Impacts of Social Media and Comic-Movies on the spoken English of Undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria.

Dare Williams, OMOTOYINBO

Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko Ondo State, Nigeria.

*Corresponding author: Dare Williams, OMOTOYINBO

Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko Ondo State, Nigeria.

Abstract

Previous studies have conducted researches on spoken English language errors in Nigeria basing it on the influence of pidgin English, L2 influence. Insufficient qualified teachers etc. However, a little seems to have been done as regards the impacts of social media and comic movies on same. The survey research method used for this study, adopted closed ended questionnaire. One hundred respondents were picked from all the faculties in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Nigeria, using random sampling Technique. Data collected from the research were analyzed using simple random sampling technique, frequency counts and percentages. Findings revealed that majority of the undergraduates' spoken English are affected by social media and comic movies in the university. The study concluded that there were significant influences of the comedy series on undergraduates' speaking patterns. It was therefore recommended among others, that the film board should be encouraged to create innovative educational series that will improve the educational values of undergraduates and young people at large. Likewise, students should ensure that what they watch in films and television screens or the internet do not influence their speaking competence negatively. Educative programmes and movies that can improve learners' speaking skills should be ensured by the Television industry and the National film board, embraced by students, lecturers, parents and encouraged by government and other stakeholders.

Keywords: *Social media, comic movies, comedy series, film board, speaking skills*

Introduction

Nowadays, social media is a very popular medium that cuts and spreads across the world. Previous studies have conducted researches on spoken English errors in Nigeria: effects of pidgin on spoken English performance among students and others. However, a little seems to have been done as regards the influence of comic movies and social media together on same, especially among undergraduates which is the focus of this paper.

The growing trend and usage of social media as means of fostering mutual understanding has come to stay in Nigeria like in almost all parts of the world. From the perspective of social media as resourceful input, both learners and educators need to be critical of the linguistic resources received from social media as they may expose learners to culturally inappropriate or linguistically conflicting contents. (Zhou, 2021)

Majority of those using the internet today are younger generations. Arroyo (2012) says, "Once social media was introduced, it enabled a new way for people, particularly the younger generation, to connect with one another, based on common interests, goals and even values". Social media applications allow users to cross the boundaries of their countries, connect and express themselves on a global scale (Thorne, 2010). Thus, young adults and teenagers make use of social media more than the older generations.

In the recent years, information technologies and social media in particular has affected the educational community, due to their

different forms which help people communicate in various ways as aforementioned. Baran (2010) is of the firm opinion that whatever effects social media has on the user fundamentally, depends on how the user chooses to use it. Social media may prove beneficial to users who potentially harness its benefits, but as well, pose serious harm, to those who cannot control its usage. Scholars, like Kolan&Dzandza (2017), Mensah&Lizam (2016), Osharie (2015), Kuppuswamy&Narayan (2010), Maya (2015),also confirms that social media is a double-edged tool or, as Christian LousLange puts it, 'the most useful servant, but a dangerous master'. Though helpful, but can portend negative consequences if unwisely tailored.

Previous researches have revealed that many students are not cautious of their use of grammar, abbreviations, punctuations and spellings on social media since the language of social media is an informal one. They bring in these grammatical errors to their academics. Indeed, social network platforms can be a lethal-weapon that distracts students from their studies, but these platforms can be tremendously useful for education if judiciously use.

On the other hand, movies have also become an inevitable tool for entertainment, information and education all over the world, Nigeria inclusive. Young people are increasingly devoting times and attention to watch movies on their androids, tablets, laptops, televisions and so on. In certain cases, young people spend almost four hours per day watching movies (US Department of Education, 2002).

Onukaogu (2011),opines that young people tend to idolize television characters and seemingly copy them in their daily life. This implies that a young adolescent may resort to a particular lifestyle in order to appear like a character that he or she watches in a movie without considering the circumstances that enhanced such character, or star in a particular movie. Furthermore, Wilson (2008) is of the opinion that movies and TVs are integral parts of youth's sub-culture. Movies- actors form interesting part of daily conversations with friends, family and acquaintances, usually causing viewers to imitate the characters and mannerisms of their favourite-actors/actresses. In a research conducted by Goswanni and Kashyap (2009), they found out that imitating actors in popular movies was widespread in urban and rural areas. These imitations were largely based on their dressing, character, manner of speaking among others.

