal University of Abeokuta; Fuoye (P46) - Federal University of Oye Ekiti; waec (P54) - West African Examination Council; utme (P54) - Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination; OAU (P54) - Obafemi Awolowo University; OND - Ordinary National Diploma. From the acronyms above, the aspirants used lowercase while typing.

In addition, the aspirants omitted apostrophe in their use of contraction. For examples: 'dats' for "that's" (P20), 'its' for "it's" (P17), 'wats' for "what's" (P44), 'didnt' for "didn't" (P36/54), 'dont' for "don't" (P50), 'hasnt' for "hasn't" (P50), and 'issi' for 'is it?' It is clear from this feature that when the aspirants are in haste to type online, they try to omit apostrophe in order to reply their readers quickly. The omission of apostrophe in the posts above captures Thurlow's (2001: 289) claim that CMC is to be blamed for the death of apostrophe.

Homophone spellings feature in the posts. They are used by the aspirants in the posts below:

4- for (P4), 2moro- tomorrow (P14), 8am- eight o' clock in the morning (P55), b4- before (P4), 4k+ - four thousand plus (P15), ani1- anyone (55/78), 4wd- forward (P8), 2- to (20), c- see (P30), 3rd- third (P55), 2nd- second (85), sum1- someone (P57/94), b- the (P), d- the (P), 2- too (P104), and y- why (P91). The aspirants engage in lexical substitutions whereby a graph, a combination of two graphs or a number replaces a homophone word or word part. It should be noted that not all these lexical substitutions have standard pronunciation but with close approximation. For example, sum1. Also, '2' as used in P20 and P104, has different meanings. It is only the context that will determine the correct usage. '2' in P20 represents 'to' (preposition) while in P104 stands for 'too' (adverb). We can say at this juncture that homophone spellings can only be used correctly when context is appropriately selected. Therefore, homophone, when appropriately used, are normal features in online language. (Squires, 2010; Crystal, 2006; Ross, 2006; Baron, 2004).

Most of the aspirants' use of phonological spellings do not reflect closest phonetic transcription. In P9, 21, 28, 33, 85, 'wen' represents 'when', 'fwend' in P81 represents 'friend', 'ckul' (P56) represents 'school', 'dey' (P28) represents 'the', 'wu' (P100) represents 'who', 'deris' (P56) represents 'there is', 'wic' (P29) represents 'which', 'dere' (P32) represents 'there', 'cuming' (P28) represents 'coming', 'afta' (P36) represents 'after', 'wan' (P40) represents 'one', 'cum' (P77) represents 'come', and 'konkor' (P27) represents 'concur'. Based on the analyses above, the aspirants used the Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) word (dey) to replace the definite article 'they' in P28. Therefore, the context of usage is wrong. The 'c' in 'wic' is substituted for 'ch' in 'which' which shows no approximation. P32 and P56 substituted voiced alveolar stop /d/ in 'dere' and 'deris' for 'th' which should be realised as voiced dental /ð/ in 'there', the bilabial



approximant /w/ is substituted for the rhotic sound /r/ as in 'fwend' for 'friend.' The bilabial approximant /w/ in 'wu' is substituted for the glottal sound /h/ in /hu:/. It shows that the aspirants have not achieved proficiency in the silent consonants.

In P32, there is an instance of metathesis which is the process in which neighbouring speech sounds change places in their chain of speech. The user swapped the position of /b/ and /m/, that is, the /m/ comes before /b/ which gives rise to wrong syllable structure. It is evident in P32 when 'submit' is wrongly spelled as 'sumbit.' This error is caused by lack of attention or knowledge of the standard forms and unconventional orthographies in the textual representation of auditory information such as prosody, laughter and other non- language sounds. (Herring 2004; Mackinnon, 1995). It is obvious from these analyses that the aspirants make use of different spellings and pronunciation in their posts which are not acceptable in either English language or Nigerian national languages, most especially Yoruba language. These spellings variation are presented in table 1 below.

