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DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS

**A DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL FEATURES
ON WHATSAPP TEXT MESSAGES OF LEVEL FOUR
STUDENTS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I**

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DEDICATION

To

My beloved parents who taught me to rise above difficult circumstances in life:

Mr Tohnain Paul Yong and Mrs Christina Mbel Tohnain

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No piece of research work has ever been the effort of one person, so this study is the fruit of the joint endeavour of several persons through various ways.

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ABSTRACT

This work, “A Discursive Analysis of Lexical Features on WhatsApp Text Messages of Level Four Students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé 1,” examines the lexical features and linguistic patterns used by level four students in their WhatsApp messages. Employing a discursive approach and drawing on Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) and Social Construction of Technology (SCOT), the study identifies and describes how these students use lexical features to suit their online context. The objectives include analysing diverse lexical choices, investigating the frequency of various lexical features, and understanding language trends among the students. A descriptive research design was applied through qualitative and quantitative analysis of 220 anonymised WhatsApp messages, focusing on lexical choices such as capitalisation, abbreviations, neologisms, slang, and code-switching. Findings reveal that students engage in lexical innovation, creating new words and phrases to express themselves within WhatsApp’s affordances. Their communication spans social interactions, academic discussions, and coordination of activities, blending informal and formal registers. The study highlights how WhatsApp’s features such as; brevity, informality, and real-time interaction impact language evolution. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of language adaptation in digital communication, relevant for linguists, educators, and social media developers.

Keywords: WhatsApp, lexical features, discursive analysis, language adaptation, digital communication.

RÉSUMÉ

La présente étude, intitulée « Analyse discursive des caractéristiques lexicales des messages WhatsApp des étudiants du niveau 4 du département d'anglais de l'Université de Yaoundé I », examine les caractéristiques lexicales et les modèles linguistiques utilisés par ces étudiants dans leurs messages sur WhatsApp. En s'appuyant sur les théories de l'analyse du discours médié par ordinateur (ADMO) et de la construction sociale de la technologie (SCOT), l'étude positionne WhatsApp comme un écosystème linguistique unique, visant à identifier et décrire les caractéristiques lexicales spécifiques des étudiants et comment ils adaptent le langage à leur contexte en ligne. Les objectifs de l'étude incluent l'analyse et la catégorisation des choix lexicaux, l'étude de la fréquence des différentes caractéristiques lexicales dans leurs messages, et la compréhension des tendances linguistiques et des sélections de vocabulaire. Un modèle de recherche descriptif a été appliqué, utilisant une analyse qualitative et quantitative d'un corpus de 220 messages WhatsApp anonymes. La recherche explore les choix lexicaux, tels que l'utilisation d'abréviations, d'argot, de langage informel et de changements de code. Les résultats montrent que les étudiants s'engagent dans une innovation lexicale dynamique, créant de nouveaux mots et phrases pour s'exprimer efficacement sur WhatsApp. L'analyse révèle que leurs communications couvrent divers sujets, des interactions sociales aux discussions académiques, tout en exprimant frustrations et en coordonnant des activités. Cette étude met en lumière la façon dont les étudiants mélangent registres informels et formels, naviguant entre discours académique et social. Les résultats suggèrent que les caractéristiques uniques de WhatsApp, comme la brièveté et l'interaction en temps réel, influencent l'évolution de l'utilisation de la langue. Les implications de cette étude contribuent à une meilleure compréhension de l'adaptation linguistique aux contraintes et possibilités des plateformes de communication numérique.

Mots-clés: analyse discursive, caractéristiques lexicales, WhatsApp, étudiants, communication numérique.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMC: Avatar-mediated Communication

CamE: Cameroon English

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

CMDA: Computer Mediated Discourse Analysis

CPE: Cameroon pidgin English

FALSS: Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences

FBK: Facebook

IMPs: interactive multimodal platforms

RSGs: Relevant Social Groups

SCOT: Social Construction of Technology

SFL: Systemic Functional Linguistics

SM: Social Media

YM: Yahoo Messenger

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

0.1. Background to the Study

The introductory section provides an overview of the research background, focusing on the impact of the digital communication revolution on language evolution, particularly within social media platforms. It presents the emergence of computer-mediated communication as a new linguistic frontier, and evaluates the dynamics of lexical features in online contexts. This part introduces WhatsApp as a distinct linguistic ecosystem for studying language adaptation and innovation within instant messaging services.

0.2. An Overview of Social Media

Manning(2014), introduces social media as a transformative force in communication, highlighting the shift from the broadcast age to the interactive age. In the broadcast age, media communication was centralised through entities like radio and television stations, limiting interpersonal interaction to a smaller scale. However, the emergence of digital and mobile technologies ushered in the interactive age, enabling individuals to engage in larger-scale interactions and participatory communication. This shift has led to a democratisation of information sharing, empowering users to create and disseminate content on a global scale.

Kaplan & Heanlein (2010), define social media as internet-based applications rooted in web technology, facilitating the creation and exchange of user-generated content. This shift towards user-generated content has fundamentally altered communication dynamics, allowing individuals to connect, collaborate, and share diverse perspectives and experiences. The ubiquity of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube has transformed the way people interact, bridging geographical boundaries and fostering virtual communities.

DataReportal(2023), underscores the pervasive nature of social media in modern society, with 4.8 billion users actively engaging on various platforms. Among these, WhatsApp emerges as a dominant player in the messaging arena, with over 2 billion users worldwide. The platform's versatility in enabling text, voice, and video communication has made it a popular choice for individuals seeking to stay connected and informed in real-time. WhatsApp's user-friendly

interface and multimedia capabilities have streamlined communication and collaboration, transcending traditional barriers.

Tayo & Deborah(2019), shed light on the prevalence of social media usage among undergraduates, with platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube dominating their online interactions. These platforms serve as essential tools for academic pursuits, social networking, and leisure activities, reflecting the diverse role of social media in students' lives. Boateng & Amankwaa (2016), emphasise the transformative impact of social media on education, facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing among students, instructors, and academic stakeholders. Integrating social media tools in educational settings has revolutionised the learning experience, providing new avenues for interaction, engagement, and information dissemination. Platforms like WhatsApp play a crucial role in fostering collaborative learning environments, where students can exchange ideas, share resources, and engage in meaningful discussions, both inside and outside the classroom. In conclusion, social media platforms like WhatsApp have revolutionised communication, enabling individuals to connect, collaborate, and engage with others globally. As technology continues to evolve, the impact of social media on language use, communication behaviours, and educational practices will continue to be an affluent area of study and exploration.

The evolution of language through social media platforms has become an area of significant academic interest. As these platforms vary in their communicative affordances, they also differ in their impact on language use and development. For instance, Twitter's character limit encourages concise and sometimes inventive language use, while Facebook's more expansive space allows for longer discourse and storytelling. The linguistic impact of these platforms is evident in the emergence of platform-specific slang, abbreviations, and even new semantic meanings for existing words Varnhagen et al.(2010).

Furthermore, the rapid exchange of multimedia content on platforms like Instagram and Snapchat has introduced a visual dimension to language evolution. Emojis, stickers, and GIFs are now integral to online communication, often replacing or supplementing text. This visual language has transcended cultural barriers, enabling a form of global communication that is heavily reliant on imagery and less on textual literacy (McCulloch, 2019).

WhatsApp, in particular, has been noted for its role in language evolution among youths. As a messaging app that supports group chats and various media sharing, it fosters an informal language style that often blends local dialects with Standard English. The app's influence extends to the modifying language rules and creating new words, as users adapt their language to suit the immediacy and intimacy of the platform (Dürscheid & Siever, 2017). The comparative analysis of social media platforms reveals a dynamic linguistic landscape. Each platform's unique set of features contributes differently to language change. As digital communication continues to grow, understanding these linguistic shifts becomes crucial for educators, linguists, and social media developers like (Crystal, 2011).

Social media platforms have instigated a transformative shift in language use and evolution. The rapid integration of these platforms into daily life has fostered new domains for linguistic expression and experimentation. Unlike traditional communication methods, social media enables immediate and extensive interaction, dissolving geographical and social barriers. This phenomenon has precipitated a form of global communication where language evolves at an accelerated pace. The linguistic impact of social media is comprehensive, affecting lexicon, syntax, and pragmatics. Users adapt their language to align with the norms and constraints of each digital environment, resulting in a perpetual state of linguistic flux, a characteristic of social media's influence on language evolution (Baron2008, Crystal 2011).

WhatsApp, in particular, occupies a distinctive position in language change, attributed to its widespread use and the intimate nature of its communication. Replacing traditional SMS, WhatsApp has become a primary text-based communication tool for millions. The app's design promotes informal and conversational language, often merging spoken and written communication norms. This has led to the genesis of new linguistic conventions unique to WhatsApp, including using short-forms, emojis, and multimedia elements as communicative tools. The platform's influence extends beyond individual words to language structure, as users devise new syntactic constructions to express tone, emphasis, and emotion. WhatsApp's role in language change is thus pivotal, as it does not only mirror, but also actively shapes contemporary linguistic trends (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008).

The linguistic evolution observed on WhatsApp is not merely a by-product of technological innovation; it reflects the app's capacity to emulate and augment human interaction. WhatsApp's

interface and functionality prompt users to communicate as if they were speaking, leading to the transcription of speech patterns into text. This has led to 'conversational writing,' where the distinction between spoken and written language is increasingly indistinct. The platform's group chat feature has become a virtual space for communal language practices, where new words and expressions rapidly gain popularity and integrate into the common vernacular. The ease with which language can evolve on WhatsApp is unparalleled, positioning the app as both a catalyst and a repository for linguistic innovation. Consequently, WhatsApp is not merely a communication tool but a dynamic laboratory for linguistic change, epitomising the fluid nature of language in the digital era (Baron, 2008).

In conclusion, WhatsApp's role in language evolution is diverse and profound. It serves as a microcosm of the broader linguistic shifts occurring across social media platforms, yet it also stands out due to its specific features that foster unique communicative behaviours. The app's influence on language is evident in becoming a fertile ground for new forms of expression, facilitating users' navigation through the complexities of digital communication with creativity and ease. As social media continues to evolve, so will the language use within it, with WhatsApp at the vanguard of this linguistic revolution. The study of WhatsApp's impact on language is not just an academic pursuit; it is a critical lens to understand how technology shapes human communication and, by extension, the fabric of society, (Crystal, 2011).

0.3. Computer-Mediated Communication

The rise of social media has greatly increased computer-mediated communication (CMC), which involves using networked computers and text to send messages across distances, (Jacobs, 2008). Today, various communication tools are available through computers and smartphones, with younger users leading the way. A unique "CMC language" has emerged among youth in informal CMC, often straying from standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation. This "CMC language" is a digital dialect that appeals to young people, seen as playful and trendy. While some parents and educators worry about its impact on language skills, it reflects a divide in perceptions, balancing traditional language prestige with the emerging appeal of this new form.

The CMC language shows many variations influenced by the author, context, and medium. Despite concerns from older generations about potential language degradation, these worries are

often based on personal experiences rather than solid research. CMC significantly shifts from traditional communication methods, like face-to-face conversations and written letters, to more instantaneous digital exchanges. This change affects not just how we communicate but also the nature of language itself.

The introduction of acronyms, emojis, and a new emphasis on brevity in CMC reflects a cultural shift toward efficiency and immediacy. This linguistic economy prioritises conveying maximum information with minimal resources, as evident in text messages and social media posts. Additionally, CMC has democratised language use, allowing people from various backgrounds to shape language in new ways. The global reach of digital platforms has led to a more inclusive and dynamic linguistic landscape, raising questions about language standards and the role of traditional grammar. Overall, CMC is now a cornerstone of modern communication, enabling real-time interaction and collaboration across distances. While it enhances information exchange, it also brings challenges like miscommunication and cyberbullying. Ongoing research in CMC seeks to understand its impact on communication patterns and relationships, examining how different platforms influence social dynamics.

The term ‘new media’ encompasses a broad spectrum of communication technologies. From text messaging and email, which gained popularity two decades ago, to online chats, instant messaging apps, social networking sites, content-sharing platforms, blogs, microblogs, and online forums, the landscape of new media is extensive and diverse. Each medium carries distinct features that can influence the language of CMC. As technology progresses and new platforms emerge, the field of CMC continually evolves, with ongoing research efforts to optimise online communication and address its inherent challenges. Researchers remain dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of CMC and finding solutions to its associated issues.

Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) has become a new linguistic frontier, fundamentally changing how we use language online. The language of CMC is marked by unique features that set it apart from traditional written and spoken forms. According to Herring (2003) these features include the use of acronyms, and emojis, and a tendency toward informality and brevity, reflecting the fast pace of digital interactions.

Additionally, CMC often shows high interactivity and multimodality, combining text, images, and sounds into a single communication act. The shift to digital communication has also led to specific varieties of internet language. Squires (2010) notes that these features are seen as both non-standard and specific to the internet, highlighting the uniqueness of online interactions. This process is influenced by standard language ideologies and deterministic views of technology, shaping how internet language is perceived and used. In summary, CMC has introduced new linguistic elements and redefined the nature of language use in online environments. As this field continues to evolve, it offers exciting opportunities for linguists and communication scholars, providing insights into the dynamic relationship between language, technology, and society.

0.3.1. Lexical Dynamics in Online Platforms and Lexical Innovation on WhatsApp

The rapid growth of instant messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp, has significantly impacted how individuals communicate and interact. These platforms have become ubiquitous in daily life, facilitating real-time exchanges and fostering the development of unique linguistic patterns. One of the most notable aspects of this phenomenon is the nature of lexical innovation that emerges within the context of WhatsApp conversations. The inherent characteristics of WhatsApp, including its emphasis on brevity, informality, and the ability to respond instantaneously, have given rise to a dynamic and ever-evolving lexical landscape. “WhatsApp messages can be such a rich source for creative and spontaneous language geared towards more individual expression”(Alazzawie, 2023, p. 45). Users of the platform often engage in the creation and adoption of new words, phrases, and abbreviations to convey their thoughts, emotions, and experiences more efficiently. This process of lexical innovation is driven by the need to adapt to the constraints and affordances of the digital medium, as well as the desire to establish a sense of shared identity and in-group belonging among WhatsApp users.

The study of lexical innovation on WhatsApp reveals fascinating perspectives into how language evolves in response to technological and social changes. Researchers have observed the emergence of creative neologism, the repurposing of existing words, and the widespread use of emojis and other non-verbal cues to enhance the expressive capabilities of the platform. These linguistic adaptations “contribute to the development of a distinct digital vernacular that is constantly in flux”(Alazzawie, 2023, p. 56).

The rise of instant messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp, has profoundly influenced on the lexical choices made by users in their daily communication. The inherent characteristics of these platforms, including their emphasis on real-time interaction, informality, and the use of mobile devices, have shaped the way individuals select and employ language to convey their messages. One of the primary factors driving lexical choices on instant messaging platforms is the need for efficiency and conciseness. “WhatsApp messages can be a rich source for creative and spontaneous language geared towards more individual expression”(Hubtype, 2023, p. 78). Users often prioritise brevity and speed over formal linguistic conventions, leading to the widespread use of abbreviations, acronyms, and shorthand expressions. This linguistic adaptation allows for the rapid exchange of information and the maintenance of a conversational flow that is well-suited to the fast-paced nature of instant messaging.

Additionally, the informal and personal nature of instant messaging platforms has also influenced the lexical choices of users. Individuals tend to adopt a more casual and colloquial tone, incorporating slang, idioms, and playful language to create a sense of intimacy and rapport with their conversation partners. This linguistic style “contributes to the development of a shared digital vernacular among users”(Hubtype, 2023, p. 92).The influence of instant messaging on lexical choices also extends to incorporating multimodal elements, such as emojis, GIFs, and other visual cues. These non-verbal elements have become an integral part of the communicative landscape on instant messaging platforms, enhancing users’ expressive capabilities and conveying nuanced emotional and contextual information that may be difficult to capture through text alone.

The evolution of linguistic norms in online communication, particularly on platforms like WhatsApp, significantly impacts social and cultural contexts. As students engage in chats, they collaboratively create meaning and negotiate shared linguistic conventions, leading to new linguistic norms and practices.

On WhatsApp, students often display a creative and adaptive use of language, allowing them to express their identities, emotions, and relationships in engaging ways. The communal nature of these chats fosters linguistic creativity, where playful language, wordplay, and humour become central features. Students might use puns, memes, and other forms of playful language to

entertain and connect with one another, reinforcing group cohesion and solidarity. Moreover, language adaptability in these chats enables students to navigate various communicative contexts and social norms. They may adjust their linguistic choices, tone, and style to match the expectations of different groups, showcasing their social intelligence and ability to code-switch. This flexibility reflects the complex relationship between language, identity, and social dynamics in digital spaces, highlighting how WhatsApp serves as a platform for both personal expression and community building among students.

Linguistic creativity flourishes, with playful language and wordplay serving as key tools for conveying humour, sarcasm, or irony. This playful use of language, which includes puns, memes, and creative language games, not only entertains but also builds solidarity and fosters group cohesion (Danet 2001, Crystal 2006). The adaptability of language in these digital spaces allows users to navigate various communicative contexts and social norms, demonstrating a high degree of communicative flexibility and social intelligence, (Baron, 2008). Such code-switching and modulation of language use indicate the intricate relationship between language, identity, and social dynamics in virtual communities. Furthermore, online communities are hotbeds for the co-creating linguistic resources and shared lexicons that encapsulate group identities and values. Users often craft and share specialised vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and inside jokes, contributing to a distinctive digital vernacular that enhances group identity and belonging, (Zappavigna, 2012). This process of lexical innovation and appropriation is a testament to the dynamic nature of language in online environments and its role in shaping digital cultures.

0.3.2. WhatsApp as a Linguistic Ecosystem

WhatsApp has become an integral part of the daily lives of university students, and its impact on their linguistic behaviours is significant. The app's features, such as the use of emojis, abbreviations, and informal language, have created a unique linguistic ecosystem that is shaping the way students communicate and interact with each other. The study will explore the role of the WhatsApp app in shaping academic discourse. The use of WhatsApp has become a ubiquitous feature of university life, with students using the app to communicate with their peers, share information, and collaborate on academic projects. According to Crystal (2017) the use of language in digital environments has created new forms of communication that are distinct from

traditional face-to-face interactions. WhatsApp, in particular, has become a popular platform for students to communicate with each other, share information, and collaborate on academic projects. Crystal argues that, technological constraints of the medium shape the use of language in digital environments, the social context of communication, and the individual's communicative goals.

In the WhatsApp context, emojis, abbreviations, and informal language have become a common feature of students' linguistic behaviours. As Davidson (2017), notes, using emojis and abbreviations in WhatsApp allow students to communicate quickly and efficiently, without the need for formal language. This has created a new form of communication that is distinct from traditional written language, and it has become a defining feature of the WhatsApp linguistic ecosystem. However, using informal language on WhatsApp has also raised concerns about the impact on students' academic writing skills. According to Connolly (2017) using informal language in digital environments can lead to a lack of attention to grammatical accuracy, spelling, and punctuation. This can have negative consequences for students' academic writing, leading to a lack of clarity and coherence in their writing.

University students use WhatsApp for various academic purposes, including group study sessions, project coordination, and informal peer-to-peer learning. This has led to the development of a hybrid linguistic register that blends the informality of peer interactions with the more structured language of academic discourse. Researchers like (Thurlow 2003, Baron2008) have noted that students often employ a casual style that includes slang, abbreviations, and emojis. Yet, they can switch to a more formal register when discussing academic content. This flexibility in language use reflects the dual role of WhatsApp as both a social and educational tool, allowing students to easily navigate between different communicative contexts.