English and Movie in Nigeria

In Nigeria, English remains the undisputed language of instruction in schools, governance, administration, legislation, judiciary, international relations, unification of the country's numerous ethnic groups, social prestige, and so on (Adio, 2010). English language is taught as a subject and at the same time, a medium of instruction for other subjects in the Nigeria education curriculum at all levels (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary).The main objective of teaching spoken English in schools is to ensure that students can express themselves proficiently in the English language. It also helps the students to develop confidence in their ability to express themselves in English as fluently as possible (Babu,2010). Speaking is of paramount importance of the four language skills (reading, speaking, reading and writing) because a native speaker of a language is first identified when speaking such language. (Tuan and Mai, 2022).Speaking of course, comes first before writing or reading, thus, its importance cannot be exaggerated.

However, in many British colonies, like Nigeria, where English serves as the second language, many errors have often been detected either while learning the language as a child or using the language as an adult. Spoken language production is often considered one of the most difficult aspects of language learning Tuan and Mai, 2015).

The Nigeria, Nollywood movie industry especially, has witnessed a tremendous development in the production of movies since inception. It is the world's second largest film industry by volume (UNESCO 2017). One of the few ever watched and popular comic Nollwood series is "Aiyetoro Town", closely following behind "Jenifa's Diary", the former and latter produced by Funke Akindele. Aiyetoro Town has become one of the most popular comic series lately, the most mimicked among its audience in Nigeria because of its comic characteristics. The main character, producer and content creator, Funke Akindele (aka Jenifa) is known for her funny, but ungrammatical expressions and blunders characterizing her spoken English in the movie.

Despite the ungrammaticality and deliberate deviation from language rules used by the protagonist in the movie, many young people are beginning to imitate Jenifa's manner of speaking. In fact, it is becoming a norm and slowly taking a firm grip among many Nigerian students.

Statement of the Problem

The place of films and the social media in the 21st Century is overwhelming. The problem that necessitated this study is the observed poor speaking performance of students, which is a growing trend in the study area and Nigeria at large. Previous studies have dwelt on mother tongue interference, poor quality of education, teacher's incompetence, poor family background, environmental factors as causes of poor speaking performance among students. However, this research sees students engrossed with what they see or hear in films or on various social media platforms. They often develop the habits of imitating what they hear and see on televisions and social media and these have been discovered to affect students' academic performance especially in the area of speaking and writing. Therefore, this study looks into the impact of social media and comic movies on the spoken English of students of Adekunle Ajasin UniversityAkungba Akoko.

Research Question:

This study seeks to provide answer to this research question:
1. What are the effects of social media language and comic movies on Spoken English of Undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University?

Concept of Social Media

Social media is a common trend in the 21st Century. It is commonly used by teenagers, adolescents, youths, and even adults, since the traditional means of communication through SMS, phone calls, letters is seemingly gradually fading out. Social media is a form of electronic media that enables communication between two or more persons over a specified medium, usually kilometres of distance apart. In fact, Social media is regarded as the fastest growing web application in the 21st century. This trending innovation is made usable by means of the internet and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as well as the advent of smart phones. There are many social media platforms

such as Facebook, Skype, Twitter, MySpace, WhatsApp, 2go, SMS etc. Activities on social media are for socializing, getting and sharing information, discussing assignments and projects, debates, chats, collaborating and networking.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as a group of Internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. Social media includes web and mobile technology. In a similar vein, Kamnoetsin (2014) sees social media as forms of electronic communication as websites for social networking and micro blogging through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other contents. This is to say that social media allows a wider interaction among users who have a collective aim of collaboration through particular means. Lakhal (2022), defines social media simply way, by conceving it as virtual places where people can share anything, anywhere and anytime. In other words, the social communication process occurs across space and time.

Generally, all the definitions provided by the scholars seem to describe social media as a channel through which knowledge is conveyed and transmitted between learners and communities, using internet and online technologies. In this modern world of technology, everything that we need to know is available online through the use of social media. It is possible to express one's opinions and thoughts instantaneously on things that have been written or advertised. People can share their thoughts or knowledge with one another helping them to increase their knowledge about the world and life through social media (Asad et al, 2012).