Spelling and Pronunciation Variation

ENGLISH WORD	Individual Spelling Varieties
Is	iz, z, ix
Because	coz bcos, cox, cos,
This	ds, dis, dz
Your	ur, yr
You	u, yu
Week	wk, we, wi
Have	av, hav, ave
And	n, nd,
Should	shud, shuol
Are	r, re, ar
Please	pls, plss, plc, plz
Yours	urs, urz
What	wah, wot, wt wat, wax
That	dt, dat
The	d, dey
Thanks	thnks, fnks
Guys	guyx, guyz
That is	datx, dats
School	ckul, sch, skul
Now	naw, nw
Okay	ok, owk
People	ppl, pple
Roommate	rumz, rommies
About	bout, abt
Friend	frnd, fwend



The summary of the aspirants' spellings and pronunciation are presented in table 2 below.

Features of Aspirants Spellings and Pronunciation

Types of Cyber spellings	Examples
Phonetic	Urs, shud, dat, sed, wat, rumz, dis, gud, tru, wit, insyd, av, onlyn, dose, wich, cum, dem, den, wax, yu, lyk, owk, xame, deir, ox, credentialz, datx ol, wot, anoda Phykhayor, Adebayor, Tunjee Deybizzy, Rokkybee, Fartunkenzee, Mhiz, Damy, Dahrahsihmih, Psalmad, Motunrhayor, Sekhynart, Omopholakemie, cos, Oluwateemelehyn, guyx
Phaeresis	av, z, m, ouse, aving, nd, ave, bout, are, coz, cox
Syncope	dat, hw, knws, pls, nt, admisn, thnks, sef, calculatn, jst, bfore, fnks, hv, ppl, yr, admsn, yp, knw, rmbr, everting, bk, wk, nw, chk, cn, pple, serzly, frnds, frm
Apocope	wan, nop, info, givim workin, takin, reg, anytin, writin, awaitin, payin, comin, bro, somtin hav, goin, Sept, sch
Acronyms	lol, coi, jamb, cbt, ict, RRR, ui, Funaab, Fuoye, waec, utme, OAU, OND
Prosodic	sayING, ND, WATS
Absence/Presence of Contraction	lets,its, dats, lemme, wats, didnt, dont, hasnt, how'd, issi
Epenthesis	Horlameydey, Hormowunmi, Holuwatobi, Horlamyposi, Hardura, Hinioluwa, Hester, Hirmahnuel, Horyindamollar, Horlarmzylee, Horlakemie, Horpeyhemy, Hardeyemi, Horlalekan
Homophone	4, 2, 4wd, b4, 4k+, sum1, ani1, 2moro, 8am, 3rd, 2nd, 2, y
Phonological	wen, fwend, dis, dere, c, dz, dey, afta, konkor, wi, wan, wu, deris, sku, ckul, togefafa, deir datx ol
Metathesis	Sumbit

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has examined the effects of English spelling and pronunciation over the aspirants' mother tongue (spelling and pronunciation), the spelling and pronunciation of the aspirants as individualistic styles, and the causes of the non-standard spellings and pronunciation. We found that the inconsistent features of English spellings have been borrowed by the aspirants to their



mother tongue writing system and pronunciation which have rendered the language non-standard. These occur when the aspirants cannot write correctly in the two languages, that is, English and Yoruba languages. When they (the aspirants) write in English, they carry the features of English spellings to their mother tongue or vice versa.

The spelling and pronunciation of each aspirant are full of individual styles because a word has different spelling and pronunciation from each aspirant. Therefore, there is no acceptable spelling and pronunciation among the aspirants. These spelling variations are evident in table 1.

Finally, the causes of non-standard spelling and pronunciation are caused by the aspirants' mother tongue interference, creativity on the part of individual aspirants which feature under phonetic spellings, phonological spellings, homophone spellings, colloquial spellings (phaeresis, syncope, apocope, acronyms, and contraction without apostrophe), epenthesis (prosthesis), and metathesis. It is further recommended that the aspirants' competence in English language should reflect in their cyber creativity in order not to create challenges for the comprehension of their mother tongue. Their spellings and pronunciation styles should also conform to the standard of both English language and their mother tongue.