The role of WhatsApp in shaping academic discourse extends beyond mere communication; it influences how knowledge is constructed and shared within student communities. Bouhnik & Deshen (2014), argue that WhatsApp facilitates collaborative learning, where students can engage in peer-to-peer discourse, enhancing their understanding of academic content. Additionally, Madge et al.(2019), suggest that the platform's immediacy and accessibility support the development of a supportive academic community, where students can share

resources, discuss ideas, and provide feedback in real-time. This collaborative environment fosters a sense of belonging and collective identity among students, reflected in their language.

Furthermore, the use of WhatsApp has also created new opportunities for students to engage in academic discussions and share ideas. As Bayne & Ross (2015), argue that the use of digital technologies has created new forms of participation and engagement that are shaping how students interact with each other and their lecturers. WhatsApp, in particular, has become a popular platform for students to discuss academic topics, share ideas, and collaborate on projects. The role of WhatsApp in shaping academic discourse is also significant. As Kovach (2017), notes the use of WhatsApp has created new forms of communication that are shaping the way students interact with each other and with their lecturers. The app's features, such as group chats and file sharing, have made it easier for students to collaborate on academic projects and share information. This has created a new form of scholarly discourse that is distinct from traditional classroom interactions.

Likewise, the use of WhatsApp has also created new opportunities for students to engage in peer-to-peer learning and collaborative learning. Johnson (2017), argues that the use of digital technologies has created new forms of collaboration that are shaping how students learn and interact. WhatsApp, in particular, has become a popular platform for students to collaborate on academic projects, share information, and provide feedback to each other. In addition, using WhatsApp has also created new opportunities for students to engage in self-directed and personalised learning. Morrison (2017), notes digital technologies have created new forms of personalised learning that are shaping how students learn and interact with the curriculum. WhatsApp, in particular, has become a popular platform for students to access educational resources, share information, and engage in self-directed learning. Thus, the linguistic behaviours of university students on WhatsApp are shaped by the app's features and the social context of the communication.

The significance of WhatsApp in this research is paramount, as it does not only sets the stage for the discussion but also shapes the perspectives of both the researcher and the reader regarding the unfolding trends within the study. This platform serves as a critical case study, illustrating how digital communication tools influence language use and social interaction in contemporary society. As such, exploring WhatsApp's impact will provide deeper insights into the evolving

nature of communication in the digital age, highlighting its role in shaping linguistic practices and social connections. In an era characterised by digital interconnectedness, WhatsApp instant messaging has emerged as an omnipresent mode of communication, encompassing broad and global usage. This platform has gathered significant attention from scholars, particularly among students, due to its pervasive nature. The present research endeavours to investigate and elucidate the lexical features employed by level four students in the Department of English at the University of Yaounde 1, in their WhatsApp interactions, with the goal to show the involvedness of language adaptation and evolution within this unique online environment. This introductory discussion lays the groundwork for the ensuing research, displaying a synopsis of the topics to be explored in this study. In essence, it presents the research motivation, articulates the statement of the problem, outlines the research aim, delineates the research objectives, poses pertinent research questions, elucidates the significance of the study, defines the scope of the investigation, expounds upon critical concepts, and provides a structural overview of the work.

0.5. Research Motivation

The evolution of lexical features on social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp, presents a compelling research focus due to the growing trend of online communication among students in Cameroon. With the increasing availability of the internet because of government-led E-learning initiatives and the distribution of laptops to state university students, there has been a noticeable surge in digital interactions for various purposes such as studying, research, entertainment, and communication. The motivation for this research stems from observing how students strategically adapt and shape text messages on WhatsApp to cater for their communication needs. This phenomenon has sparked an interest in exploring the computational nature of lexicons as a potential criterion for evaluating the quality of text messages. Through its focus on the role of lexical innovation in online communication, this study seeks to provide valuable perspectives that not only deepen our understanding of digital discourse but also contribute towards improving communication practices among students in Cameroon.

0.6. Statement of the Problem

While the use of WhatsApp among students for communication is widespread, there is a noticeable gap in the research focusing on the linguistic features that have emerged within this digital space. The influence of social media on language use, such as the increasing use of

abbreviations, neologisms, slangs, non-standard spellings, code switching, and emoticons, has significantly influenced communication patterns. These emerging lexical features does not only shape the way messages are conveyed but also play a role in the limitations of creative expression and the adherence to grammatical rules in text messaging. The prevalence of these lexical deviations in computer-mediated communication raises questions about the evolving nature of language in the digital age. Terms such as netspeak, chatspeak, cyberslang, and weblish have emerged to describe the language of the media, reflecting the impact of digital platforms on linguistic conventions. Furthermore, the addictive nature of platforms like WhatsApp, evidenced by the increasing number of users and the significant amount of time students spend on them, has raised concerns about the impact of informal language use on communication. While some view the use of abbreviations, slang, and colloquial expressions as a form of creativity or language evolution, there are concerns about the potential negative implications of such non-standard linguistic practices, particularly in terms of altering traditional language structures and conventions among students. This shift in language behaviour prompts a critical examination of the implications for communication and language use in contemporary digital contexts.

0.7 Research Aim

The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the lexical features used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp forums and explore how they adapt and shape language to suit the specific online context of this platform.

0.8 Research Objectives

This research seeks to examine the use of lexical features in WhatsApp communication among Masters 1 students to achieve the following objectives:

- 1 To analyse and categorise the diverse lexical choices of Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages. This objective aims to provide a detailed understanding of the lexical features used by students in digital communication.
- 2 To investigate the frequency of occurrence of different types of lexical features in the text messages of Masters 1 students on WhatsApp. This aims to illustrate the patterns and trends in students' language use in digital discourse.
- 3 To understand the language trends, patterns, and vocabulary selections used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp interactions. This objective seeks to examine students'

linguistic preferences and communication styles within the digital realm, focusing on the evolving language dynamics in contemporary digital communication platforms.

0.9 Research Questions

In pursuit of the outlined research objectives, the following questions have been formulated to guide the study:

- 1) What lexical choices are used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages?
- 2) What is the frequency of occurrence of different lexical features in their interactions?
- 3) How do social, linguistic, and technological factors influence the usage of lexical features on WhatsApp among Masters 1 students?

0.10 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant importance for both the media industry and linguistic scholars, especially within the unique context of Cameroon. Since the research focuses on the diverse lexical features present in digital communication such as slangs, non-standard spellings, and abbreviations, it will serve as an invaluable resource for media professionals and language enthusiasts seeking to understand the dynamic nature of language in digital spaces.

Likewise, educators will find this study beneficial as it provides perspectives into the specific lexical features use in text messaging. This knowledge can inform teaching strategies, and help teachers adapt their approaches to enhance digital literacy and communication skills among students. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the knowledge base on lexical features, offering new perspectives for linguistic research and educational practices.

Increasing awareness among language users about the evolving lexical features identified in this study is essential for fostering a deeper understanding of language adaptation in digital environments. The findings of this research can be applied as a practical guide in secondary schools and universities to support language education and empower students with effective communication tools.

Beyond its immediate implications, the researcher's exploration and acquisition of new knowledge throughout this study will not only benefit her personal development but also contribute to the broader academic community. Enriching the literature on digital communication and lexical features, this research has the potential to inspire further scholarly inquiry and

encourage other researchers to explore the complexities of language evolution in contemporary digital contexts. The study's findings will thus pave the way for scholarly discourse and research in media linguistics.

0.11 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on lexicology, specifically examining lexical features within WhatsApp communication. The collected written text will be sourced from WhatsApp platforms for analysis. The study is limited to investigating language features within the confines of WhatsApp, a popular social media platform. Furthermore, the research will center on the University of Yaounde 1 at Ngoa – Ekelle in the Center Region of Cameroon. Specifically, the study will be conducted within the Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences (FALSS), focusing on the Department of English. The sample population will consist of Level 4 students from this department. The data collection period for this research is the 2022 to 2023 academic year. 85 students who use WhatsApp will participate in the quantitative analysis, these same 85 students who are members of the Level 4 class from the Department of English serve as informants for the qualitative analysis.

0.12 Definition of Key Concepts

Discursive

The term "discursive" is rooted in the Latin "discursus," which translates to "running to and fro." In scientific and academic contexts, it refers to how language is used to construct meaning, convey ideas, and engage in social interaction. Discursive practices are central to understanding how communication functions in various settings, including digital platforms such as WhatsApp. According to Gee (2014) discourse is not merely about language; it encompasses the social practices and contextual factors that shape how language is produced and interpreted.

Discursive analysis focuses on the relationship between language and social power, examining how language shapes discourse and is shaped by social structures. Foucault (1972), posited that discourse is a means through which power is exercised and maintained in society. He argued that discursive formations influence not only how individuals perceive reality but also how they engage with it. This perspective is crucial for the lexical features and communicative strategies students employ in their WhatsApp conversations, as it highlights the interplay between language and social dynamics.

In digital communication, the discursive approach emphasises the importance of context in shaping language use. Context includes the physical and temporal circumstances surrounding communication, and the cultural and social frameworks that inform participants' interactions. Hodge & Kress (1988), noted understanding the context of communication is essential for interpreting the meanings constructed in discourse. In this study, the specific context of academic life, peer relationships, and digital communication norms significantly influence the lexical choices and stylistic features observed in students' WhatsApp conversations.

Analysis: McCarthy (1991), defines analysis as breaking down a complex topic or substance into smaller parts to enhance comprehension. This involves dissecting an object into its constituent or original elements, whether tangible or intellectual.

Lexemes: A lexeme constitutes a fundamental unit of language, encompassing a single word or a cluster of words whose individual components do not independently convey the complete meaning. According to Wikipedia, a lexeme is a foundational abstract unit of meaning that connects a group of words via inflection. Derived from the noun lexeme, the term lexicology – originating from the Greek words “lexico” and “logy,” denoting 'word' and 'study' respectively – refers to the branch of linguistics concerned with the vocabulary of a language.

Lexicology: Nordquist (2019), characterises lexicology as the area of linguistic study focusing on the vocabulary or lexicon of a given language. Beyond simple words, lexicology encompasses examining complex and compound words, as well as the meaningful units comprising a language's lexical inventory. Halliday (2004) further elaborates that lexicology entails the study of content words or lexical items encompassing nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, and conjunctions. Furthermore, Cruse(1986),elucidates that lexicology, a term derived from the Greek morphemes lexicon (meaning “words”) and logos (denoting “learning”), serves as a branch of linguistics that investigates various properties of words and the vocabulary of a language. Central to lexicology are words, variable word groups, phraseological units, and morphemes that constitute these words. Ginzburg, et al.(1979), assert that lexicology represents “the science of the word,” serving as a pivotal branch of linguistic science that intersects with other linguistic domains. Phonetics explores the outer sound form of words, while grammar focuses on the grammatical structure of language, thereby being intricately linked with lexicology. Notably, lexicology focuses on words, word-forming morphemes, word groups, and

phrases, all harbour distinct layers of meaning, emphasising semasiology's role within lexicology. Semasiology transcends the mere analysis of lexicons to encompass morphology, syntax, and semantics, culminating in a comprehensive study of word meaning within the broader framework of language structures. Lexicology according to Cruse (1986), derives from the Greek morphemes “lexicon” meaning “words” and “logos” denoting “learning” or “a department of knowledge,” and is a branch of linguistics that deals with various properties of words and the vocabulary of a language. It focuses on words, variable word groups, phraseological units, and morphemes that constitute the lexical components of a language. In addition, lexicology studies language vocabulary's origin, structure, and usage of language vocabulary, exploring the interrelationship between words, such as synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms

Lexical Features: Manning & Schütze (1999) ,describe lexical features as words or terms used within a text, highlighting aspects such as their frequency, distribution, and relationships with other words in the same text. Jurafsky & Martin (2000), support this notion, stating that lexical features encompass characteristics like frequency, length, and part of speech, which aid in text analysis and comprehension. In addition, Biber et al.(1998), further elaborate on lexical features, emphasising their role in exploring the properties of words in a text, including semantic meaning, syntactic roles, and collocation patterns. Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding of how lexical features contribute to the analysis and interpretation of texts.

Language: Sweet (1900), elucidates language as the medium through which ideas are conveyed through speech and sounds organised into words, and these words collectively form sentences facilitating the transformation of ideas into thought. Crystal (2004), describes language as the systematic and customary use of sounds, symbols, or written signs in human societies for communication and self-expression. Bloch & Trager (1942),attribute language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols that enable social groups to collaborate effectively. Chomsky(1960), regards language as an inherent part of human cognition, physically represented in the brain, and a fundamental aspect of the human species. Saussure (1916), defines language as a conventionally constructed system of signs, emphasising its status as a social phenomenon with synchronic and diachronic dimensions. Halliday (1968), views language as a semiotic system, not solely comprising signs but as a structured resource for conveying meaning within social

contexts. Language, as stated by Bonvillain(2019) and Canale (2014), serves as a comprehensive tool for communication, incorporating sounds, expressions, symbols, or marks to facilitate idea exchange, emotional expression, and social interactions.

WhatsApp: Acton & Koum (2009), conceptualise WhatsApp as a freeware, cross-platform instant messaging application that enables users to communicate through text, voice messages, video calls, and multimedia sharing. Forbes(2015), describes WhatsApp as a popular messaging platform for connecting with friends and family through diverse communication modes. The app allows synchronous sharing of text messages, photos, videos, geographical locations, and contact information. McKiernan(2016) and Alqahtani et al.(2018), note WhatsApp's popularity among university students as a leading messaging app for information exchange and peer interactions.

Platform: In the realm of digital communication, a platform refers to a virtual space or software system that facilitates interactions, content sharing, and collaboration among users. According to Gauntlett (2011) a platform serves as a medium for individuals to engage with each other, exchange information, and create and share content within a structured online environment. Platforms play a crucial role in shaping the communication dynamics and social interactions of users, providing a framework for information dissemination and community building. The WhatsApp platform serves as a central hub for connecting with others, sharing messages, media, and engaging in real-time conversations. As noted by Levine (2016), the design and functionality of a platform such as WhatsApp can significantly influence the nature and quality of communication experiences among its users, shaping the ways in which individuals interact and share information within the digital space.

Interactivity: Interactivity refers to the degree to which users can actively engage with and respond to digital content, applications, or communication channels. According to Rafaeli & Sudweeks(1997) interactivity in communication technology allows for two-way communication, enabling users to participate, exchange information, and engage in a reciprocal dialogue with others. In the context of WhatsApp users, interactivity plays a critical role in fostering meaningful connections and enabling real-time communication among individuals. Li & Leckenby (2015), emphasise that the interactive features of messaging apps like WhatsApp, such as instant messaging, voice calls, and multimedia sharing, enhance user engagement and facilitate dynamic exchanges between users. The level of interactivity within a digital platform

can impact the user experience and shape the nature of communication interactions among individuals within the WhatsApp ecosystem Baecker (1995).

Privacy: Privacy, in the context of digital communication and social networking platforms like WhatsApp, pertains to the protection and control of personal information shared and exchanged between users. Westin(1967),defines privacy as the ability of individuals to determine when, how, and to what extent their personal data is collected, stored, and shared with others. Maintaining privacy on WhatsApp involves safeguarding one's personal information, conversations, and media shared on the platform from unauthorised access or misuse. Critics such as Boyd & Marwick (2011), highlight the importance of privacy in digital communication spaces and emphasise the need for platforms like WhatsApp to prioritise user data protection and security. Ensuring privacy on WhatsApp is essential for fostering trust among users, safeguarding sensitive information, and creating a safe and secure environment for communication and social interactions, as underscored by Solove (2008).

0.13 Conclusion

This introductory section has provided a foundational framework for the study by expanding beyond essential preliminary aspects such as the research topic, background to the study, aim, objectives, questions, problems, motivation, significance, scope, and key term definitions. These preliminary considerations have laid the groundwork for the subsequent exploration of the core themes and findings presented in this study. Establishing a clear context and setting the stage for the research to unfold, this section serves as a gateway to the more in-depth analysis and perspectives that will be explored further in the following sections. The foundational elements outlined here not only guide the direction of the study but also provide a reflective mirror through which the research aims and objectives can be viewed and understood in the broader context of the study. As the study progresses, the groundwork laid in this introductory section will continue to inform and shape the descriptions, contributing to understanding the topic at hand.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0.Introduction

This chapter is structured around two key components: a thorough literature review and establishing a theoretical framework. As Flick (2006: 58, cited in Mankanchang 2010), aptly points out, virtually every researchable topic is interconnected with existing fields of knowledge, challenging the notion that entirely novel areas for study exist. In alignment with this perspective, this section within the chapter will focus on a comprehensive review of both published and unpublished sources that offer perspectives, ideas, and empirical evidence related to our research topic, duly acknowledging and referencing relevant works.

2.1 Literature Review

The primary focus of this study will be to conduct a thematic analysis of literature from various authors within our subject area, demonstrating the alignment of our research with contemporary trends in the exploration of lexical features. This review aims to identify gaps in the current understanding of the topic and establish the rationale for undertaking this study. Our analysis will encompass three main forms of media: print media (such as newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (including television and radio), and social media platforms (specifically WhatsApp, Facebook, and email). Additionally, this chapter's subsequent section will focus on exploring and elucidating pertinent theories underpinning our area of study.

2.1.2Lexical Features in Print Media

Print media is essential in influencing public opinion and disseminating information to a broad audience. One critical element contributing to the efficacy of print media is the use of lexical features. These features including; vocabulary selection, tone, and style, aid in communicating the desired message and capturing readers' attention. Therefore, this study will review the works of other authors in this field.

Taiwo (2014), in his study examined the lexical, structural, and rhetorical features of Nigerian English print media. Data were sourced from national Nigerian English newspapers, and

linguistic analyses were conducted to identify distinctive features. The study revealed specific lexical features such as acronyms, abbreviations, and compound words, alongside structural elements like omitting conjunctions and verbs. Rhetorical devices such as metaphors, alliteration, and puns were also observed. Taiwo employed the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theoretical framework and adopted a qualitative research design, particularly using discourse analysis to assess language use in print media texts. The findings indicated that the aforementioned features in Nigerian newspapers not only serve an informative purpose but also contribute to creating stylistic effects. They establish a unique linguistic structure for newspapers, setting them apart from other forms of language use.

Comparatively, Taiwo's study shares similarities with our research as both investigate the usage of lexical features in the media. However, Taiwo focuses on print media, while our study is specific to social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp. While Taiwo's analysis concentrates on limited lexical features such as acronyms, abbreviations, and compound words, our study offers a comprehensive examination of lexical characteristics. Furthermore, Taiwo's work encompasses structural and rhetorical features, whereas our research solely concentrates on lexical aspects. Taiwo employed the SFL framework, while our study used the Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis frame, and the Social Construction of Technology frame theoretical frameworks. Our research adopted a mixed-method design incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to analyse and describe data, in contrast to Taiwo's qualitative approach using discourse analysis. Additionally, Taiwo conducted his study in Nigeria in 2014, whereas our research is a more recent investigation conducted in Cameroon in 2023.

In a similar vein, Yingxia et al. (2014), conducted a study analysing lexical features in English broadsheets and tabloids, aiming to compare lexical characteristics between these two distinct styles of English newspapers: broadsheets, such as The New York Times and The Times, and tabloids, like The New York Post and the Sun. The research specifically examined five lexical aspects, including the use of compound words, numbers, proper nouns, fuzzy words, and vivid language, through the critical discourse analysis (CDA) theoretical framework. Data was collected from broadsheets in the United States and the United Kingdom, with the selected samples reporting on the same subject matter. The findings from the study showed that compound words are preferred in both broadsheet and tabloid reports. As for the use of fuzzy

words, the total quantity of fuzzy words used in broadsheets was greater than that in tabloids concerning numbers; broadsheets used more numbers in stories and events than tabloids. Using vivid words does not present much difference between broadsheets and tabloids. On the other hand, how much one understands and commands these words depends greatly on the language level of the readers. Both studies centered on the media and the analysis of lexical feats. Our differences come in the media types, while they focused on print media, specifically broadsheets and tabloids. Our study focused on social media, limited to WhatsApp only. They handled lexical features under five aspects, whereas ours is broader. Yingxia et al. did a comparative study employing a qualitative research design using the CDA frame lens, ours is a descriptive study with a mixed-methods research design, and the CMDA and the SCOT were used as the framework. Their study was carried out in 2014, whereas our study was recently carried out in 2023.