Edeh (2022) shows the advantages of social media to students as follows: Social Media aids research, it is a tool of giving/receiving information, it also improves Learning, and enables social networking etc:

Social Media may also be disadvantageous in the following areas (Edeh 2022) It may be distractive which may lead to destruction. Social Media is addictive, it may lead to poor time management, encouraging laziness among students, may facilitates criminal activities and encourage fake news etc)

Social media and Education

Social media is the fastest growing web application in the 21st century. This phenomenon is made usable by means of the internet and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as well as the advent of smart phones. Activities on social media are for socializing, getting and sharing information, discussing assignments and projects, debates, chats, collaborating and networking. According to Freeman (2016), social media can be a useful tool for educational activities when approached in the right way.

Similarly, Bright (2014) submits that social networks are resource centres for teaching of English language. Akinjobi (2013) is also of the opinion that social network sites should be explored as supplements to classroom activities while Yunus&Salehi (2012) opine that Facebook page enables proficiency in students' use of English. In a related manner, Fatimayin (2015) asserts that social media can be used to accommodate both the social and educational aspects. They can be tools for supporting teaching/learning on one hand and a means of socializing on the other. She, however, went on to state that social media has both advantages and disadvantages: its impact on the way secondary school students spell words and write, their study behaviour like copying of wrong concepts. For Paul &Gelish, (2011) the use of mobile phones for sending short messages and accessing social media may and may not result in students' lower academic performance.

Yunus&Salehi (2012), undertook a study titled: "The Effectiveness of Facebook Groups on Teaching and Improving Writing: Their findings reveal that social media usage does help students expand their vocabulary repertoires in English, improves their writing skills and reduces their spelling mistakes. These scholars conclude that "the main challenge that teachers need to overcome is the distractions by other features of FB such as FB chat, games, and other applications" (Yunus et al., 2012).

As a matter of fact, social media has tremendously facilitated learning and broadly impacted same in higher education as never before. Different researches conducted reveal the influence of social media on users' academic performance and found positive relations between the use of SMS and writing ability.

However, from classroom observation, social media language is infiltrating into students' formal writing exercises and impacting it negatively. During classroom interaction with students, one finds out that most of them write, using incorrect spelling, grammar, punctuation-marks and abbreviations, while others are of the habit of using text-speak.

A report published in 2010 by Clarion University shows that social media language is mostly informal and allows non-standard orthography and grammatical errors. Furthermore, Ofuokwu (2010), submits that scholars are expressing concern about how social media language is affecting Nigerian students' usage in formal contexts especially in written essays. Similarly, Ekah (2007) states that the informal language of texting is slowly, but steadily encroaching on formal texts.

Overall, it is incumbent on users to be prudent and cautious towards social media usage lest their academic lives be affected. According to Freeman (2016), social media can be a useful tool for educational activities when approached in the right way.

Roles of English language in the educational system of Nigeria

Nigeria is made up of multilingual and multi-ethnic nationals wielded together for the benefit of the colonial administration. English language was adopted as a language of necessity to enable the British authorities to run their colonial government. Clerks and interpreters were trained and those who wished to work with the colonial masters strived to learn English. The missionaries were the first to establish schools in Nigeria. Their main aim then was to train people who will propagate the gospel. When the British government took over the running of the schools, they harmonized the subjects taught in the different missionary schools. They also came up with a policy that made English language a core subject as well as the language of instruction in the 1882 and 1887 education ordinances (Njoku and Izuagba: 2001).

Akporokah (2012) observes that English language has been widely used in the propagation of education in all facets in Nigeria. This seems to be the most important function of English in our society. It is the language of transaction in government offices; minutes, official correspondence, memoranda, circular, instructions and directives are done in English. In fact, it was a yardstick for employment during the colonial era. After independence, it remains the pivot of education in Nigeria. English is the language of instruction from upper primary education through secondary, to

tertiary institutions. It is the language through which all other subjects in the curriculum, except indigenous languages, are taught. English language is not only a compulsory subject in secondary education, a credit pass in it is also mandatory for securing admission into tertiary institutions.

English language has become a pre-requisite for employment, technological development and considered as the language of the learned. The retention of English has removed the political tension that would have arisen choosing any of the indigenous languages for instruction in schools. Nwachukwu, (2001) says, "if we remove English from our educational system and polity (and replace it with any Nigerian language),we have cut the strongest string that holds the country together). In the words of Emonyionwu (2000) quoted in Osuafor (2002). "Competence in English is seen as an index of academic, excellence". Thus, it is a yardstick for measuring learners' academic performance. More so, before any student can graduate from the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, they must pass the course tagged ''Use of English". In summary, English language can be seen as the bedrock upon which education is hinged in Nigeria.