REFERENCES

- Adegbija, E. (2004). The domestication of English in Nigeria. Awonusi, S & Babalola, E.A. (eds.). *The domestication of English in Nigeria: A festschrift in honour of Adetugbo*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press. 20-59.
- Androutsopoulos, J, & Georgakopoulou, A. (eds.). (2003). *Discourse construction of youth identities (Pragmatics and Beyond New Series)*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin.
- Adelabu, B. (2001). Oracy and interference: A case of two languages in context. *Journal of English Studies*. viii. 81-93.
- Awonusi, V.O. (2009). Some characteristics of Nigerian English phonology. Dadzie, A.B.K & Awonusi, S. (eds.). *Nigerian English: Influences and characteristics*. Lagos: Sam Iroanusi Publications. 203-225.
- Barasa, S.N. (2010). Language, mobile phones and internet: A study of sms texting, email, im and sns chats in computer-mediated communication (cmc) in Kenya, Utrecht, The Netherlands, LOT.
- Baron, N.S. (2008). Always on language in an online and mobile world. Newyork: Oxford University Press.
- Bodomo, A. (2009). Computer-mediated communication for linguistics and literacy: Technology and natural language education. Hershey: Information Science Publishing.
- Cherny, L. (1999). Conversation and community: Chat in a virtual world. Stanford, CA: Centre for the Study of Language and Information.
- Chiluwa, I. (2013). West African English in digital discourse. *Covenant Journal of Language Studies*. 1(1).
- Crystal, D. (2006). Language and the internet (2nd edition). Cambridge: CUP.
- Danet, B & Herring, S. (eds.). (2007). The multilingual internet: language, culture and communication online. Oxford University Press.
- ete.com/2007/09/14/facebook- activity- breakdown- application/>.



- Florence, M., Jacinta, N., & Wendo, H. (2016). Language and technology: Linguistic features of facebook in Kenya. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*. 26. pp. 67-77.
- Freiert, M. "14 million people interacted with facebook applications in August compete.com.14Sep.2007. <<http://blog.comp>
- Georgakopoulou, A. (2003). Computer-mediated. In *Handbook of Pragmatics* (2001) Instalment, J Verschueren, J. Olastman, J. Blommaert & Chris Bulcaei, 1-20. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Herring, S. (2001). 'Computer-mediated discourse' In *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. D, Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H, Hamilton (eds.). Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 613-634.
- Herring, S. (2004). Computer-mediated discourse analysis: An approach to researching online behaviour. In S.A. Barab, R. Kling and J. Gray (eds.). *Designing for virtual communities in the service of learning*. Newyork: Cambridge University Press. 338-376
- Herring, S. (2007). A faceted classification scheme for computer-mediated discourse: Language@internet 4(1).
- Herring, S. C., Scheidt, L. A., Bonus, S., & Wright E. (2004). Bridging the gaps: A genre analysis of weblogs. Proceedings of the 37th Hawai'i International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS- 37). Los Alamites: IEEE Computer Society Press.
- Jowitt, D. (1991). *Nigerian English usage: An introduction*. Lagos: Longman Nigeria Plc.
- Ko, K-K. (1996). Structural characteristics of computer-mediated language: A comparative analysis of interchange discourse. *Electronic Journal of Communication*, 6(3). Retrieved September 5, 2018, from <http://www.cios.org/www/v6n396htm>.
- Maja, M. (2017). Birds of a feather don't quite tweet together: Analysis of spelling variation in Slovene Croatian and Serbian tweeterese. In D. Fiser & M. Beibwenger (eds.) *Investigating Computer-mediated Communication: Corpus-based Approaches to Language in the Digital World*. University of Ljubijana, Faculty of Arts. 14-43.
- Ojo, G.A. (2014). Deviant realization of speech form of Yoruba-English Nigerian bilinguals. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics* 4. 720-727.
- Opeibi, T. (2015). New media and transformation of political cultures in Nigeria: Exploring a corpus-based discourse approach. In T, Opeibi J. Schmied, T. Omoniyi, and K. Adedeji (eds.). *Essays on Language in Societal Transformation: A Festschrift in Honour Segun Awonusi*. University of Lagos. 210-239.
- Roach, P. (1991). *English phonetics and phonology*, Cambridge: CUP.
- Salami, O.L, Osoba, G.A & Fakoya A.A. (2000). *Linguistics: A short introduction*. Ogun: Olabisi Onabanjo University Press.
- Scraggy, D.G. (1974). *A history of English spelling*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Thurlow, C. (2001). Talkin' 'bout my communication: Communication awareness in early adolescence, *Language Awareness*. 10, 1-19.
- Yale, S.J. (1996). Oral and written linguistic aspects of computer conference. In S. Herring (ed.), 29-46.