Tabé (2015), investigated the contribution of the Cameroonian print media in the development of Cameroonian English (CamE) and the English language as a whole. Data was collected from 200 issues of the Cameroon Tribune, the Herald, and the Post newspapers from 2008–2014. World English was used as a theoretical frame to back up the study, and a qualitative research design was used to analyse the data. After analysis, her study revealed that print media sources enrich CamE with loan words from mother tongues, borrowed nominal elements from Cameroon pidgin English (CPE) and French, coinages, idioms, stylistic devices, and devices, and deviant prepositions.

This work is similar to ours in that we both handled the media, but she focused on Cameroon print media while our work focused on social media (WhatsApp only). Another similarity is that we both carried out our studies in Cameroon.

On a point of divergence, our study identified and described lexical features on WhatsApp, whereas Tabé, analysed the contribution of Cameroonian print media in the development of Cameroonian English and the English language as a whole, and her study unravelled not only lexical items, but it went beyond. World English was used as a theoretical frame, while CMDA and SCOT were employed in our study as theoretical frames. Another difference sets in at the level of research designs. Our study used a mixed research design, whereas the researcher used just a qualitative research design. Her study was carried out in 2015, while ours is a recent study carried out in 2023.

Dai & Anna (2021), identified the specific and distinguishing features of the stylistic system of the Chinese language, particularly the journalistic style, which is a kind of literary written Chinese language and is widely used in almost all mass media. Lexical features of newspaper-publicist style in Chinese media texts were identified and described. The article named not only those features that are common both for Russian and Chinese languages (widespread use of terminology, emotionality, colloquial and familiar words and turns, phraseological expressions), but also features of newspaper and publicity texts in the Chinese language that are related to the specifics of its development and structure (publicity, the tendency to use Baihua, the propensity to reduce abstraction, the use of phrases from three to four morpheme-hieroglyphics, the propensity to use colloquial vocabulary, and the use of adjectives with emotional coloring). This study used the Systematic Functional Linguistic theoretical frame and a qualitative research design, precisely a discourse analysis approach, to analyse and interpret the language data in their study.

The researchers explained that functional language styles serve social, political, economic, cultural, and other areas of human life, and are widely used in studies and life. The Chinese language's journalistic style has unique linguistic features that give us a better understanding of Chinese media texts and help us identify the specific and distinguishing features of the stylistic system of the Chinese language.

Hamza et al. (2013), analysed the lexical features of the language used by various columnists in Nigerian newspapers. The corpus consisted of five texts selected from different Nigerian newspapers. To carry out the study, a descriptive and discursive approach was adopted as methods of investigation with the aid of qualitative research, precisely a content analysis approach to examine and interpret the discourse patterns in the study. The texts were therefore subjected to analysis to find out how the columnists selected words to meet the needs of the mass audience. Being a corpus-based analysis, the texts were analysed, but for this study, Leech and Short's (1985) approach was adopted. The method is based on a linguistic checklist that focuses on analysing literary texts, which can also apply to non-literary texts. The checklist consists of four (4) categories: lexical category, grammatical category, figures of speech, context, and cohesion. The Leech and Short (1985) approach is adopted because it provides a detailed level of analysis of texts. In addition, Crystal and Davy's (1969) linguistic model was adopted. Their

approach encourages analysis at all linguistic levels, which include graphitic, and graphology, phonetics and phonology, and grammar or syntax. The discursive approach adopted was therefore, eclectic and focused on only the lexical features. These approaches will help to look at the language use, the variations, how the columnists generally select language, etc. The critical discourse analysis theoretical framework provided the lens for this study. The analysis showed that columnists do not use technical vocabulary much in their articles. However, the vocabulary was noted as subject-specific; that is, the columnists' topic or subject being handled determined the prevalent words.

The columnists used pronouns frequently to show emphasis and make reference to themselves especially the first-person singular pronoun, that is, I. Though the reading sounds boring and monotonous, clear reference has been achieved. Unlike writings on technical fields, which have common registers, the selections of Hamza's lexemes by the columnists depend on the subject matter and the individual writer's experience. In other words, the choice of words is idiosyncratic since it is based on an individual style.

The analysis of the lexical features revealed that columnists selected vocabulary that relates to an issue they write about. The vocabulary is therefore idiosyncratic and subject-specific. They are mostly jargon since they were selected to present opinions, not conventional or universal facts. The analysis carried out revealed that columnists used a lot of nouns metaphorically to convey the content of their message. In a similar vein, adjectives were employed to give a vivid picture of an issue or event to the mass audience. It is not easy, therefore, to pin point regular lexical items across columns, but it should be done based on a specific issue treated in a column. What seems to be uniform is that most of the words are everyday words. This entails that the mass audience can easily read and comprehend the articles.

While this study was carried out in Nigeria in 2013, ours was carried out in Cameroon in 2023. The study dwelled on print media, whereas our study focused on social media WhatsApp, to be precise. This study went beyond lexical features and surfaced grammatical categories, figures of speech, context, and cohesion, whereas our study failed to outline and was limited to lexical features. The CDA theoretical frame was used as a lens for analysis, while our study used CMDA and the SCOT as frames for analysis. A content analysis approach was employed in both studies.

Geim(2020), identified the lexical and stylistic features of headlines in Italian newspapers. The data for this study was the headlines of articles published in the Italian newspapers *Corriere della Sera*, *La Stampa*, *IlMessaggero*, and *IlSole24ore*, among Italy's most popular periodicals. The purpose of the presented article was to identify the means of expressiveness used by journalists of printed publications in Italy to attract readers' attention, having analysed the lexical and stylistic peculiarities of Italian newspaper headlines.

The specificity of the newspaper-journalistic style is its remarkable expressiveness. One of the characteristic features of newspaper expression is the expressive power of headlines. The most striking characteristics of newspaper article headlines are informative content and impact strength. It is also essential to identify the lexical and stylistic features of headlines, which is what the researcher did. Therefore, this article discusses the features of vocabulary and stylistic tools that contribute to the expressiveness of headlines in Italian newspapers. He used the method of continuous sampling of language material for the study with the aid of a qualitative research design, which was a corpus-based analysis approach, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis, which are necessary when describing the peculiarities of the titles of newspaper articles. These research methods help gather facts, systematise them, identify dependencies, and determine causes and consequences; all these were achieved thanks to the SFL theoretical framework that guided the study.

After analysing the data, it was found that, in the newspaper style, the most common means of giving special expressiveness to headlines are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, foreign language vocabulary, and comparison. The presence of such means as the non-use of verbs or the use of abbreviations is a distinctive feature of newspaper headlines, since one of their most important characteristics is their brevity. In addition, many titles contain interrogative sentences, encouraging the reader to take action and make them think and analyse what they read.

Geim's study projected both lexical and stylistic features on newspapers, whereas our work focused only on lexical features on WhatsApp. His study was conducted in Italy in 2020, and ours was carried out in Cameroon in 2023. SFL was used as a frame in his study, while the CMDA and the SCOT were used as frames in our study. Both studies were corpus-based.

2.1.3 Lexical Features in Broadcast Media

Broadcast media, due to its ability to reach a vast audience simultaneously, relies heavily on lexical features to convey messages effectively, engage viewers, establish brand identity,

maintain credibility, and promote cultural sensitivity. In this context, this research will examine existing literature on broadcast media to gain perspectives and identify research gaps.

Dumitrascu & Maruntelu (2017), conducted a lexical analysis of advertising radio discourse to outline and define the specific lexical characteristics of this type of discourse and emphasize its uniqueness in promotional messages. Employing critical discourse analysis as the theoretical framework, the study revealed that using lexical and grammatical items not only captured listeners' attention but also served persuasive and seductive purposes.

The common ground between their research and ours lies in exploring media and lexical items. While Dumitrascu & Maruntelu examined broadcast media, our study focused on social media, specifically WhatsApp. Their research encompassed both lexical and grammatical elements, whereas our work concentrates solely on lexical features. Using the CDA framework for theoretical guidance, our study adopted the CMDA and the SCOT theories. Furthermore, their study was conducted in 2017 in Romania, contrasts with ours, which was carried out more recently in 2023 in Cameroon.

In another study, Aditya (2020), analysed the lexical features in English advertisement taglines, classifying and examining lexical attributes. Data collection involved English advertisement taglines during prime time on a local television station in Indonesia, using the document analysis method and a qualitative research approach, specifically content analysis. With the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory as the theoretical framework, six lexical features were categorised: colloquial words, coinage, loanwords, compound word usage, phrasal verbs, and evaluative adjectives. The study highlighted the dominance of colloquial words, verbs, and adjectives in English advertisement taglines during prime time, employing monosyllabic words for added impact.

Aditya's research shares similarities with our study, particularly in examining media through different lenses. While Aditya focused on broadcast media, we focused on social media, specifically WhatsApp chat. Additionally, Aditya's analysis included both lexical and grammatical aspects, whereas our study concentrated solely on lexical features. The research locations and timeframes also differed, with Aditya's study conducted in Indonesia in 2020 and our study in 2023 in Cameroon. Another difference sets in at the level of theories used; while the researcher used the SFT theory our study employed both the CMDA and the SCOT theories.

Furthermore, Novriyanto (2010), investigated the lexical features of newspaper headlines, comparing English and Indonesian online newspapers. Data collection involved headlines from The Sydney Morning Herald (English) and Gorontalo Post (Indonesian), with quantitative analysis revealing similarities and differences in lexical features and linguistic attributes within headlines. Using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, the study explored the forms and structures of newspaper headlines in both languages, identifying differences in the use of nouns, active voice, verb omission, tenses, conjunctions, prepositions, and acronyms.

Novriyanto's study, involved a comparative analysis using a quantitative research design, whereas ours focused on descriptive methodology. While SFL theory guided Novriyanto's research, our study incorporated the CMDA and the SCOT theories. Additionally, the study was conducted in Indonesia in 2010, distinct from our research in Cameroon in 2023. Both studies addressed lexical features, with Novriyanto's focused on lexical and grammatical features, whereas our research concentrated on lexical elements exclusively.

In continuation with broadcast media, Supanee(2022), carried out a comparative study of both grammatical characteristics and lexical features of online news headlines of the Bangkok post website and compared it with the printed version. Data for this study was collected from 525 online news headlines of the Bangkok post website and analysed qualitatively with the support of the SFL theoretical framework. The analysis of sample headlines revealed that both online headlines and headlines in print media are mainly in the uncomplicated sentence structure using the present simple tense followed by headlines of other constructions. Regarding the lexical features of lexicon in both types of headlines, they employ short words such as; abbreviations, acronyms and clipping. In addition to this, they employ various stylistic devices such as foreign words, idioms, jargon expressions and reporting verbs. As for comparing online news headlines and headlines in print reporting the same issue, the online news headlines are generally longer than the headlines in print.

The differences between both studies are glaring, the case study of this piece of work is both print media and broadcast media, while our case study is just on social media specifically WhatsApp. Another difference is that, the researcher did a comparative study whereas our study is descriptive. The study further looked at both grammatical and lexical characteristics, meanwhile our study described only lexical features. SFL was used as a frame to guide the study, while our study used the CMDA and the SCOT theories as guide. This study

was carried out in Bangkok, Thailand, while ours was carried out in Yaounde, Cameroon and there is a year's difference between both studies. The study limited lexical features to four types namely; clipping, acronyms, abbreviations and short words, while our study did an extensive description of lexical features.

Algernas & Aldoholmi (2021), addressed two questions: 1) how does language variety (dialectal vs. standard) affect listener's lexical recall in commercial advertisements? 2) Do listeners recall words that have appeared in dialectal advertisements better than those that did not appear in advertisements using the same variety? Fifteen Saudi participants responded to a forced-choice memory test with 24 yes-no questions (3 per advertisement) asking them to report whether they heard a specific key word in eight advertisements using different language varieties. The findings revealed that Arabic speakers tend to perceive both Modern Standard Arabic and dialectal Arabic in commercial advertisements similarly, but tend to recall the presence of a key word in an advertisement better than its absence. Future research may increase the sample size and examine more Arabic varieties.

Roberto et al. (2021), explored the words lexically loaned from the English language in the Chabacano language. The study is anchored in the phylogenetic change theory made by Hockett, (2008) and the deficit hypothesis authored by Kachru (1994). Raw data was taken from the analysis on Dateline Zamboanga, a local teleradyo program airing regularly on both television and radio broadcasts. The borrowed English words were then tallied and sorted based on lexical categories, patterns, affixation, and semantic fields. The results gave the impression that the interlocutors in Dateline Zamboanga incorporated English utterances into the Chabacano language, thus modifying the former to suit their communicative purposes.

The examination of the lexical borrowing of English words in Chabacano television newscasts of Dateline Zamboanga, came out with results indicating that borrowed English nouns are the most frequently used lexical category across all episodes, totalling 270 occurrences. Moreover, the language genre of broadcasting fortifies the need to morphemically borrow English utterances and turn them into verbs to achieve vivid and intense narratives of events and communicative efficiency; and (4) the high frequency of borrowed words related to government offices or agencies, titles or designations, and giving honours suggested the need to maintain bureaucratic identity. At the same time, professional or technical jargon is used to retain their

technical meaning vis-à-vis the impact of today's technological advances Using glossaries to increase the lexical coverage of television programs.

Differences between both studies are as follow: the study handled English lexical borrowing in both television and radio broadcasts, while our study handled lexical features on WhatsApp students' text messages. Broadcast media and social media make a difference. The study went beyond lexical categories and looked at the semantic field. The study used both Phylogenetic change theory made by Hockett (2008) and the Deficit Hypothesis theory by Kachru (1994) as theoretical frames. In contrast, our study used the CMDA and the SCOT theories as frames.

Lastly, Stuart (2010), examined how much glossaries may affect the lexical coverage (percentage of known words) in television programs. The transcripts of 51 episodes of 2 television programs (House and Grey's Anatomy) were analysed using Range (Heatley, Nation, & Coxhead, 2002) to create glossaries consisting of the low-frequency (less frequent than the 3,000-word level) word families that were encountered 10 or more times in each program. The results showed that coverage of the glossaries was 1.31% for Grey's Anatomy and 2.26% for House. This was greater than the coverage of the 3,001–4,000 most frequent word families in both programs. The cumulative coverage including the glossaries at the 3,000-word level, increased to 96.00% for House and 97.20% for Grey's Anatomy. The findings indicate that glossaries can potentially improve comprehension of television programs.

A distinct niche in this work lies in its focus on broadcast (television and radio) media compared to social media platforms, diverging from our study in Cameroon conducted in 2023. While this research adopted a theoretical framework centred on vocabulary acquisition and retention, our study employed the CMDA and the SCOT theories for guidance, showcasing differing methodological approaches – qualitative for this study and mixed methods in our research. Both studies share a common emphasis on lexical features but illuminate unique facets within their respective media domains.

2.1.4 Lexical Features on Social Media

In today's digital age, social media platforms have become powerful tools for communication, information sharing and networking. As users navigate through the vast sea of content on social media, the role of lexical features becomes increasingly important in shaping perceptions and influencing behaviour. With this note, this research will review the works of other authors in this field of study.

Alobwede (2023), asserted that text messaging is drastically influencing the quality of the written rendition of standard English at the different faculties of the University of Yaoundé 1. This deviant usage is not only the result of word contraction in students' sentences but equally the results of the frequent use of non standard spellings interference, abbreviation, or alphanumeric, which are common features in texting. His study is based on the premise that the continuous use of text messaging on social media by some users of Standard English in Cameroon is a cause for concern that merits investigation, given its negative influence. The negative effects of the text messaging on the written renditions of students in the use of standard English which leads to their poor handling of grammatical rules in the construction of sentences was equally spelled out. The findings of his study revealed that students tend to reproduce in their scripts text message features such as abbreviations, word shortening, acronyms, non standards spelling forms, and improper punctuation markers, word combination and alphanumeric. The meeting point for Alobwede's study and ours is social media and university of Yaoundé 1 as case study, with a touch on students' text messages. Both studies were conducted in Cameroon in 2023. While our study focuses only on students text messages on WhatsApp, he went further to examine the students' examination scripts, how text messages affects students' formal writings, thus, bringing in our first point of divergence. Alobwede used the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) to analyse how students communicate by emphasising or minimising the social difference between them and those with whom they interact while our study employed the Computer Mediated Discussion Analysis Theory (CMDA) and the Social of Construction Theory (SCOT) to analyse students' WhatsApp text messages. Data for his study was collected through questionnaire which was administered to both students and lecturers whereas our source of data collection was done through screenshots.

Sawalda (2023), conducted a study on deitic expressions in Cameroon social media with the aim to find out the various types of deixis namely; personal, temporal, spatial, social and discourse deixis. He used Levinson's (1983) theory of deixis to analyse data. He collected data from 464 francophone Cameroonian chats, 313 from WhatsApp, 118 from Facebook and 33 from meta chats. Data collection method was through screenshots and the researcher used a mixed method research to analyse the data obtained. The findings showed that the five types of deixis abound in all the selected social network platforms, with personal deixis as the predominant in the various post and the second person 'you' represents the highest rate of deixis used by Cameroonians on

WhatsApp, Facebook and message platform. An overall total of 104 (25.24%), 52 (42.98%) and 14 (48.28%) occurrences were noted respectively. It was equally noticed that time or temporal deixis followed person deixis being manifested through deitic words and place and spatial deixis attained through adverbs and demonstrative pronouns were also used to locate both writer and addressee in space. Finally discourse deixis falls upon this, these and that, whereas social deixis involves relational social deixis. This study mirrored some similarities with ours on the type of media we used, and the year both studies were conducted which was in 2023 in Cameroon. Both studies collected data through screenshots and used the mixed research methods to analyse data. Both studies diverged at the level of theories. The Computer Medated Discourse Analysis Theory (CMDA) and the Social construction of the theory were used as frameworks for analysis in our study whereas Sawalda used the Levinson's (1983) theory as analytical frame. Our platform was limited to WhatsApp, while the latter extended to Facebook and meta chats.

Tabé (2023), examined code-mixing and code-switching in Cameroon social media to find out the languages that are mixed or switched to, and the reasons for the phenomenon. Insights were drawn from the structural approach to code switching, which measures the degree to which an L2 is incorporated into an L1 or vice versa. Data for this study comprised of 245 100 e-mail messages, 60 from Facebook, and 85 from WhatsApp. Data was collected through screenshots with the use of android phones. A mixed research method was employed in this study. Findings revealed 48% of code mixing and code-switching from English to French, 18.4% from English to Cameroon pidgin English and 11.5% from English to home languages. It was concluded that Cameroonians mix or switch codes because of their multicultural and multilingual backgrounds. Both Tabé's study and ours were carried out in 2023 in Cameroon. And we used the same media, which is social media. While we limited our scope only on WhatsApp messages, Tabé extended hers to e-mail and Facebook. Both studies diverged at the levels of aims, our study aimed at identifying and describing lexical features on students' Whatsapp text messages, whereas hers aimed at examining semantic and syntactic ties which bind two languages in a single speech act as well as determined code-switching as an internalised grammatical system. She used the structural to CM/CS as a framework and we used the CMDA and SCOT as frameworks.