Advent of Movies/films in Nigeria

Film was introduced into Nigeria long before that official information of the country, but was within the colonial era. Williams Ahmed-Gangum writes that on settling down in Nigeria, they created Northern and Southern Protectorates, they introduced and implemented Lord Lugard's "political Memorandum and indirect rule. Bringing his study into academic focus for proper inquest, he categorized the history of Nigerian video films into ''The Colonial Era, Post colonial era and the Nollywood Era (Gloria and Uchenna –Joe,2019) After Nigeria independence in 1960, the film business became rapidly expanded. As a result, Nigerian films in theatres increased in late 1960s and 1970s especially the productions such as Hubert Ogunde and Moses Olaiya transitioning into the big screen in 1972. An indigenization Decree was issued by General Yakubu Gowon (the then head of state) that demands transferring the ownership of about 300 film theatres from foreign owners to Nigerians which resulted in more Nigerians playing active roles. In 2013, Nigerian cinema was rated as the third most valuable film industry in the world based on its worth and revenue generation.(Okedara 2013)

Spoken English errors in Nigeria

Speaking seems to be the most important skills of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) because people who know a language are usually referred to as speakers of that language. The major goal of all English language teaching should be to give learners the ability to use English effectively, accurately in communication. However, not all language learners can communicate fluently and accurately even after many years of learning, for lack of necessary knowledge.

English provides a means through which Nigerians, just like other Africans, can participate in the present competitive modern world. One's level of communicative competence in English language determines his placement in the society, and his access to white-collar jobs. In spite of its highly extolled status and the number of years of its usage in Nigeria, some so-called educated members of the society are still with prevalent errors which are usually ascribed to mother tongue interference. It is unfortunate to note that in spite of this pervasive situation, the study of oral English has received less patronage when compared with the study of its grammatical forms (Ngozi, et al 2016).

The Standard of Nigerian English is threatened by the wide spread of wrong usage, such as deviations with clear errors because speakers do not adhere to the grammatical rules of the language. Though it has been said that not all deviations from the standard British English are errors, yet, non-conformity with the rules of English grammar still remains unacceptable forms and patterns compared with the speech and writing of speakers/users of a language. Errors occur in such areas of phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis and usage (Okafor, 2010). The errors which occur in the English of Nigerians are committed because of clear ignorance or misapplication of the rules that are inherent in the language. Corroborating this, Onoyovwi (2010) indicates that the volume of ungrammaticality pervasive among the elite is a pointer to the fact that relegation of intensive teaching of grammar cannot produce a standard level of English that is internationally acceptable. It is common to hear embarrassing grammar when a highly educated personality is called on to speak especially in the aspect of subject-verb concord. We cannot defend aberrant forms based on ignorance of the basic rules of the English language as variety because this will fall short of the two tests for determining varieties globally (Okafor, 2010). English being a second language to a vast majority of Nigerians is an excuse for many, not to strive to achieve competence in the language.

Incredibly as it may sound, Nigerians commit errors at different stages of learning the language, and even after they are expected to have mastered the workings of the language. Why is this so? According to Onoyovwi (2010), in the earliest days of the introduction of English as a language of education in Nigeria, there was adequate emphasis on grammar through intensive use of drills, substitution tables, fill in the gap etc, pupils mastered the rudiments of grammar by the end of primary school. Unfortunately, when the teaching of structures (structuralism) came in the late sixties, this method which immersed the learner in the rudiments of grammar branded as 'traditional grammar' was neglected in pursuit of Chomsky's 'communicative competence'. In a bid to have the L2 learner acquire English as the mother tongue (MT) user, methods changed, forgetting that L2 users are not exposed to the same volume of raw linguistic data as the mother tongue users. Though L2 speakers learn English language in school, but as they revert to MT at home, reinforcement through daily social interaction is conspicuous absent.

Many Nigerian students' errors in spoken English, could be traced to many different sources: personal and physical impediment of speech, inter-lingual and intra-lingual sources, and a host of other environmental factors. First, it is necessary to note that Nigerian languages are very active in and outside the classrooms. Nigerian learners' use their native languages when interacting with people who speak the languages in schools and even in government offices. This is not surprising because many of them are already used to their mother tongue for communication purposes.

The result of this is that these learners do not see why they have to learn English at school. Besides, learners' competence in their L1 means that some particular English sounds would be difficult for them to identify and articulate. The greatest influence on the pronunciation of English by Nigerians is the sound systems of the vernacular languages. For example, the Yoruba's realize /f/ with /v/, Hausas /p/ with f/, and the Igbos /t/ with /th/. It is therefore not difficult to see why spoken language with its attendant problems of 'undiminished sound energy at word boundaries' and 'co-articulation' are cumbersome for students. The teachers' attitudes

too have not helped matters when it comes to oral work in English, because, those who are not good at teaching such aspects of the language, often avoid, skip or brush over them to the detriment of the learners.

Hindrances of placing too much emphasis on written examination is yet another problem in Nigeria. Many inspectors of education consider the teacher as having done enough in an English class when evidences of written work are visible. In most Nigerian language classrooms today, studying speaking is found difficult because the skill of teaching speaking cannot be strictly detached from other ongoing activities.

For a language so crucial to a nation and its people, it remains incredible seeing people paying little attention and showing lackadaisical attitude in internalizing the language in its correct form. Errors are detected in the speaking or writing of even educated Nigerians in sectors such as education, the media (print and electronic), entertainment (Music and the film industry), and governance, to mention but a few. Though scholars have agreed that there is a Standard Nigerian English as a variety just as there are many other varieties worldwide. We should note that the form of incorrect English, that are unacceptable in the educational system cannot be acceptable or intelligible at the international level. If nothing is done urgently by government and other stakeholders, the wrong form of English may gradually become acceptable and regarded as a Nigerian variety of English. Our contribution should not be a way of defending deviant forms based on ignorance of basic rules of the English language as 'Nigerian English'(Onoyovwi, 2010)

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey type. Questionnaire was used to collect and gather data for the study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 students across faculties in Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo state, Nigeria.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Research Question: What are the effects of social media language and comic movies on Spoken English Performance of Undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University?

Table 1: Effects of social media language and comic movies on Spoken English

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Social media helps my spoken English	32 (32%)	36 (36%)	21 (21%)	11 (11%)	100
2.	Social media changes the way people communicate and share information	35 35%	39 (39%)	12 (12%)	14 (14%)	100
3.	Social media exposes students to slangs and ungrammatical expressions which latter have negative impacts on them during examinations	29 (29%)	42 (42%)	16 (16%)	13 (13%)	100
4.	Social media helps vocabulary development	33 (33%)	25 (25%)	23 (23%)	19 (19%)	100
5.	Social media improves the way people interact globally	41 (41%)	34 (34%)	19 (19%)	6 (6%)	100
6.	Social media language affects students' performance academically	29 (29%)	22 (22%)	18 (18%)	21 (21%)	100

Discussion of Findings

This Research question wants to find out the effects of social media language and comic movies on Spoken English Performance of Undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University Students? The result revealed that, 68% of the respondents agreed that social media helps their spoken English, 32% disagreed; 74% of the respondents agreed that social media affects the way people communicate and share information, 36% disagreed; 71% of the respondents agreed that social media exposes students to slangs and ungrammatical expressions which have negative impacts on them during examinations, while 29% disagreed; 58% of the respondents agreed that social media helps vocabulary development, 42% disagreed, 75% agreed that social media improves the way people communicate globally, 25% disagreed; 51% agreed that social media language affects students

academically, while 39% totally disagreed, however, 10% remain neutral.

Finally, we found out that, although social media helps to improve social interaction, yet, most students agreed unequivocally that, the language of social media and comic movies inhibit their speaking, writing and academic competence in no small dimension.

Conclusion

From the analysis and summary of the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the movie has significant influence on the speaking patterns and competence among the students of Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State. The students were found to actively make use of social media language. More so, it was discovered that occasionally, the students imitate wrong intonation while engaging in social interactions amongst them-selves. The major challenge is that, this pattern might further damage their speaking competence.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the findings, the researcher recommends that:

1) Students of Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State and all others, should be encouraged to stick to correct pronunciation of words according to the recognized 'Standard English' version.

2) Lecturers and instructors should promote the use of intellectual, academic and formal conversation with students especially during lectures since they spend an ample time with them

3) Students are to make conscious efforts, as much as they can, to communicate in correct and properly pronounced English diction, to make it become an integral part of their life.

4) The television industry and the National film censors board should ensure that decent and standardized educative programmes that will promote the educational value of students are showcased and promoted for public viewing.

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