Nkemleke & Leinyuy (2020), observed that when physical distancing became a key safety measures throughout the world because of the outbreak of the corona virus it became imperative

for teachers to deliver content online to save the academic year, and WhatsApp suddenly became very popular amongst teachers and students at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) de Yaoundé. A WhatsApp forum was created for every course in the department of English. This study illustrates how Nkemleke and Leinyuy used a WhatsApp forum to run a class project on summary and writing, which required each student to watch a movie online and write a holistic summary of it. Participants for this study were 32 students. The findings as reported by the teachers was that, WhatsApp enhanced their writing skills, including the ability to write holistic summaries. Students' creativity was developed and academic horizons widened. It was stated that WhatsApp learning experience was better than the usual face to face class interaction. Conclusion arrived at was that there are clear benefits for using WhatsApp in the teaching and learning of writing since the students focused on writing conventions at textual level including hedging, meta discourse, lexical choices, interaction in text, cohesion and coherence. The merging point for both studies was on the type of media platforms used which was WhatsApp, and we both focused on higher education students in the department of English with a slight difference in that they focused on a teacher training college attached to the university of Yaoundé 1 while we focused on the student of the English department at the university of Yaoundé 1. Both studies were conducted in Cameroon. Our study is more recent since it was carried out in 2023 and theirs in 2020.

Drouin (2011), asserted that, due to the compact nature of the cell phone, its use has led to the development of a much abbreviated language variety referred to as "textese" with its unique abbreviated lexicogrammatical forms, emoticons and stylistic features. Drouin's participants were students from an American college, and the social network sites he used were; my space, Facebook and emails to professors. The social constructionist Theory guided the researcher in this study to realise findings. The findings show a negative effect on spelling and reading fluency. Relations between text messaging, frequency and literacy skills were positive. Drouin did a correlational analysis in his study, as compared to the experimental study which was carried out by Skierkowski & Wood a year later.

Both studies handled lexical features on social media, though this study used Facebook, my space and emails as case study, and our work used WhatsApp only. The researcher did his research in America in 2011, whereas our research was done in Cameroon, in 2023. The frame that guided this study was the Constructionist Theory, while the frame that guided our study was

the CMDA and the SCOT theories. Analysis in this study was correlational, whereas ours was descriptive.

Skierkowski & Wood (2012), observed the use of text messaging by adolescents is a widely accepted phenomenon that has proliferated in the last few years in response to the advent of new and more affordable mobile phone technologies. They highlighted some reasons for text brevity; to save time, to spare typing, and to be quick, simple, brief and concise. This result may comprise both grammatical and lexical abbreviated words, pidgin, slangs and emoticons. These researchers used 38 studies, 19 were experimental, 11 were quantitative, 6 studies were qualitative research approach, 1 was multi-method and 1 was mixed method. An experimental study was done to interpret and analyse the data collected. The researchers employ the social Cognitive Theory in their study, which acted as a guide. Results from this study show that texting or short message services (SMS) is the predominant means of communication amongst students.

Handling of lexical features on social media is a point of convergence for both studies. At the level of differences, looking at the research design methods, this study uses both multi-method and mixed method designs to interpret and analyse collected data, while our study used just the mixed method design. Our work was carried out in Cameroon in 2023, and was a descriptive study whereas this study was carried out in the United States in 2012 and was an experimental study

Fiona et al. (2013), carried out their study a year after Skierkowski & Wood using experimental research design just as the latter did, though their findings were different

In the course of analysing the language of university students' text messages they discovered that students' were coding their texts. They equally use a lot of non-standard spelling, contractions, emotions, clipping, initialism letter/ number homophones, missed punctuation, and missed capitalisation. Data for this study was drawn from text messages collected from 139 undergraduate students (99 women and 40 men) attending university in Ireland. All participants were Irish and English was their first language. The result of this study showed that the majority of text messaging languages is non-standard. This study was typically experimental and the theoretical frame was the sociolinguistics theory.

What is similar about both studies is the fact that we handled the same media, and collected data from text messages of university students. Content analysis was done with the collected data. We

equally differ in some aspects; while this study was carried out in Ireland in 2013, ours was carried in Cameroon in 2023. Sociolinguistics Theory is the theoretical frame that guided the study, whereas the CMDA and the SCOT were the frames used in our study

Alazzawie (2022), in the course of exploring the linguistic and situational features of WhatsApp messages among high school and Canadian university students, mentioned some lexical features such as slangs, abbreviations and clipped sentences. The researcher said the point of texting is to be brief and fast. The study aimed to explore the linguistic features of text messaging communicative content and context. Data for this study was drawn from high school students in Canada. The corpus was 100 different received and sent texts for personal, educational and professional purposes. Data was analysed using Biber and Conrad (2009) qualitative approach to register genre and style analysis. Findings showed that students used clipped sentences in a free flow of casual speech and slang. And abbreviations have come into common use to the point of becoming standard. Findings equally showed that most of the lexical features used were monosyllabic word which makes it easier to catch the audience.

Handling students' text messages on WhatsApp makes this study similar to ours, though this study was conducted in Canada in 2022 and ours in Cameroon in 2023. The work looked at both linguistic and lexical features while our work looked just at lexical features

Kouega(2009), conducted a notable research, focusing on Campus English, specifically exploring lexical variations observed among Anglophone students in state universities within Cameroon. The primary objective was to focus on the elusive secret language employed by these students, analysing informal interactions within settings such as classrooms, restaurants, sports fields, and dormitories. A dedicated team of 20 enthusiastic Anglophone undergraduate students from the University of Yaoundé 1 was tasked with documenting relevant utterances made by their peers in these informal scenarios. Additionally, the researcher discovered similar linguistic traits within the students' private notes, messages posted on doors, and short text messages (SMS), culminating in forming a comprehensive corpus for the study. Notably, 200 lexical tokens were identified from this corpus, reflecting the linguistic nuances prevalent among Anglophone students across various state universities in Cameroon, including Buea, Douala, Dschang, Yaoundé, and Ngaoundéré.

In a similar vein, Ojongnkpot (2017) examined the analysis of morphosyntactic elements of Camfranglais among the students in the University of Buea, particularly focusing on their

interactions on social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp. The study accentuated polite and impolite linguistic features exhibited by these youths, mirroring a notable connection to Kouega's work in terms of the target demographic - learners from the Department of English at the University of Yaoundé 1. However, a distinctive shift in the research focus was observed, with an emphasis on lexical features rather than morphosyntactic elements.

The convergence of the two studies lies in their geographical alignment within Cameroon and the overarching focus on lexical features, although Kouega's research spanned multiple state universities, which contrasts with our study solely centred at the University of Yaoundé 1. Moreover, while Kouega's study was conducted in 2009, our research took place in 2023, allowing for a substantial period of linguistic evolution.

word length, and thematic preferences leaning towards gender, age, and educational backgrounds. Notably, gender disparities in word usage and thematic inclinations were observed, with distinct preferences noticeable between boys and girls, reflecting unique linguistic tendencies and sociocultural influences.

Moreover, Hilte, L. et al. (2020), highlighted parallelisms and contrasts in word choices related to educational contexts, demonstrating core similarities among all teenage participants with a penchant for school-centric vocabulary. The qualitative research design adopted in this study provided deeper perspectives into the traditional verbal literacy practices of adolescents within informal writing settings. Divergences emerge between the two studies concerning national contexts, methodological approaches, theoretical frameworks, and research scopes, particularly in exploring digital literacy skills and linguistic variations within adolescent communication practices. While encompassing comparable social media usage, each study unveils distinctive nuances in linguistic analysis, shedding light on the evolving language dynamics prevalent among diverse demographic cohorts across various social and educational contexts.

Thurlow & Brown (2013), in a discourse analysis online titled *generation TXT? The sociolinguistics of young people's text messaging* did a discursive analysis of qualitative data arising from an investigation of 159 older teenagers' use of mobile telephone text messaging or short messaging service (SMS). They examined the linguistic forms and communicative functions in a corpus of 544 participants' actual text messages. They discovered some young people use their mobile phones as a novel, creative means of enhancing and supporting intimate

relationships and existing social networks, thus serving the sociolinguistics “maxims of brevity and speed paralinguistic restitution and phonological approximation.

Out of the 159 participants who provided the data, 3/4, 120, 75% were female and a quarter 39, 25% were male, and the mean age of participants was 19. The setting was the Cardiff University. A total of 544 separate messages were recorded and were transcribed into a single electronic document and content analytic procedures was followed in the organization and interpreting participants text messages; this is an approach well suited to the descriptive analysis of open ended or qualitative textual data, the CDA theory guided and influenced the study They calculated broad descriptive tendencies in terms of central interest such as;

a. Message length that is the number of words and characters used

As similarities of both studies, we did our research on text messages of university students, specifically WhatsApp. Studies employed content analytical procedures in analysing data however, this study was done at the Cardiff University, United kingdom in 2013 and ours was done at the University of Yaounde, Cameroon in 2023. While our study used the CMDA and the SCOT theories, this study used the CDA Theory.

Oculares & Blanco (2023), investigated the lexical features of an online advertisement created by people selling plants on Facebook. The data source was Bukidnon’s top sellers, identified by their annual sales. The data was elicited from the plant sellers’ online advertisements who are residents of one of the cities in Bukidnon. The sales of the top five sellers in Bukidnon whose sales ranged from 450,000 to 750,000 pesos were analysed. In analysing the data, a summative content analysis approach was used. The content of text data was interpreted through a methodical classification process of coding and identifying patterns. The researchers also used a codebook that contained predetermined lexical features, such as hyperbole, neologism, weasel words, familiar language, simple vocabulary, repetition, euphemism, humour, glamorisation, and potency. The codebook was conceptualised to be the basis of the inter-coding analysis. In the summative approach of qualitative analysis, they identified and classified the lexical features according to their category outlined in the codebook, and counted their occurrences

The results showed that simple vocabulary, glamorisation, and merging combinations were frequently identified lexical features used in online advertising. The study implied that the identified lexical features helped the participants’ advertisement posts to catch attention and

easily convey their intention. Finally, the study concluded that plant sellers mostly used simple, precise, and straightforward words in advertising their products online on Facebook. The results implied that the simple and direct usage of lexical features and combining them enticed the customer's interest through implementing words that enhanced the message of the advertisement to be perceived clearly. Plant sellers also constructed their advertisements with an art of creativity by emerging the various type of lexicon in each advertisement

Both studies were centered on lexical features of social media, though our study used WhatsApp as case study, and this study used Facebook as a case study. Both studies employed the content analysis approach in the interpretation and analysis of data. We both carried out our research in 2023. This study used the CDA theory as a frame, whereas our study used the CMDA and the SCOT theories as frames. This study was carried out in the United States while, ours was carried out in Cameroon.

Verheijen & Spooren (2021), in a study, investigated the Impact of WhatsApp on Dutch youth's school writing and spelling, and whether the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) and non-standard informal written language affect youth's literacy skills. 500 Dutch youths of different educational levels and age groups were the participants who provided the data for the study. The features they examined were non-standard forms like abbreviations, letter repetitions, phonetic respellings, others were lexical, orthographic & grammatical deviations from standard Dutch in the form of emoji, English borrowings, omission of punctuation, no capitalization, ellipses and sentence fragment and such deviations are characteristics of CMC language or "textese". Five hundred youths from secondary and tertiary educational institutions from different educational institutions, different educational levels, and different age groups were used for the final analyses. One cohort of participants was excluded so data of 408 youths were used. Data was collected in 2016 at four secondary schools, from two locations one vocational and one university. Most small number of participants (in the university) took part outside class. Each class was randomly split up into an experimental group and a control group. Half were to chat on in a group of 3 or 4 primed with WhatsApp, while the other half carried out a control task. They were to write stories and complete grammatical judgment tasks. The Sociocultural Theory was used by the researchers to support data interpretation and analysis.

The results after analysing revealed that "the writing style commonly used in texting and other forms of computer mediated communication need not spell the end of normative language"

(Baron,2005) youths appear capable of incorporating different registers in different writing contexts, as long as they know when to heed standard language norms and are aware of the importance of using context appropriate language. No evidence of negative transfer from the register of CMC language to the register of the standard language, but rather suggests that texting and instant messaging with unconventional spelling may increase youths' metalinguistic and orthographic awareness, making them think more about the way they write.

Some drawbacks of this study were that the WhatsApp use in a classroom context with groups was created just for the purpose of this research, so was artificial in nature. This explains why chats on WhatsApp were linguistically similar to messages composed under non-experimental conditions. This is a possible explanation why a direct impact was only found on misspellings. Time constraints also limited the duration of the experimental phase since the researcher had just 50minutes to divide the class into experimental and control groups, priming task, narrative writing task, grammaticality judgment task and wrapping up. There was no time to ask participants about their CMC use outside of this experiment. Information about participants' experience with WhatsApp and the frequency or intensity of using WhatsApp in non-experimental settings would have been valuable.

This study has its limitations; however, it showed that rather than WhatsApp interfering with school writings negatively, youths appear to be well able to switch between registers. Some similar aspects on both studies are as follow; both studies handled lexical features on students' text messages on WhatsApp using same media, which is socialmedia. Both studies employed the mixed method research that is combining quantitative and qualitative analysis. While our study used the CMDA and the SCOT theories, this study used the sociocultural theory. Our study was carried out in Cameroon in 2023, whereas this study was carried out in Netherlands in 2021.

Tabe(2018), in an article on Cameroon social media, explored how Cameroonians form words in social media (SM) contexts. She used e-mails, chats from Yahoo Messenger (YM) were assembled from 2012-2016. Data from Facebook (FBK) came from some randomly selected Cameroonians and some level 2 students of the department of English in the Higher, Teacher Training College ENS of the University of Maroua in Cameroon. The students socialised on FBK and brought the hard copies of their charts to the lecturer. The YM data came from level 4 students in the departments of administrative Techniques and accounting in the higher Teacher Training College for Technical Educational (ENSET) in the University of Douala.

The results revealed that Cameroonians alter some of the English word formation mechanisms to suit the context of Social media. The following morphological processes were found in the data: accent stylizations, clipping, borrowing, neologisms, onomatopoeia, substitution, abbreviations, compounding conversion\inflection, reduplication, hybrid, blending slang and smileys. FBK tops the lead in terms of the number and frequency of occurrence of the word-formation processes.

The point of convergence between Tabe's work and ours is the media, both studies focused on social media, though with different case studies. Her case study is e-mail, Facebook and yahoo messenger, whereas our case study is whatsapp. Both studies were carried out in Cameroon. Data for our study was collected from level 4 students of the University of Yaounde 1 meanwhile Tabe's data was collected from several sources namely; level 4 students of ENSET Douala, some level 2 students from ENS Maroua and randomly selected chats of Cameroonians on Facebook. While she explored morphological processes, our study described lexical items. There is a difference of 5 years between both studies. Hers was carried out in 2018 and ours in 2023.

Given the prevalent use of WhatsApp as a prominent digital communication platform in contemporary society, it is imperative to highlight that existing research predominantly emphasises digital or social media in a broader sense, rather than specifically focusing on WhatsApp. Moreover, while some studies have focused on the field of WhatsApp communication, there remains a scarcity of descriptive investigations pertaining to the lexical features used by students in text messages. This notable gap underscores the need for a meticulous examination of computer-mediated communication (CMC) practices in the present milieu, prompting a critical reflection on the evolving nature of lexical features within this domain. This underscores the significance of undertaking a recent research endeavour to bridge these gaps and shed light on the transformations therein, thus contributing novel perspectives into the contemporary linguistic landscape shaped by students' text messaging habits. As such, our study aims to address this lacuna by unravelling the latest lexical trends observed in students' text messages, thereby augmenting the existing scholarship and offering valuable perspectives into the nuanced dynamics of linguistic evolution within digital communication platforms like WhatsApp.

2.2.Theoretical Frameworks

The second section of this chapter presents and discusses the frameworks on which this study is anchored. This section equally provides a solid foundation for the study by helping to situate the research within a broader context. In the fast-evolving landscape of digital communication, the medium of exchange influences the essence of the discourse. This study focuses on examining the linguistic phenomena present in the WhatsApp text messages of Level Four students in the English Department at the University of Yaoundé 1. To analyse these emerging lexical features, the dissertation employs a dual-theoretical framework. The first theory is Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA), propagated by Herring, who emphasises the unique characteristics of language in digital communication. The second theory is the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT), advocated by Wiebe Bijker and Trevor Pinch, who explore how social factors shape technological development and use. According to communication Herring, (2004), CMDA is a well-established framework for analysing language use in digital environments. It provides a systematic approach to examining the linguistic features, patterns, and strategies employed by users in computer-mediated environments, such as WhatsApp text messages. This theory is highly relevant to the current study as it gives room for the investigation of linguistic phenomena that may emerge in the context of WhatsApp communication among the Level Four students in the English Department. The Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) is a theoretical perspective that emphasises the role of social factors in the development and use of technological artifacts. This theory is relevant to the current study because it can elucidate how the students in the English Department at the University of Yaounde 1 perceive, interpret, and appropriate the WhatsApp platform for their communication purposes. According to (Bijker, 1995; Kline & Pinch, 1996) SCOT can help to display the social and cultural factors that shape the linguistic choices and practices observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the Level Four students. The integration of CMDA and SCOT enables the researchers to analyse the linguistic features of the text messages while also considering the social and technological factors that influence the students' communicative practices in this digital environment.

2.3.Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA)

The rapid proliferation of digital communication technologies has significantly transformed how individuals interact and exchange information. In this context, the field of Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) has emerged as a valuable framework for studying the linguistic

phenomena that manifest in computer-mediated communication (CMC) environments Herring, (2004). CMDA was pioneered by Herring in 2004, a leading scholar computer-mediated communication. Herring is a Professor of Information Science and Linguistics at Indiana University Bloomington, where she has made significant contributions to the understanding of language use in digital spaces (Indiana University Bloomington,). Herring's academic journey has been marked by a deep fascination with the intersection of language, technology, and human behaviour. She obtained her Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of California, Berkeley, focusing on discourse analysis and computer-mediated communication (Herring, n.d.). Her early work in the 1990s played a pivotal role in establishing CMDA as a distinct field of study, as she recognised the need to develop specialised analytical approaches to capture the unique characteristics of language use in digital environments.

At the core of CMDA is the idea that computer-mediated discourse differs from traditional face-to-face communication in significant ways, requiring a tailored analytical approach Herring, (2004). Herring's pioneering research has identified several key features of CMC, including the asynchronous nature of exchanges, the multimodal integration of text, images, and other media, and the role of technological affordances in shaping linguistic choices. Through CMDA, Herring and other scholars have examined a wide range of linguistic phenomena in digital contexts, such as the use of emoticons, the prevalence of abbreviations and acronyms, the dynamics of turn-taking and topic management, and the emergence of new linguistic varieties (e.g., “netspeak”) Herring(2004, 2007, 2013). Her influential publications, such as the “Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis: An Approach to Researching Online Behaviour” Herring (2004) and the “Handbook of the Pragmatics of Computer-Mediated Communication” Herring, et al.(2013), have become essential references for researchers and students interested in understanding the complex dynamics of language use in digital environments.

In addition to her scholarly contributions, Herring has been a driving force in the academic community, serving as the founding president of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) and the editor-in-chief of the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication (Herring, n.d.). Her leadership and vision have played a crucial role in fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and advancing the field of CMDA.

The significance of Herring's work and the CMDA framework is in its ability to provide researchers with a systematic approach to examining the linguistic and communicative practices

that emerge in various digital contexts, from social media platforms to online forums and instant messaging applications Herring (2004, 2007). Through CMDA, researchers understand which technology shapes and is shaped by human language use, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between language, technology, and social interaction.

The rapid proliferation of digital communication technologies has significantly transformed the way individuals interact and exchange information. In this context, the field of Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) has emerged as a valuable framework for studying the linguistic phenomena that manifest in computer-mediated communication (CMC) environments. Herring's early work in the 1990s played a key role in establishing CMDA as a distinct field of study. She recognised the need to develop specialised analytical approaches to capture the unique characteristics of language use in digital environments. At the core of CMDA is the idea that computer-mediated discourse differs from traditional face-to-face communication in significant ways, requiring a tailored analytical approach.

One of the key characteristics of digital discourse that sets it apart from traditional communication is its asynchronous nature. In computer-mediated environments, individuals can engage in conversations without needing immediate responses, allowing for a more reflective and deliberate exchange of ideas (Herring, 2004, 2007; Georgakopoulou & Spilioti, 2016). This asynchronicity can lead to unique linguistic patterns, such as the use of delayed responses, the emergence of topic shifts, and the development of specialized conversational strategies. The current understanding of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), which has remained largely unchanged for almost 40 years, is often associated with the transmission of text in a single mode at a time. Therefore, I propose a fundamental shift in the conceptualisation of CMC to be inherently multimodal. In fact, if hypothetical Martian scholars were to observe CMC for the first time in 2017, they would likely recognise its use of multiple semiotic modes as an integral part of its nature. This perspective is also shared by younger generations who have always experienced CMC as a multimodal form of communication, rather than just textual exchanges. By viewing CMC as multimodal, the notion of non-multimodal CMC becomes obsolete, except in historical contexts. This new conceptualization does not exclude the use of text-only communication; rather, text is just one of many modes of transmission, including voice, audio, video, and potentially graphics and certain types of robotic devices. This is illustrated schematically in the figure below.

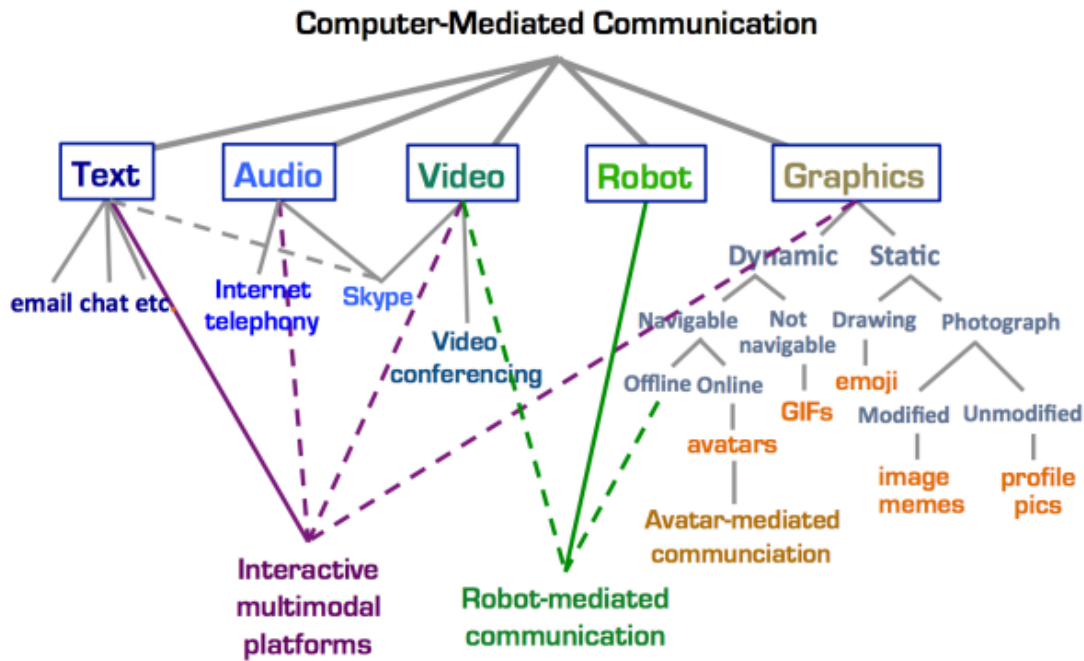


Figure 1: Computer-Mediated Communication and Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis

Adapted from *the Co-Evolution of Computer-Mediated Communication and Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis* by Herring, S. C (2018)

Text, audio, and video communication via Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) have been well-established for many years and extensively discussed in literature on CMC and human-computer interaction. For example, O’Connail, Whittaker, & Wilbur’s work in 1993 on video conferencing is a notable reference in this area. In the subsequent sections, we will direct attention to three emerging trends outlined in Figure 1: communication on interactive multimodal platforms (IMPs), graphical communication with an emphasis on avatar-mediated communication (AMC), and robot-mediated communication (RMC). These newer phenomena, like other forms of CMC, involve verbal language alongside other semiotic systems. They facilitate human-to-human interaction and support social discourse, which is a central focus in Computer-Mediated Discourse (CMD) analysis. We will then explore the implications of these emerging trends and the multimodal approach to CMC for computer-mediated discourse analysis.

The asynchronous nature of digital discourse creates a fundamental shift in communication dynamics. Unlike face-to-face interactions, where participants must respond in real-time, computer-mediated communication enables users to take their time crafting their messages and formulating their thoughts before sharing them (Herring 2004, 2007, Crystal 2011). This temporal flexibility can foster a more thoughtful and considered exchange of ideas, as users can carefully select their words and articulate their thoughts more precisely.

The lack of immediate response requirements also influences the flow and structure of digital conversations. Delayed responses, for instance, can create pauses in the discourse, prompting participants to introduce new topics or revisit previous ones (Herring 2004, 2007, Androutsopoulos, 2006). This can lead to the emergence of unique conversational strategies, such as using explicit topic management cues or incorporating references to earlier parts of the conversation. The asynchronous nature of digital discourse, therefore, affects not only the linguistic choices made by users but also the overall communicative dynamics within these computer-mediated environments (Herring 2007, Thurlow & Mroczek 2011).

Another distinctive feature of digital discourse is its multimodal integration, where text is often accompanied by visual, auditory, and other multimedia elements (Herring, 2004, 2007). The ability to incorporate various modes of communication can significantly influence the ways in which individuals express themselves and convey meaning. For instance, the use of emoticons, emojis, and other graphical representations can add nuance and emotional expression to textual exchanges, while the integration of images and videos can enhance the communicative potential of digital interactions.

The multimodal nature of digital discourse represents a fundamental departure from traditional forms of communication, where the exchange of information was primarily text-based. In computer-mediated environments, users have access to a rich array of communicative tools, allowing them to transcend the constraints of a purely linguistic medium. The integration of visual, auditory, and other multimedia elements not only expands the expressive capabilities of users but also shapes how they convey meaning and establish social connections (Herring 2004, 2007, Thurlow & Mroczek 2011).

The use of emoticons and emojis, for example, has become a ubiquitous feature of digital discourse, enhancing the emotional and affective dimensions of textual exchanges. These graphical representations can convey a wide range of sentiments, from happiness and amusement to frustration and sarcasm, often in a more nuanced and context-sensitive manner than purely textual cues (Herring 2004, 2007, Dresner & Herring 2010). By incorporating these multimodal elements, users can imbue their messages with a sense of personality, tone, and interpersonal meaning that may not be as readily conveyed through text alone. Similarly, the integration of images, videos, and other multimedia content can serve to illustrate ideas, provide visual context, or evoke emotional responses, thereby enriching the communicative experience and expanding the expressive possibilities within digital discourse (Herring 2004, 2007, Georgakopoulou & Spilioti 2016). This is illustrated in the figure below.

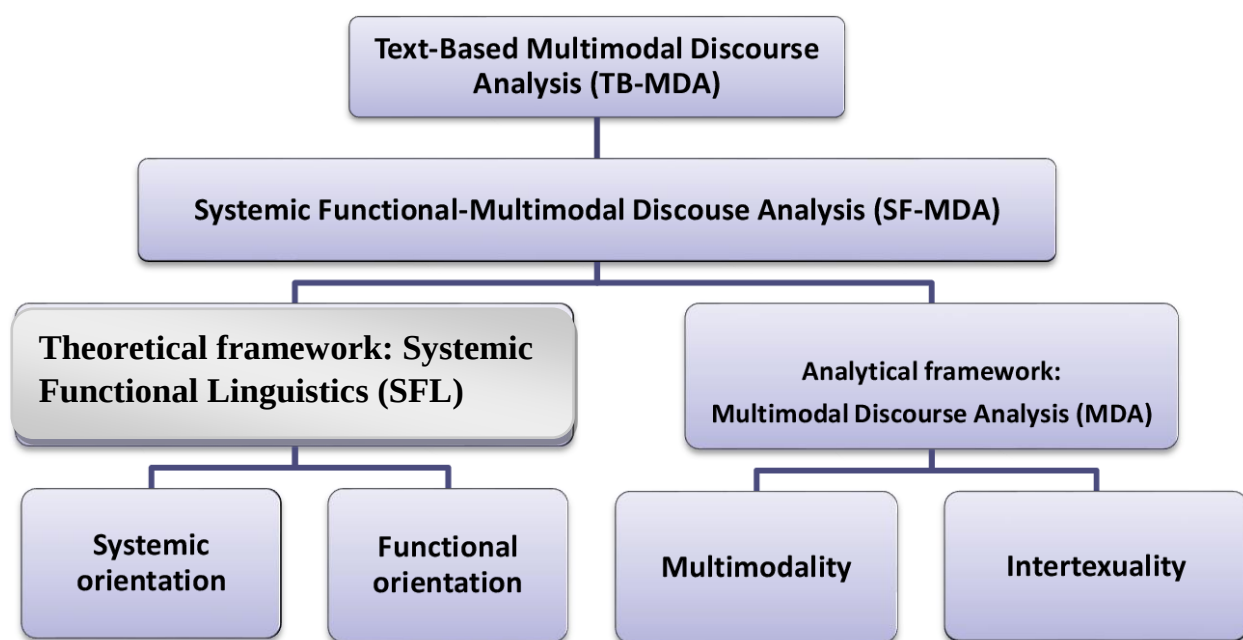


Figure 2: Multimodal Elements

The multimodal nature of digital discourse also presents unique challenges for researchers and analysts, as it requires a diverse approach to understanding the complex interplay between linguistic, visual, and other semiotic elements. CMDA scholars have recognised the importance of accounting for these multimodal features, developing analytical frameworks that can effectively capture how users leverage various communicative modes to create meaning and construct their online identities (Herring 2004, 2007, Androutsopoulos 2013). By examining the

integration of text, images, audio, and other multimedia components, CMDA researchers can better understand the linguistic and communicative practices that emerge in digital environments, ultimately contributing to a richer and more nuanced understanding of modern human interaction.

Technological affordances also play a crucial role in shaping the linguistic choices and communicative practices observed in computer-mediated environments Herring(2004, 2007). The design and features of digital platforms, such as character limits, the availability of formatting options, or the ability to post and share content, can directly influence the linguistic styles and strategies employed by users. Understanding how these technological affordances shape the linguistic phenomena in digital discourse is a key focus of CMDA.

The concept of technological affordances, as it pertains to digital discourse, refers to how the design and functionality of computer-mediated communication platforms enable, constrain, or even encourage certain communicative behaviours. For instance, the character limit on platforms like Twitter can foster the development of concise, abbreviated language, as users must carefully craft their messages to fit within the allotted space. Similarly, the availability of formatting options, such as the ability to use bold, italics, or different font sizes, can allow users to enhance the expressive potential of their textual contributions, potentially conveying emphasis, emotion, or even a sense of online “tone”(Herring 2004, 2007, Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011).

Furthermore, the integration of features that enable the sharing of multimedia content, such as the ability to upload images, videos, or audio files, can significantly influence how individuals communicate and construct meaning in digital environments. The affordance of content-sharing, for example, can prompt users to incorporate visual or auditory elements to complement their textual messages, thereby expanding the communicative repertoire and enhancing the multimodal nature of digital discourse (Herring 2004, 2007, Georgakopoulou & Spilioti2016). CMDA researchers recognise that these technological affordances are not merely neutral features of digital platforms, but rather active shapers of the linguistic and communicative practices that emerge within computer-mediated environments. By examining how users navigate and appropriate these affordances, CMDA researchers can understand the dynamic interplay between technology and language use.

In addition to the asynchronous nature, multimodal integration, and technological affordances, CMDA also recognises the emergence of new linguistic varieties, often referred to as

“netspeak” or “digital language” (Herring 2013). These linguistic forms can include the widespread use of abbreviations, acronyms, creative spellings, and other linguistic innovations tailored to computer-mediated communication’s unique demands and constraints. By examining these linguistic features, CMDA researchers can understand how language evolves and adapts to the digital landscape. The growth of these new linguistic varieties, which may initially appear to be deviations from standard language norms, can reflect the dynamic and adaptive nature of human communication in the face of technological change. CMDA’s focus on these emergent linguistic phenomena helps to shed light on how language and technology mutually shape and influence one another, ultimately contributing to a richer understanding of the complex and diverse nature of digital discourse.

2.4. The importance of context in CMDA

The proliferation of digital communication technologies has given rise to a new frontier of linguistic inquiry, requiring specialised analytical frameworks capable of capturing the unique characteristics of language use in computer-mediated environments. CMDA has emerged as a powerful analytical tool for researchers seeking to understand the complex and evolving nature of online communication. At the heart of CMDA’s analytical approach is recognising that the linguistic features and communicative practices observed in digital discourse differ significantly from those found in traditional, face-to-face interactions. (Herring 2004, 2007) has argued that the asynchronous nature of computer-mediated communication, the integration of multimodal elements, and the influence of technological affordances all contribute to the development of distinctive linguistic patterns and communicative strategies. CMDA can help researchers systematically examine these phenomena, gaining perspectives into the ways in which users navigate, appropriate, and even transform the digital landscape through their linguistic choices. One of the key strengths of CMDA as an analytical tool lies in its ability to contextualise the linguistic features and communicative practices observed in online environments.

Herring (2004, 2007) has emphasised the importance of considering the broader social, cultural, and technological factors that shape the communicative landscape, as these elements can significantly influence the linguistic choices and strategies users employ. For instance, the analysis of linguistic features, such as emoticons or the prevalence of abbreviations, can be more meaningfully interpreted when situated within the specific norms, expectations, and affordances

of the digital platform or community in question. Likewise, understanding the socio-cultural backgrounds and communicative goals of the participants can provide valuable context for interpreting the linguistic phenomena manifest in their online interactions. (Androutsopoulos 2006, Georgakopoulou & Spilioti 2016) through this contextual approach, CMDA researchers can move beyond the mere identification of linguistic features and strive to uncover the deeper social, cultural, and technological underpinnings that give rise to the unique communicative practices observed in digital environments.

In addition, the asynchronous nature of digital discourse can also lead to the development of new linguistic varieties, often referred to as “netspeak” or “digital language” These linguistic forms can include the widespread use of abbreviations, acronyms, creative spellings, and other linguistic innovations that are tailored to the unique demands and constraints of computer-mediated communication. By examining these linguistic features, CMDA researchers can understand how language evolves and adapts to the digital landscape. The growth of these new linguistic varieties, which may initially appear to be deviations from standard language norms, can reflect the dynamic and adaptive nature of human communication in the face of technological change. CMDA's focus on these emergent linguistic phenomena helps to shed light on how language and technology mutually shape and influence one another, ultimately contributing to a richer understanding of the complex and diverse nature of digital discourse. The following table illustrates the computer-mediated discourse analysis (CMDA) toolkit adapted from Herring (2004).

Table 1: (CMDA) Toolkit

Levels	Issues	Phenomena	Methods
Structure	Orality; formality; efficiency; expressivity; complexity; genre characteristics, etc.	Typography, orthography, morphology, syntax, discourse schemata, formatting conventions, etc.	Structural/Descriptive Linguistics, Text Analysis, Corpus Linguistics, Stylistics
Meaning	What is intended, What is communicated, What is accomplished	Meaning of words, utterances (speech acts), exchanges, etc.	Semantics, Pragmatics
Interaction management	Interactivity; timing; coherence; repair; interaction as co-constructed, etc.	Turns, sequences, exchanges, threads, etc.	Conversation Analysis, Ethnomethodology
Social phenomena	Social dynamics; power; influence; identity; community; cultural differences, etc.	Linguistic expressions of status, conflict, negotiation, face-management, play, discourse styles/lects, etc.	Interactional Sociolinguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, Ethnography of Communication

2.5.The Social Construction of Technology (SCOT)

Alongside the Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) framework, the present study also employs the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) as a theoretical lens to comprehend the linguistic phenomena manifest in the WhatsApp text messages of Level Four students within the English Department at the University of Yaounde 1. The SCOT approach was pioneered by sociologists Wiebe E. Bijker and Trevor J. Pinch in the 1980s and 1990s. Bijker, a professor of technology and society at Maastricht University, and Pinch, a professor of science and technology studies at Cornell University, were instrumental in developing this theoretical perspective, which emphasises the vital role of social factors in the development and use of technological artifacts, Bijker (1995) and Kline & Pinch(1996).

At the core of the SCOT framework is the notion that technology is not a neutral or autonomous entity, but rather a product of complex social, cultural, and political negotiations Bijker(1995) and Bijker & Pinch(1996) argued that the design, adoption, and use of technological artifacts are heavily influenced by the interpretations, meanings, and actions of various social groups, each with their own interests, agendas, and perspectives. The SCOT approach challenges the traditional technological determinism, which views technology as an independent force that shapes and determines social change. Instead, Bijker and Pinch posit that technology and society are mutually constitutive, with each shaping and being shaped by the other in an ongoing, dynamic process. In discussing how technology emerges from these social interactions, the SCOT framework uses several interrelated concepts. These concepts are summarised below.

Table 2: SCOT Concepts

Term	Definition
Relevant Social Groups (RSGs)	Groups that may or may not be members of the same organisation or institute, but share a similar interpretation of an artifact.
Interpretive Flexibility	The notion that an artifact has numerous interpretations, thus there are as many artifacts as there are interpretations, and each RSG has their own interpretation.

Closure	When multiple interpretations cease to exist and interpretive flexibility diminishes.
Stabilization	The development of the artifact within one relevant social group. This happens in degrees.
Technological Frame	The cognitive, social, and technical elements that guide or constrain meanings and behaviors relevant to an artifact. Actors have different degrees of inclusion in a frame.
Micro Political Power Strategies	A variety of practices used to influence social groups and ultimately the production of a technological frame or semiotic structures.
Semiotic Power	The extent to which meanings attributed to an artifact become reified in certain forms.
Semiotic Structures	The reified meanings that constrain the extent to which actors can influence and shape an artifact.

The key concepts within SCOT, as presented above, are as follows:

Relevant Social Groups (RSGs): The concept of Relevant Social Groups (RSGs) is a cornerstone of the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) framework. RSGs refer to the various stakeholders, users, and other parties that ascribe different meanings and interpretations to a particular technological artifact Bijker(1995) and Pinch & Bijker(1984). The key aspect of RSGs is that the members within a group share a common way of perceiving or interpreting the technological artifact in question. This shared interpretation is what defines the group as “relevant” from the perspective of the SCOT approach. The members of an RSG may or may not belong to the same organisation or institution, but they are united by their common understanding and framing of the artifact (Pinch & Bijker, 1984).

The diversity of RSGs is central to the SCOT framework, as it acknowledges that a single technological artifact can have multiple, often competing, interpretations ascribed to it by

different social groups. For instance, in Bijker & Pinch's (1987) analysis of the development of the bicycle, they identified various RSGs, such as sport cyclists, safety cyclists, and ordinary cyclists, each of which perceived and used the bicycle technology in distinct ways. Recognising the existence of these multiple RSGs, the SCOT approach challenges the notion of a single, fixed, or “objective” meaning of a technological artifact. Instead, it posits that the meanings and interpretations are socially constructed, shaped by the various interests, agendas, and perspectives of the different stakeholders involved. The identification and analysis of RSGs is a crucial step in understanding the social construction of technology. It allows researchers to uncover the diverse ways in which different groups of actors engage with, appropriate, and give meaning to technological artifacts, ultimately shaping their design, development. By focusing on the RSGs, the SCOT framework provides a comprehensive lens for examining the complex interplay between technology, society, and human agency.

Interpretive Flexibility: The concept of interpretive flexibility is a crucial element of the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) framework. It suggests that a single technological artifact can have multiple interpretations and meanings, as different Relevant Social Groups (RSGs) perceive and ascribe various meanings to it. (Bijker1995,Pinch & Bijker 1984). The notion of interpretive flexibility challenges the idea of a single, fixed, or “objective” meaning of a technological artifact. Instead, it posits that the meaning of an artifact is not inherent or predetermined, but rather shaped by the diverse perspectives and interpretations of the different social groups engaged with it. For example, Bijker & Pinch's (1987) analysis of the bicycle, they identified how different RSGs, such as sport cyclists, safety cyclists, and ordinary cyclists, perceived and used the bicycle technology in distinct ways. While one group might have viewed the bicycle as a tool for racing and sport, another group might have seen it as a means of safe and comfortable transportation. These divergent interpretations reflect the interpretive flexibility of the bicycle as a technological artifact.

The recognition of interpretive flexibility is crucial because it allows researchers to uncover the socially constructed nature of technology. By acknowledging that a single artifact can have multiple, often competing, meanings, the SCOT approach emphasizes the role of social, cultural, and political factors in shaping the development, adoption, and use of technological artifacts (Bijker1995, Kline & Pinch 1996). The concept of interpretive flexibility also suggests that the meaning of a technological artifact is not static or fixed, but rather subject to ongoing negotiation

and renegotiation among the various RSGs involved. As these groups interact and engage with the artifact, the interpretations and meanings can evolve, leading to processes of closure and stabilisation.

Locating Relevant Social Groups, Researchers can locate RSGs through a snowball sampling method, where they interview selected individuals and ask them to nominate others who are relevant to the technology. This is complemented by a more theoretical approach where the researcher defines analytical categories to identify RSGs. Locating Relevant Social Groups (RSGs) is a crucial step in the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) framework. Bijker, (1995) and Pinch & Bijker (1984) suggest that researchers can employ two main methods to identify the relevant social groups involved with a particular technological artifact.

The first method is the “snowball sampling” approach, where the researcher starts by interviewing selected individuals who are theoretically relevant to the technology in question. These initial interviewees are then asked to nominate other individuals or groups who they perceive as appropriate to the same technology (Bijker 1995, MacKenzie & Wajcman 1999). Through a series of these nominations, the researcher can “follow the actors” and uncover a larger sample of RSGs. This snowball sampling technique is beneficial because it allows the researcher to let the actors themselves define the relevant social groups, rather than imposing pre-determined categories. By enabling the actors to identify the groups they see as necessary, the researcher can gain a more authentic and grounded understanding of the various stakeholders involved with the technology (Martin & Scott, 1992).

2.6.CMDA and SCOT in WhatsApp Communication

The Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) framework and the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) approach are highly compatible and complementary in analysing linguistic features and communicative practices within digital environments, such as WhatsApp messaging. The CMDA framework provides tools and methodologies for the detailed linguistic analysis of textual features in WhatsApp messages. Researchers can employ CMDA to examine the linguistic choices, patterns, and strategies used by users, such as using abbreviations, emoticons, creative spellings, and other linguistic innovations (Herring 2004, 2007). CMDA offers a robust set of analytical techniques to uncover the nuances of language use in computer-mediated communication, shedding light on how users navigate the affordances and constraints

of the digital medium, thus throwing light on the research questions of: what are the lexical choices used by the level 4 students in their WhatsApp text messages?, and what is the frequency of occurrence of different types of lexical features

On the other hand, the SCOT approach provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the technological and social factors that shape the linguistic and communicative practices observed in WhatsApp interactions. By identifying the Relevant Social Groups (RSGs) involved, examining the interpretive flexibility of the WhatsApp platform, and exploring the technological affordances that influence user behaviour, the SCOT lens allows researchers to situate the linguistic phenomena within the broader socio-technological context (Bijker 1995, Pinch & Bijker, 1984). So the SCOT approach can give us an insight to the research question of: how social, linguistic, and technological factors influence the usage of lexical features on WhatsApp

The integration of CMDA and SCOT offers a robust analytical framework for studying WhatsApp communication. The CMDA tools can be employed to uncover the specific linguistic features and patterns within WhatsApp messages, while the SCOT approach provides the conceptual lens to understand how these linguistic choices are shaped by the platform's technological affordances and the diverse interpretations and negotiated meanings of the various RSGs involved.

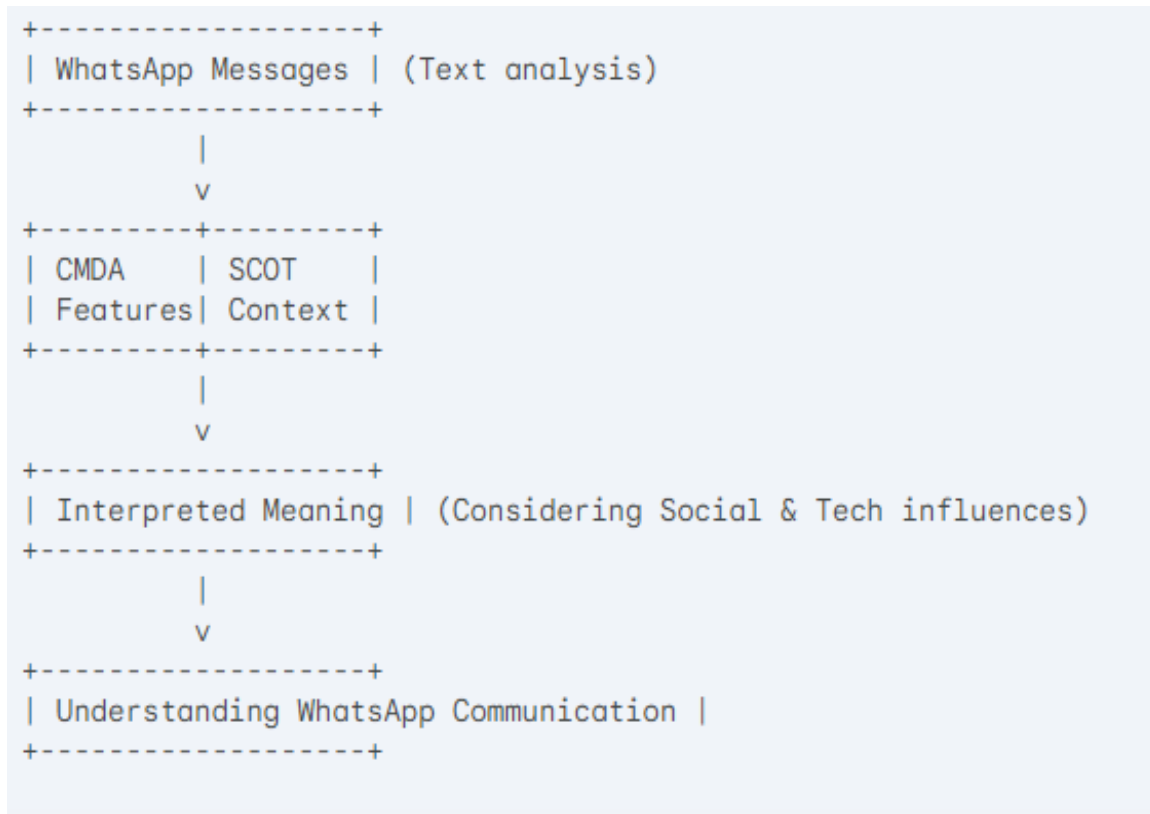


Figure 3: CMDA and SCOT Frameworks

The diagram illustrates the integrated approach, where the CMDA and SCOT frameworks work in tandem to provide a holistic understanding of WhatsApp communication. The CMDA component focuses on the linguistic analysis of the textual features, while the SCOT component examines the technological and social influences that shape these linguistic choices and communicative practices. Drawing on the strengths of both frameworks, researchers can gain a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between language, technology, and social factors in the context of WhatsApp interactions. This integrated approach allows for a rich and contextual analysis to shed light on the dynamic and evolving nature of communication in the digital age.

In this work, CMDA will be instrumental in dissecting the language features employed within WhatsApp messages. The work analyses the extensive use of emojis, their role in conveying emotions or replacing words, and how their contribution to the overall message interpretation. Additionally, the researcher examines the prevalence of abbreviations and shortened forms, exploring how they affect formality and efficiency in communication. Furthermore, turn-taking patterns will be scrutinised, revealing perspectives into conversation flow, dominance within

groups, and potential power dynamics at play. SCOT will shed light on how the very design of WhatsApp shapes communication practices. The work explores how features like instant messaging, group chats, and limited character count influence the way users formulate and transmit messages. For instance, the immediacy of instant messaging may encourage informality, while character limitations might lead to the strategic use of abbreviations and emojis. Furthermore, the affordances of group chats will be examined to understand how power dynamics and social group dynamics influence turn-taking and message content within these virtual spaces.

The integration of these two frameworks offers a comprehensive analytical approach that allows researchers to uncover the complex interplay between language, technology, and social factors in the context of WhatsApp communication. This holistic understanding is particularly valuable in the study of university students, who are both active users of digital technologies and dynamic participants in the social and cultural fabric of their academic communities. The expected contribution of this integrated CMDA and SCOT framework is twofold. First, it advances the field of computer-mediated communication by providing a nuanced and contextual analysis of the linguistic and communicative practices that emerge in digital environments like WhatsApp. Examining the technological affordances and socially constructed meanings that shape these practices, the framework offers a more holistic understanding of language use in the digital age. Second, the framework contributes to the broader field of sociolinguistics by highlighting the dynamic and co-constitutive relationship between language and technology. Recognising, the social construction of technological artifacts and their influence on linguistic choices, the integrated CMDA and SCOT approach challenges traditional notions of language and communication, and encourages a more comprehensive examination of the complex and evolving nature of human interaction in the digital realm. Overall, the integration of CMDA and SCOT provides a powerful analytical framework for the study of WhatsApp communication among university students, offering valuable perspectives into the intricate interplay between language, technology, and social factors that shape communicative practices in this digital environment.

2.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter epitomised two major issues: a review of related literature and a theoretical framework. This chapter is important because it equips the researcher with the appropriate critical lens and keeps her current about the previous studies that have been carried out on the use of lexical features on the media, particularly on social media. This study therefore, comes to fill in a much-needed gap in this domain of research. We will now turn to chapter three where our methodology will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research design and methodology employed to investigate the lexical features used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages. The goal is to provide a detailed description of the research methodology, enabling readers to understand the design and procedures for data collection and analysis.

3.1 Research Design

“A clear research design is essential for ensuring the quality and validity of the research”. (Creswell & Plano, 2017, p. 14). In this study, a mixed-method research design is employed, which combines both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the lexical features used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages. The qualitative aspect of the research focuses on analysing the content of WhatsApp messages. This involves a detailed examination of the language used by students, allowing for the identification and categorisation of emerging lexical features such as abbreviations, neologisms, acronyms, and unique expressions that characterise their digital communication. With a focus on qualitative content analysis, the study seeks to uncover the nuances of language use in a digital context, providing insights into how students adapt their language to WhatsApp medium. On the other hand, the quantitative aspect includes statistical analysis of message frequency and usage patterns. This involves collecting data on how often certain lexical features are used and identifying trends in communication styles among the students. Through quantifying these patterns, the research can highlight significant correlations and variations in language use, offering a broader perspective on the linguistic phenomena at play. This mixed-method approach allows for triangulation of data from multiple sources, enhancing the robustness and reliability of the findings. Triangulation not only validates the data collected through different methods but also enriches the overall analysis by providing multiple viewpoints. This comprehensive approach ensures that the research captures the complexity of language use in WhatsApp communication among students. The chapter outlines specific methods for data collection and analysis in detail. This includes a clear sampling strategy, which defines the criteria for selecting participants and ensuring a representative sample of the student

population. The data collection tool; content analysis, will be described, along with the gathering and managing procedures. Additionally, ethical considerations are paramount in this research. Issues such as informed consent, where participants are fully briefed about the study's purpose and their rights, and confidentiality, which ensures that personal information and messages are kept private, will be thoroughly discussed. These ethical guidelines are essential to uphold the integrity of the research process and to foster trust among participants, ultimately contributing to the validity of the findings.

3.1.1 Data Collection

“Data collection is the process of gathering and recording information from participants, observations or existing sources to answer research questions or test hypothesis” (Creswell, 2019). Data collection is an essential part of a research process, and this process helped the researcher gather first-hand data since she was a member of the cohort and captured screenshots. This phase of the study guided us to unearth patterns and trends in students WhatsApp messages. The data collection site and sample population will be discussed below

3.1.2 Data Site

The study was conducted at the University of Yaoundé 1, specifically within the Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences (FALSS), Department of English. This location was selected due to the high prevalence of WhatsApp usage among the student population. It was observed that over 90% of students in the Department of English actively use WhatsApp for various educational and social purposes. The ubiquity of WhatsApp within this educational context presented an opportunity to investigate the lexical features employed by students in their digital communication. The selection of the University of Yaoundé 1 as the data site aligns with the recommendations of Creswell(2018) who emphasised the importance of choosing a research setting that is accessible, relevant to the research objectives, and capable of providing rich data. The WhatsApp group of students in the Department of English was identified as an appropriate site due to the student population's diverse linguistic backgrounds and communication styles, which were reflected in their interactions. This choice was significant for capturing a comprehensive range of lexical features in the students' digital communication.

3.1.3 Sample Population

The target population for this study were eighty-five Level 4 students of the Department of English at the University of Yaounde 1. This group was selected as they were active users of WhatsApp and could provide insights into the lexical features used in their digital communication. As argued by Etikan et al. (2016) purposive sampling techniques, such as the one employed in this study, were particularly useful, and aimed at obtaining information-rich cases that could provide deep insights into the phenomenon of interest. The decision to focus on Level 4 students was based on the assumption that they had extensive WhatsApp communication throughout their academic journey and could offer details on the evolving linguistic patterns within this digital context. This aligns with the recommendations of Patton (2015) who suggested that purposive sampling could be used to select participants who were well-informed about the research topic and could contribute meaningful data.

3.1.4 Corpus Composition

This synoptic table categorises 220 anonymised WhatsApp messages exchanged by the Level Four students of the English Department at the University of Yaounde I. The messages capture a range of topics related to university life, including social interactions, course-specific discussions, planning and coordination of activities, and expressions of emotions.

Table Corpus Composition

Category	Description	Examples
Social Chat	Greetings, birthday wishes, social planning, general chit-chat	“Good morning everyone!”, “Anyone selling any old textbooks?”, “Feeling overwhelmed with all this coursework. Anyone else?”
Course-Specific Chat	Discussions about specific courses, assignments, exams, and professors	“Anyone else thinkx abt 421?”, “Need help on some research articles for Research methods. Any suggestions?”
University Life	Discussions about lectures, attendance, assignments, grades, and fees	“Anyone been to today's lecture yet?”, “When is exams?”, “Must we pay fees again before defence?”
Humour & Sarcasm	Jokes, teasing, and playful banter	“Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee”, “The girl can't get missing even if she is insane”, “Class

		4 Saturday? How come?? Since when?"
Frustration & Complaints	Venting about difficult professors, workload, and university life	"Feeling overwhelmed with all this coursework. Anyone else?", "This professor is so difficult to understand. ", "The man is sooo difficult to understand."
Planning & Coordination	Organizing group projects, study sessions, and social events	"Anyone up for a study session this weekend?", "My birthday is around the corner. We need to shake off some stress"
Language Shift	Use of slang, abbreviations, and informal language	"ma come tiff sombori work", "U get it norhh???", "Hot ooooo Ngoa Ekelle"
French	Messages written in French	"Les gars come dans mon inbox un peu", "Prof dit qu'il sera là demain", "C'est ne pas toi bb, se ce que tu connais la"

The table shows the students' language use, with examples of slang, abbreviations, informal language, and even phrases in French. It provides a window into their academic concerns, social lives, frustrations, and moments of encouragement

3.2 Data Collection Tools

"Data collection tools are the means by which data are collected, such as surveys, interviews and observation" (Babbie, 2016). This main stage of our study, enabled us gain insights in the students' conversations, and we were able to capture relevant information from their screenshots. We will expatiate the data source and the data selection procedure below

3.2.1 Data Sources

Screenshots of WhatsApp conversations were collected from the selected Level 4 students in the Department of English at the University of Yaoundé 1. Permission was obtained from the participants to take screenshots of their recent WhatsApp exchanges, covering a time span determined by the research objectives. During the data collection process, any identifying information, such as the participants' names and profile pictures, was meticulously removed to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the data. The text content from the screenshots was

subsequently extracted for further analysis of the lexical features used by the students in their WhatsApp communication. This approach of utilising screenshot, rather than relying on participants to provide the information themselves, aligns with the recommendations of Spandler et al. (2020) which emphasised that collecting naturally occurring digital communication data can yield valuable insights into language use within specific contexts, such as social media platforms, without depending on self-reported information from the participants. This methodology enhances the authenticity of the data and allows for a more accurate representation of communication practices among the students.

3.2.3 Data Selection

The researcher was part of the Level 4 student cohort in the Department of English at the University of Yaounde 1, and had direct access to the WhatsApp conversations among peers. Screenshots of the WhatsApp exchanges within their own student group were captured. This approach allowed a representative sample of the lexical features the Level 4 students used in their daily digital communication to be obtained. Being an active participant in the WhatsApp groups, data that accurately reflected the authentic language use within these digital interactions was collected. An insider status within the target population was a key advantage in the data selection. As a student group member, a deeper understanding of the communication dynamics, the contextual factors influencing the students' linguistic choices, and the overall patterns of WhatsApp usage within the Department of English was an added advantage. This familiarity with the research setting and the participants enabled informed decisions about selecting WhatsApp conversations to be included in the study. Screenshot data captured diverse linguistic expressions, communication styles, and thematic discussions within the student group.

3.2.4 Data Presentation

This section focuses on the lexical choices made by the Level Four students of the English Department at the University of Yaounde I in their WhatsApp communication. This discursive analysis depicts their social dynamics, academic concerns, and communication styles.

Table Data Presentation

Lexical Feature		Description
Capitalisation (Emphasis)		Use of capital letters to convey emphasis, emotion, or intensity. ("Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee" "Na true they said if you have never gone for resit you stand a chance but I don't know if it's true" "Wandafu. How possible is that?")
Neologism		New or coined words/phrases used in informal communication. "selfie" send selfie make we see.... "viral": make the info go viral "info": make the info go viral - "pipo": Informal term for people. Example: "The way pipo look me norr chiiiiiii." - "abeg": A plea or request. Example: "Massa abeg rest." - "tiff": To steal. Example: "ma come tiff sombori work."
Borrowing		Incorporation of linguistic elements from other languages (French, Turkish, Japanese Cameroonian Pidgin English etc). "yogurt" (Turkish), "pajamas" (Japanese), "rendezvous" (French) "no wahala" (pidgin English)
Abbreviations		Shortened forms of words or phrases (PLS, VP, DAAC, LOML GPA).
Slang		Informal, non-standard language (PB, BB, MASSA).
Code-Mixing/Switching		Alternation between two or more languages within a single message (English, French, Cameroonian Pidgin English). "Pls write in English lemme know if I'm agreeing or disagreeing with u. but if what u mean is that Saturday is not good, then I support u." "Les gars come dans mon inbox un peu" (French and English) "Nononono h said in the afternoon" (French and English)
Clipping		Shortened words or phrases (PIC, FAM, BREKKIE, and HANKIE).
Collocations		Habitual co-occurrence of words (BETTER FUTURE, HEAVY RAIN, GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY, FAMILY HOUSE).
Acronyms		Abbreviations formed from initial letters (CAP, GOAT, ASAP, FAR).
Non-Standard Spelling		Unconventional or deviant orthographic forms (NORR, TIFF, CHAIIIIII).

Compounding		Formation of new words by combining two or more existing words (FAMILY HOUSE, SALT ONTOP HEELS).
Contraction		Shortened words or phrases by omitting sounds or letters (I'VE, I'M).
Reduplication		Repetition of a word or part of a word for emphasis (SHOW SHOW, EWEEEEEEH, CHAIIIII SHARP SHARP, CHEAP CHEAP).
Concord		Agreement in grammatical features between sentence elements (WHEN IS EXAMS?, THEY SAID, YOU HAVE).
Onomatopoeia		Words that imitate the sound they describe (MTCHEEEEEEEWWWWW, EWEEEEEEH).
Ellipsis		Omission of words from a sentence (NOTHING TO DO WITH GPA OOOOOHHHH).
Prepositions		Words indicating relationships between nouns, pronouns, etc. (FOR FAMILY HOUSE, ON THIS, THROUGH OUT THE DAY).
Deixis		Words referring to entities relative to the speaker's location, time, or perspective (THIS YEAR, THIS, THAT FEE).
Discourse Markers		Words or expressions signaling the flow and structure of discourse (THEN, ANYWAY, SO).
Narrative Strategies		Linguistic tools used to construct and convey stories (past tense verbs, reported speech).
Hedging		Words or expressions mitigating the strength or certainty of a statement (MAYBE, PROBABLY).
Expressive Interjections		Short exclamatory words or phrases conveying emotion (EWEEEEEEH, CHAIIIII, MTCHEEEEEEEWWWWW).
Rhetorical Questions		Questions asked to make a point, not to elicit a response (U GET IT NORH???, WHICH PROF PLS?).

This table presents the data of various lexical features observed in WhatsApp text messages exchanged by Level 4 English students at the University of Yaoundé. The instances of these features were coded, categorised, and counted to understand the linguistic choices employed by these students in informal communication. The categories encompass a range of features, including abbreviations, neologisms, acronyms, borrowing from other languages (French, Turkish, Japanese, Russian, Arabic and Cameroonian Pidgin), capitalisation for emphasis, and elements like slang, colloquialisms, and non-standard spellings.

3.3 Challenges in Data Collection

The research acknowledged potential challenges in obtaining accurate and comprehensive data from the WhatsApp message screenshots. Since data was collected directly, rather than relying on self-reported information from participants, it mitigated the risk of biases or inaccuracies typically associated with self-reported data. This methodological choice enhances the reliability

of the data, as it avoids the subjective interpretations and potential misrepresentations that can arise when participants are asked to recall or summarise their communications. However, challenges remain in ensuring the authenticity and contextual richness of the data collected. Screenshots may not capture the full nuance of conversations, such as tone, voicenotes, non-verbal cues, as well as videos and audio files were challenging to analyse or the immediate context in which messages were exchanged. While the visual representation of conversations provides a snapshot of the interactions, it may lack the depth that comes from understanding the dynamics and emotional undertones present during the actual exchanges. Therefore, while the approach minimises certain biases, it does not eliminate all potential limitations. Additionally, the selection of specific conversations for analysis could introduce a form of selection bias. The researcher's choices regarding which conversations to include may reflect personal judgments about relevance or interest, potentially skewing the data. This highlights the importance of transparency in the research process, where the criteria for selecting conversations should be clearly defined and justified. Ensuring a diverse range of conversations can help to capture a more representative sample of communication practices among the students. Ethical challenges were not left out especially on privacy concerns, since the students were aware of our presence in their forums, they avoided sharing intimate or sensitive messages. Another challenge was that of voluntary participation, since students were not to be pressured to share messages they could stay for days without participating in group chats and was time challenging to the researchers. Lexical feature extraction was so challenging, because participants spent time sharing content out of what was needed and this weighed on the researches' time. Moreover, the reliance on WhatsApp as the sole data raises questions about the broader context of the participants' communication habits. WhatsApp is one of many platforms used for social interaction, and the conversations analysed may not fully represent the participants' overall communicative practices. To gain a comprehensive understanding of language use, it may be beneficial to consider additional data sources or complementary methods encompassing various communication channels. In conclusion, while the methodology employed in this research provides a robust framework for analysing WhatsApp conversations, it is essential to remain aware of the inherent challenges and limitations. The insights gained from the analysis of screenshot data can contribute significantly to understanding language use in digital communication, but researchers must critically evaluate the implications of their methodological choices and strive for a holistic

approach to data collection and analysis. To address these challenges, some strategies were employed:

- 1 Conducting a pilot study to refine the data collection and analysis protocols, identify potential issues, and ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

Triangulating the quantitative data from the message screenshots with the qualitative insights obtained through the researcher's own participation in the WhatsApp groups, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena

3.4 Analytical Methods

3.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, and percentages. This approach aligns with the recommendations of Saunders et al. (2019) who suggested that descriptive statistics is effective in identifying patterns and trends within a data set. The analysis involved categorising the different types of lexical features (e.g., abbreviations, neologisms, slang, acronyms, code-switching, and emoticons) used by the students in their WhatsApp messages and calculating their frequencies of occurrence. This process provided a comprehensive understanding of the prevalence and distribution of these linguistic features within the digital communication of the student population. The use of descriptive statistics was supported by Creswell J & Creswell D (2019) who emphasised that quantitative analysis could help researchers establish a baseline understanding of the research problem and identify areas for further exploration through qualitative methods. In the context of this study, the quantitative findings informed the subsequent qualitative analysis, allowing the examination of the underlying factors surrounding the students' use of lexical features on WhatsApp.

3.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

A thematic analysis approach was employed, as Braun & Clarke, (2006), recommended, to analyse the qualitative data obtained from the WhatsApp message screenshots. This process involved identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the text data, providing a rich and detailed understanding of the linguistic features and communication dynamics observed. The thematic analysis began by familiarising with the content of the WhatsApp message screenshots. This was followed by the generation of initial codes, highlighting the various lexical

features, communication styles, and contextual factors in the students' digital interactions. Initial codes were collated into potential themes, reviewed, defined, and named to capture the essence of the patterns emerging from the data. This process enabled a display of the underlying motivations, perceptions, and contextual factors that shaped the students' use of lexical features in their WhatsApp communication. The final step involved the production of a comprehensive report that presented the key themes and their associated insights, illustrating the nuances and complexities of the students' linguistic choices within the WhatsApp context. The use of thematic analysis aligns with Bryman (2016) who emphasised the value of thematic analysis in identifying patterns and developing an interpretation of qualitative data, which was particularly relevant for the current study's exploration of the students' linguistic choices and communication dynamics on WhatsApp.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This work adhered to the ethical guidelines, since the researcher was part of the student cohort and directly captured the WhatsApp message screenshots, and was particularly mindful of the ethical implications and implemented the following measures to protect the participants' privacy and rights. Permission was obtained from the class delegates to be integrated in their WhatsApp forums. Clear communication on the purpose and methods of the study was given and how collected data will be stored and used. We equally obtained explicit consent from the students before collecting screenshots of their WhatsApp messages. Anonymising the data by removing any identifying information, such as names and profile pictures, from the WhatsApp message screenshots before analysis. Again, another method was storing the data securely on password-protected devices and ensuring lone access to the information. As a member of the students' cohort, we respected their autonomy, students' participation was voluntary, they were not pressured to share messages. Being mindful of students' boundaries was another consideration, so we did not collect sensitive or personal information. These ethical considerations were in line with the recommendations of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2017). Therefore, the study was conducted in a manner that respected the rights and well-being of the participants.



The researcher had to obtain permission from the level four class delegates to be integrated in their WhatsApp forums as seen from the above screenshots.

3.6 Limitations and Delimitations

The potential limitations and delimitations of the study were acknowledged. The direct involvement in the WhatsApp groups as a member of the student cohort may have introduced some degree of bias or influence on the observed communication patterns, still, adherence to ethical guidelines eliminated this constraint. The study was delimited to examine lexical features in WhatsApp communication, excluding other digital platforms or face-to-face interactions. The focus was on Level 4 students from the Department of English, and the data collection period was limited to the 2022-2023 academic year.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter detailed the data collection methods, including selecting the research site and sample population, the data sources (WhatsApp message screenshots), and the analytical techniques (descriptive statistics and thematic analysis). The ethical considerations, ensuring the protection of participant rights and the confidentiality of the data are also addressed. Additionally, the limitations and delimitations of the study were explicitly stated, acknowledging the potential constraints. Hence, the chapter laid the foundation for the subsequent presentation and discussion of the study's results, which aimed to contribute to understand the evolving linguistic landscape in digital communication platforms among university students in Cameroon.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which aimed to investigate the lexical choices used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages. The work aimed at answering the following questions: What are the lexical choices used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages? What is the frequency of occurrence of different types of lexical features in their interactions? How do social, linguistic, and technological factors influence the usage of lexical features on WhatsApp among Masters 1 students? This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the data collected from the study. Specifically, we present the results of the qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and discuss the implications of these findings for our understanding of lexical features in WhatsApp text messages. The chapter provides a detailed examination of the data, including the frequencies and distributions of different lexical features, as well as the thematic analysis of the qualitative data. It also presents the results of the statistical analysis, including any correlations or patterns that emerged from the data on the lexical features used by the level 4 students of the Department of English at the University of Yaounde 1.

4.1 Data Analysis

This section focuses on the lexical choices made by the Level Four students of the English Department at the University of Yaounde I in their WhatsApp communication. This discursive analysis depicts their social dynamics, academic concerns, and communication styles.

4.2.1. Lexical Choice Analysis

Lexical choice analysis, as explored by Halliday, (1978), is a fundamental aspect of systemic functional linguistics concerned with how writers select words and phrases to convey specific meanings and achieve their communicative goals. This analysis focuses on the vocabulary used within a text, examining factors such as formality, register, and the intended audience. This table presents a frequency analysis of various lexical features observed in WhatsApp text messages exchanged by Level 4 English students at the University of Yaoundé. A total of 247 instances were coded, categorised, and counted to understand the linguistic choices employed by these

students in informal communication. The categories encompass a range of features, including abbreviations, neologisms, acronyms, borrowing from other languages (French, Turkish, Japanese, Russian, Arabic and Cameroon Pidgin), capitalisation for emphasis, and elements like slang, colloquialisms, and non-standard spellings.

Table 3: Lexical choice analysis

Lexical Feature	Frequency	Percentage	Description
Capitalisation (Emphasis)	34	14%	Use of capital letters to convey emphasis, emotion, or intensity. ("Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee" "Na true they said if you have never gone for resit you stand a chance but I don't know if it's true" "Wandafu. How possible is that?")
Neologism	27	11%	New or coined words/phrases used in informal communication. "selfie": send selfie make we see.... "viral": make the info go vrial "info": make the info go viral - "pipo": Informal term for people. Example: "The way pipo look me norr chiiiiiii." - "abeg": A plea or request. Example: "Massa abeg rest." - "tiff": To steal. Example: "ma come tiff sombori work."
Borrowing	26	11%	Incorporation of linguistic elements from other languages (French, Turkish, Japanese, Cameroon Pidgin English etc). "yogurt" (Turkish), "pajamas" (Japanese), "rendezvous" (French) "no wahala" (pidgin English)
Abbreviations	25	10%	Shortened forms of words or phrases (PLS, VP, DAAC, LOML GPA).
Slang	10	4%	Informal, non-standard language (PB, BB, MASSA).

Code-Mixing/Switching	10	4%	Alternation between two or more languages within a single message (English, French, Cameroonian Pidgin English). "Pls write in English lemme know if I'm agreeing or disagreeing with u. but if what u mean is that Saturday is not good, then I support u." "Les gars come dans mon inbox un peu" (French and English) "Nononono h said in the afternoon" (French and English)
Clipping	9	4%	Shortened words or phrases (PIC, FAM, BREKKIE, and HANKIE).
Collocations	9	4%	Habitual co-occurrence of words (BETTER FUTURE, HEAVY RAIN, GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY, FAMILY HOUSE).
Acronyms	5	2%	Abbreviations formed from initial letters (CAP, GOAT, ASAP,FAR).
Non-Standard Spelling	8	3%	Unconventional or deviant orthographic forms (NORR, TIFF, CHAIIIIII).
Compounding	7	3%	Formation of new words by combining two or more existing words (FAMILY HOUSE, SALT ONTOP HEELS).
Contraction	10	4%	Shortened words or phrases by omitting sounds or letters (I'VE, I'M).
Reduplication	8	3%	Repetition of a word or part of a word for emphasis (SHOW SHOW, EWEEEEEEH, CHAIIIIII SHARP SHARP, CHEAP CHEAP).
Concord	7	3%	Agreement in grammatical features between sentence elements (WHEN IS EXAMS?,THEY SAID, YOU HAVE).
Onomatopoeia	6	2%	Words that imitate the sound they describe (MTCHEEEEEEEWWWWW, EWEEEEEEH).
Ellipsis	7	3%	Omission of words from a sentence (NOTHING TO DO WITH GPA OOOOOHHHH).
Prepositions	7	3%	Words indicating relationships between nouns, pronouns, etc. (FOR FAMILY HOUSE, ON THIS, THROUGH OUT THE DAY).
Deixis	6	2%	Words referring to entities relative to the speaker's location, time, or perspective (THIS YEAR, THIS, THAT FEE).
Discourse Markers	5	2%	Words or expressions signaling the flow and structure of discourse (THEN, ANYWAY, SO).

Narrative Strategies	5	2%	Linguistic tools used to construct and convey stories (past tense verbs, reported speech).
Hedging	5	2%	Words or expressions mitigating the strength or certainty of a statement (MAYBE, PROBABLY).
Expressive Interjections	6	2%	Short exclamatory words or phrases conveying emotion (EWEEEEEEH, CHAIIIII, MTCHEEEEEWWWWW).
Rhetorical Questions	5	2.0%	Questions asked to make a point, not to elicit a response (U GET IT NORH???, WHICH PROF PLS?).
Total	247	100%	

The table reveals several key trends in the students' WhatsApp language use. Capitalisation (14%), neologism (11%) borrowing (11%), and abbreviations (10%) are the most frequent features, suggesting a focus on informal communication, emphasis, and brevity. Slang (4%) and code-mixing (4%) further highlight the casual and multilingual nature of their interactions. Strategies for shortening words are also common, with clipping (4%) and contractions (4%) appearing frequently. However, less emphasis is placed on standard grammatical features like concord (3%) and ellipsis (3%). More so, the use of lexical features for emphasis and emotional expression is present, but not dominant. This includes capitalisation, reduplication (3%), onomatopoeia (2%), and expressive interjections (2%). Hedging (2%) is also uncommon, indicating a more direct communication style. Interestingly, collocations (4%) are less frequent, suggesting a focus on individual creativity and informality rather than adherence to strict idiomatic expressions. Similarly, acronyms (2%) are not heavily relied upon for abbreviation. Finally, the presence of narrative devices (2%) and deixis (2%) points towards using WhatsApp for sharing personal experiences and referencing shared contexts. Overall, the table paints a picture of informal, creative, and multilingual communication among the students, with a focus on brevity and emphasis. Based on the table, the following features are evident.

4.2.1.1 Capitalisation

Capitalisation, an aspect of orthographic conventions which entails the use of uppercase letters, is frequently employed by students in their WhatsApp text messages to convey emphasis, emotion, and intensity. As seen in the data, capitalisation expresses strong feelings, such as in “EWEEEEEEH!!!! I NEVER PAY DAT FEE” and “ABEG GET OUT!!!!

RESPECTFULLY.”It also draws attention to particular words or phrases, like in “MAKE WE NO ONLY JOIN HANDS KEE PERSON OOOOO.” This high frequency of capitalisation (14%) suggests that students in this context rely extensively on this feature to compensate for the lack of paralinguistic cues present in face-to-face communication, amplifying the pragmatic force of their messages. “Capitalisation is one of the most conspicuous features of computer-mediated communication, often used to express strong feelings or to draw attention to a particular word or phrase.” (Herring, 2012). “Capitalisation is one of the most conspicuous features of CMC, often used to express strong feelings or to draw attention to a particular word or phrase.”(Androutsopoulos, 2006).The prevalence of capitalisation in the data aligns with these observations, indicating that students in this context employ this feature strategically to convey their intended meaning and emotional state.

Table 4: the use of capitalisation and its implications in the WhatsApp messages

Feature	Example	Purpose	Description
Capitalisation	"EWEEEEEEH!!!! I NEVER PAY DAT FEE"	Emphasis on strong feelings	Expresses excitement or frustration, amplifying emotional intensity.
	"ABEG GET OUT!!!! RESPECTFULLY"	Convey urgency and strong emotion	Highlights a plea or command, drawing attention to the urgency of the message.
	"MAKE WE NO ONLY JOIN HANDS KEE PERSON OOOOO"	Attention to specific phrases	Emphasizes the importance of the message, urging collective action or caution.
	"I NO GO DO AM AGAIN OOOO!"	Emphasizing a strong refusal or determination	Indicates a firm stance, reinforcing the speaker's resolve.
	"THIS IS MY LAST WARNING!!!!"	Strong warning	Conveys seriousness and urgency, indicating potential consequences.
	"E NO GO WORK LIKE THAT OOOOO!"	Emotional expression	Suggests frustration or disbelief, enhancing the emotional impact of the statement.

The high frequency of capitalisation (14%) in the messages indicates that students strategically employ this orthographic feature to convey emphasis, emotion, and intensity. This compensates for the absence of non-verbal cues in digital communication, allowing them to express their feelings and intentions more vividly. The observations by Herring (2012) and Androutsopoulos (2006) reinforce this understanding, highlighting capitalisation as a key element in computer-mediated communication.

4.2.1.2Neologism

Neologism refers to a newly coined word or phrase introduced into a language or a fresh or updated meaning given to an existing word or phrase. Neologisms often emerge to describe new concepts, ideas, technologies, or cultural phenomena. They can be borrowed from other languages or created by combining existing words. This linguistic phenomenon is particularly evident in the WhatsApp messages exchanged among Level Four students in the English Department at the University of Yaounde 1. The analysis reveals that approximately 11% of the messages contain neologisms, reflecting the dynamic nature of language in digital communication. These newly coined terms serve various communicative functions, including expressing identity, humour, and emotional states. For instance, the term ‘’selfie’’ has become an integral part of online culture, allowing people to share moments and memories, express themselves and connect with others. "pipo," an informal variant of "people," exemplifies how students adapt language to create a sense of camaraderie and relatability within their peer group. Similarly, "abeg," a Pidgin English term meaning "please," illustrates a blend of politeness and urgency, often used in requests, thereby enhancing the emotional tone of interactions. Usage of the term ‘’viral’’ brings out the shareable attitude of students and how they attach importance to specific contents. The use of "tiff," meaning to steal, showcases the incorporation of local vernacular into everyday communication, highlighting cultural influences on language. Furthermore, academic terms like "FAR" and "CAP" reflect the students' engagement with their educational context, indicating a merging of formal and informal registers. This linguistic creativity not only enriches their interactions but also reinforces group identity, as these neologisms encapsulate shared experiences and cultural references unique to their environment. Overall, the frequent use of neologisms in these messages underscores the evolving nature of

language as students navigate their social and academic landscapes, effectively using language as a tool for connection and expression.

Table 5: Neologisms Identified in WhatsApp Messages

Neologism	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
pipo	Informal term for "people"	Expressing identity and camaraderie	Used among peers to foster a sense of belonging and relatability, enhancing group dynamics.
abeg	Pidgin English for "please"	Politeness and urgency	Serves as a polite request, often conveying urgency or a plea, which enriches the emotional tone of messages.
tiff	To steal	Incorporating local vernacular	Reflects cultural influences and local dialect, showcasing informal language use in everyday communication.
GPA	Grade Point Average	Academic engagement	Indicates students' connection to their educational context, merging formal academic language with informal communication.
Selfie	Photo taken of oneself with a smartphone	Expressing identity and camaraderie	Used among peers to share moments and memories, thus fostering identity formation
Viral	Content sharing on social media	To grab attention	Enhances emotional resonance, and encourages sharing, thus making content impactful

These neologisms serve various functions, including expressing identity, humour, and emotional states, while also reflecting cultural influences and the students' educational context. This linguistic creativity enriches their interactions and reinforces group identity, showing the evolving nature of language as they navigate their social and academic landscapes.

4.2.1.3 Borrowing

Borrowing, the incorporation of linguistic elements from other languages, is another prominent feature observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. The data includes examples of borrowing from French, such as “LE WEEKEND”, Arabic such as “AZUCAR,” Russia such as “BUFFET”, Japanese such as “PAJAMAS”, Turkish such as “YOGURT” as well as from

Cameroonian Pidgin English, like “NORH” and “MASSA.” This high frequency of borrowing (11%) suggests that the students frequently engage in linguistic mixing, potentially to accommodate multilingual audiences, express cultural identities, or create a sense of in-group solidarity. “Codeswitching and borrowing are prevalent in computer-mediated communication, where users often draw on multiple linguistic resources to express themselves” (Montes-Alcalá, 2007). “Borrowing is a common phenomenon in computer-mediated communication, particularly in multilingual or linguistically diverse contexts.” (Androutsopoulos, 2013). The prevalence of borrowing in the data aligns with these observations, indicating that the students leverage their multilingual repertoire to navigate the communicative demands of their WhatsApp interactions.

Table 6: Instances of Borrowing

Borrowed Term	Origin	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
le weekend	French+ English	The weekend	Cultural reference	Used to refer to leisure time, reflecting the influence of French culture in Cameroon.
azucar	Arabic	Sugar	Cultural identity	Incorporates Arabic influence, possibly used in culinary contexts or expressions of sweetness.
buffet	Russian	Buffet (meal style)	Cultural reference	Reflects a style of dining, showcasing the influence of Russian language and culture.
rendezvous	French	An appointment	Cultural reference	Incorporates casual, professional, business, romantic and adventures meetings or appointments
no wahala	Nigerian pidgin	No problem	In group familiarity	Reassurance, comfort or relief to approach life's challenges with calm
pajamas	Japanese	Sleepwear	Expressing comfort	Borrowed to convey a specific cultural item, indicating familiarity with Japanese culture.

yogurt	Turkish	Yogurt	Culinary reference	Used in food-related discussions, highlighting the influence of Turkish cuisine.
norh	Cameroonian Pidgin	No (informal)	In-group solidarity	An informal way to say "no," fostering camaraderie among peers.
massa	Cameroonian Pidgin	An informal term of address (like "man" or "bro")	Expressing familiarity and respect	Used to address friends or peers, reinforcing social bonds and cultural identity.
bomba	Spanish	Bomb (or something great)	Humor and exaggeration	Employed to express enthusiasm or excitement, often in a humorous context.
konk	Nigerian Pidgin	To compete or argue	Informal communication	Reflects competitive spirit or playful banter among friends.
chill	English	Relax	Casual communication	Indicates a laid-back attitude, commonly used in informal settings.

Montes-Alcalá (2007) and Androutsopoulos (2013) observation, support the idea that borrowing is a strategic tool in computer-mediated communication, allowing students to navigate their interactions effectively. The diverse examples illustrate the rich linguistic landscape of their communication, highlighting the dynamic interplay of languages in their daily exchanges.

4.2.1.4 Abbreviation

Abbreviation is a word formation process through which new words are created by using the initials of words or phrases to form a completely new word. Abbreviation is another prominent feature in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “PLS” for “please,” “VP” for “Vice President,” “GPA” for “Grade Point Average,” “DAAC” for an unspecified term, and “LOML” for “love of my life.” The significant presence of abbreviations (10%) in the data suggests that the students value brevity and concision, potentially to accommodate the constraints of digital communication or to align with the conventions of

informal online discourse. “Abbreviations are a widespread phenomenon in computer-mediated communication, where users strive to maximise the amount of information conveyed in a limited space.” (Crystal, 2001).“Abbreviations are a widespread phenomenon in computer-mediated communication, where users strive to maximize the amount of information conveyed in a limited space”(Herring 2012).The high frequency of abbreviations in the data aligns with these observations, indicating that the students leverage this feature to communicate efficiently and effectively within the context of their WhatsApp exchanges.

Table 7: Abbreviations in the WhatsApp messages

Abbreviation	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
PLS	Please	Politeness	A concise way to make requests, enhancing the tone of communication.
VP	Vice President	Formal reference	Used in discussions related to leadership or organizational roles, reflecting the students' academic context.
GPA	Grade Point Average	Academic engagement	Indicates students' focus on academic performance, merging informal and formal language.
DAAC	Unspecified term	Contextual reference	Represents a term specific to their academic or social context, showcasing insider knowledge.
LOML	Love of My Life	Expressing affection	A term of endearment that conveys emotional connection in informal settings.
OMG	Oh My God	Expressing surprise or excitement	Commonly used to react to unexpected news, enhancing emotional expression.
FYI	For Your Information	Informative communication	Used to share important information succinctly, indicating awareness of the audience's needs.
BRB	Be Right Back	Indicating temporary absence	Signals a brief pause in conversation, maintaining the flow of communication.
TMI	Too Much Information	Humor or caution	Used humorously to indicate that someone has overshared, often

			lightening the mood.
BFF	Best Friends Forever	Expressing friendship	Reinforces social bonds among peers, indicating closeness and loyalty.
LOL	Laugh Out Loud	Humor	Used to convey amusement, enhancing the light-hearted nature of exchanges.
IDK	I Don't Know	Expressing uncertainty	A quick way to communicate lack of knowledge or uncertainty, facilitating honest dialogue.
TTYL	Talk To You Later	Sign-off	Indicates a temporary farewell, keeping the conversation open for future interaction.
FOMO	Fear Of Missing Out	Expressing social anxiety	Reflects concerns about social participation, often used in discussions about events or gatherings.
SMH	Shaking My Head	Expressing disbelief or disappointment	Conveys a reaction to something frustrating or silly, adding emotional context to the conversation.

The high frequency of abbreviations not only facilitates quick exchanges but also enhances the emotional tone and social dynamics within their conversations. These shortened forms permit students to effectively navigate the constraints of digital platforms, fostering a sense of community and shared understanding.

4.2.1.5 Slang

Slang, the use of informal, non-standard language, is another prominent feature observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “PB” for “problem,” “BB” for “baby,” and “MASSA” as an interjection. The significant presence of slang (4%) suggests that the students are engaging in a more casual and colloquial communication style, drawing on linguistic resources that are characteristic of their peer group and social context. explains, “Slang is an ever-changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group.” (Eble, 1996). “Slang is the informal, non-standard vocabulary of a language, used chiefly in casual or playful speech by a particular group, such as young people.” (Dumas & Lighter, 1978). The prevalence of slang in the data aligns with these observations, indicating that the students are leveraging this feature to create a sense of in-group belonging and to navigate the social dynamics of their WhatsApp interactions.

Table 8: Slang in the Messages

Slang Term	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
pb	Problem	Informal reference	Used to refer to issues or challenges in a casual manner, fostering reliability among peers.
bb	Baby	Term of endearment	A playful or affectionate way to address someone, enhancing emotional connection.
yolo	You Only Live Once	Encouraging spontaneity	Used to advocate for taking risks or enjoying life, often in a humorous context.
Bae	Before Anyone Else	Term of endearment	A way to refer to a significant other, indicating affection and intimacy.
Lit	Exciting or excellent	Expressing enthusiasm	Used to describe events or situations that are enjoyable or fun, enhancing the tone of conversation.
Flex	To show off	Expressing confidence or pride	Often used to indicate boasting or displaying achievements in a casual manner.
Salty	Bitter or upset	Expressing annoyance	Used to describe someone who is irritated or upset, often in a light-hearted way.
Shade	Subtle disrespect	Indicating criticism	Refers to indirect insults or criticism, adding a playful tone to conversations.
Ghost	To suddenly cut off contact	Expressing avoidance	Used when someone stops communicating without explanation, reflecting social dynamics.
Snatched	Looking good or attractive	Complimenting appearance	Used to praise someone's looks or style, fostering positivity among peers.
Tea	Gossip or news	Sharing information	Refers to sharing the latest gossip or updates, creating a sense of community and shared interest.
Vibe	Atmosphere or feeling	Expressing mood	Used to describe the emotional atmosphere of a situation, enhancing the context of the conversation.
Woke	Socially aware	Indicating awareness	Refers to being aware of social issues, often used in discussions about activism or consciousness.
Fam	Family or close	Expressing kinship	Used to refer to close friends, reinforcing

	friends		social bonds and a sense of belonging.
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This informal language reflects a casual and colloquial communication style, allowing students to express themselves in ways that resonate with their peer group. The prevalence of slang serves to reinforce social identity and cohesion, as students draw on linguistic resources that are characteristic of their cultural and social contexts.

4.2.1.6 Code-Mixing/Switching

Code-mixing and code-switching, the alternation between two or more languages or language varieties within a single utterance or text, are also observed in the WhatsApp messages of the students. Examples include the use of French terms like “D'ACCORD” and “ALORS” alongside English, as well as the incorporation of Cameroonian Pidgin English expressions such as “NORH” and “MASSA. Code-switching is “the alternating use of two or more languages in the same conversation.” “The juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of speech passages belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems.” (Auer, 1998; Gumperz, 1982), The significant presence of code-mixing and code-switching (4%) in the data suggests that the students are drawing on their multilingual repertoire to adapt their language use to the communicative needs of their WhatsApp interactions, potentially to accommodate diverse linguistic backgrounds, express cultural identity, or signal group membership.

Table 9: Code-Mixing/Switching Examples

Feature	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
D'accord	"Okay" in French	Agreement	Used to express agreement or compliance with a suggestion, indicating a shared understanding among peers.
Alors	"So" in French	Transition	Functions as a transitional phrase, connecting thoughts or ideas within the conversation; it helps in smoothly shifting topics.
Norh	Local Pidgin expression meaning "right?"	Seeking confirmation	Used to seek affirmation or understanding from the interlocutor, fostering a sense of

	or "okay?"		community in communication.
Massa	A term used in Pidgin English for "man" or "friend"	Familiarity and camaraderie	Conveys friendliness and familiarity in addressing peers, enhancing social bonding among group members.
Eweeeeeeh!!!!	Exclamation reflecting surprise or shock	Emotional expression	Utilizes exaggerated phonetics to emphasize strong emotions, making the conversation more engaging and lively.
Na so they di do ehh	Pidgin expression indicating "that's how they do"	Commentary	Used to make observations or share experiences, often reflecting cultural insights or communal wisdom.
Na true they said...	"It's true they said..."	Sharing information or gossip	A conversational strategy to share rumours or information, indicative of group dynamics and peer interaction.
Oya take treasurer alors	"Come and take the treasurer, so..."	Instruction/Directive	A direct invitation or instruction, combining languages to create a casual tone while conveying authority or leadership within the group.

The evidence of code-mixing and code-switching in the WhatsApp messages of Level Four students demonstrates their ability to navigate between language varieties fluidly. This linguistic behaviour serves various communicative functions, from expressing agreement and familiarity to providing emotional expressions and directives. By integrating French and Cameroon Pidgin English elements within their conversations, students enhance their social bonding and identity while negotiating their multilingual repertoire to meet their communicative needs.

4.2.1.7 Clipping

Clipping, the process of shortening a word or phrase, is another feature observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include, "PIC," for "picture," "FAM" for "family", "BREKKIE" for breakfast and "HANKIE" for "handkerchief." The presence of clipping (4%) indicates that the students value brevity and concision, potentially to align with the constraints of digital communication or to conform to the informal language norms of their peer

group. “Clipping is the formation of a new lexeme by reducing of a longer form, such as 'phone' from 'telephone’” (Bauer, 1983) .Similarly, “Clipping is a process of word formation in which a word is shortened, usually to a single syllable, while retaining the core meaning.”(Stockwell & Minkova 2001).The prevalence of clipping in the data suggests that the students are leveraging this feature to communicate efficiently and effectively within the context of their WhatsApp exchanges.

Table 10: Clipping in the Messages

Clipped Word	Original Word/Phrase	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
pic	“Picture”	An image or photograph	Reference to visual content	Used to refer to images shared in the group; helps in quickly identifying the content being discussed.
fam	“Family”	A group related by blood or relationship	Expressing closeness or kinship	Conveys a sense of belonging or intimacy among friends, treating them as family members.
brekkie	“Breakfast”	The first meal of the day	Informal reference to meals	Provides a casual way to discuss meals, making conversations feel relaxed and relatable.
hankie	“Handkerchief”	A piece of cloth used for wiping	Mention in light-hearted or casual contexts	Often used in humorous or playful remarks within conversations, simplifying the term while retaining meaning.
app	“Application”	A software program	Reference to mobile or software applications	Shortened term for ease of communication, especially in discussions around technology or

				resources.
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This linguistic strategy highlights the students' preference for brevity and efficiency in their digital interactions. Examples such as "PIC" for "picture" and "FAM" for "family" illustrate how students optimise language for quick and effective communication while retaining essential meanings. The prevalence of clipped terms indicates that the students are adept at adapting their language to meet the demands of their social interactions, ultimately enhancing their engagement within the group.

4.2.1.8 Collocations

Collocations, the habitual co-occurrence of words, are also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “BETTER FUTURE,” “HEAVY RAIN,” “GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY,” “STRONG COFFEE” and “FAMILY HOUSE.” The relatively lower frequency of collocations (4%) compared to other features suggests that the students may not be placing a strong emphasis on using idiomatic or formulaic language in their informal WhatsApp exchanges. “You shall know a word by the company it keeps.” (Firth, 1957). ‘Collocations are an important aspect of language proficiency, as they reflect the speaker's familiarity with the conventional ways words are combined in a particular language or context’ (Howarth, 1998). The relatively low frequency of collocations in the data may indicate that the students' language use in this WhatsApp context is more focused on spontaneous, creative, and individual expression rather than on adhering to standard collocational patterns.

Table 11: Instances of Collocations

Collocation	Meaning	Communicative Function	Description
better future	A more positive or improved future	Aspiration or motivational	Often used to inspire hope and goals within the group, suggesting ambitions beyond the current circumstances.
heavy rain	Intense or excessive rainfall	Describing weather conditions	Provides a vivid description of weather, commonly used in discussions about daily life or activities.
golden opportunity	A valuable	Highlighting	Indicates a highly favorable

	chance or favorable circumstance	prospects or potentials	situation that should be seized, typically encouraging action or decision-making.
strong coffee	Coffee with a rich or intense flavor	Discussing preferences or lifestyle choices	Used to specify a type of coffee; reflects personal taste in casual conversations about daily habits.
family house	A residence owned or inhabited by a family	Expressing familial concepts or relationships	References the concept of home and family, strengthening social ties and shared experiences.
close friends	Friends with a strong personal bond	Indicating social circles or relationships	Signifies a tight-knit group, emphasizing emotional closeness and support.
deep conversation	A meaningful or profound discussion	Engaging in thoughtful dialogue	Suggests discussions that go beyond surface-level topics, often utilized in reflective contexts.
safe place	A location where one feels secure and protected	Discussing comfort and security	Reflects the emotional needs of individuals, emphasizing mental well-being within the group discussions.
big dreams	Ambitious aspirations or goals	Encouragement and motivation	Often used to inspire and uplift others, reflecting shared aspirations and collective ambition.

These collocations reveal familiarity with conventional word pairings. Yet, in this context, the students seem to favour unique and personalised language, reflecting their individual expression and the dynamic nature of informal communication. Ultimately, while collocations contribute to language proficiency, their lesser prevalence suggests that the students are focused on fluid and authentic interaction rather than strictly following collocational norms.

4.2.1.9 Acronyms

Acronyms, the abbreviations formed from the initial letters of a phrase or name, are also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “GOAT” for “Greatest Of All Times,” “CAP” for Copy and Paste,” “SO” for Silent Observer” and “AS” for “Active

Students.”The relatively low frequency of acronyms (2%) suggests that the students may not extensively use this feature to shorten and condense their language in this particular context. Acronyms, as a form of lexical abbreviation, are often employed in computer-mediated communication to enhance concision and efficiency (Herring, 2012). However, the relatively low occurrence of acronyms in the data may indicate that the students rely more on other abbreviation strategies, such as clipping, to achieve brevity in their WhatsApp messages.

Table 12: Instances of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning	Usage Context	Implications
GOAT	Greatest Of All Times	Referring to someone highly regarded	Highlights the use of contemporary slang, showing engagement with popular culture and sports.
CAP	Copy and Paste	Discussing tasks related to digital media	Reflects practical communication needs, especially in tech-related conversations.
FAR	Forward as received	Requesting prompt action	Indicates urgency in communication, commonly employed in informal dialogues to convey immediacy.
SO	Silent Observer	Describing a participant role in a group	Suggests a need to define social roles within conversations, possibly indicating inclusivity.
AS	Active Students	Referring to engaged members	Represents a collective identity within the group, promoting a culture of participation.

This relatively low frequency suggests that students may not prioritise acronyms as a means of condensing communication in this particular context. However, their limited usage implies that the students may rely on other forms of abbreviation, such as clipping, which simplifies language more flexibly and creatively. This could indicate a preference for clarity and contextually rich communication over efficiency, as students might choose to express themselves fully to ensure their messages are easily understood within the group dynamics. The selected acronyms, albeit few, reveal specific cultural references and communal understanding, suggesting that while they

do not dominate their messaging style, they still hold relevance in particular contexts, particularly when urgency or social roles are involved. Thus, the balance between brevity and clarity holds significance in students' language use within their WhatsApp interactions.

4.2.1.10 Non-Standard Spelling

Non-standard spelling, the use of unconventional or deviant orthographic forms, is also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “NORR” for “know,” “TIFF” for “thief,” and “CHAIIIIII” as an interjection. The presence of non-standard spelling (3%) suggests that the students are engaging in a more informal and playful approach to written communication, potentially to align with the conventions of digital discourse or to express their individual linguistic creativity. “Unconventional spellings are a common feature of computer-mediated communication, often used to represent pronunciation or to convey paralinguistic information.” (Crystal, 2001). However, the relatively low frequency of non-standard spelling in the data may indicate that the students are still maintaining a certain level of adherence to standard orthographic norms, even in their informal WhatsApp exchanges.

Non-Standard Spelling	Standard Spelling	Type	Description
norr	(None)	Question Tag	Used for emphasis, similar to "right?" or "isn't it?"
tiff	Thief	Noun	An informal spelling of ‘thief’.
chaiiiii	(No Standard Form)	Interjection	An exaggerated form used to express strong emotion or excitement.

The presence of non-standard spelling in students' WhatsApp messages indicates a playful and informal approach to written communication. The relatively low frequency of such forms suggests that, while students engage with non-standard spellings, they still tend to adhere to standard orthographic norms in their informal exchanges.

4.2.1.11 Compounding

Compounding, the process of forming a new word by combining two or more existing words, is also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include

“WEEKEND”and “WORKLOAD.” The relatively low frequency of compounding (3.0%) suggests that the students are not heavily relying on this lexical feature to create new words or expressions in their informal digital communication. “Compounding is the process of forming a new lexeme by combining two or more lexemes.”Bauer, (1983). Compounding is a productive word-formation process in many languages.

Table 13: Instances of Compounding

Compound Word	Components	Type	Description
weekend	WEEK + END	Noun	Refers to the period from Friday evening to Sunday, commonly used in casual conversation.
workload	WORK + LOAD	Noun	Refers to the amount of work assigned, often used in academic or professional contexts.
schoolmate	SCHOOL + MATE	Noun	Refers to a fellow student who attends school with someone.
sunshine	SUN + SHINE	Noun	Describes the light and warmth emitted by the sun, often used metaphorically to express happiness.
notebook	NOTE + BOOK	Noun	A collection of sheets of paper bound together, commonly used for writing notes.
facebook	FACE + BOOK	Noun	A social media platform where users share content and connect with friends.

Compounding represented at a frequency of 3% shows the students do not rely on enriching their vocabulary by combining two different lexical items. The limited occurrence of this feature in the data may indicate that the students are more focused on using other linguistic resources, such as borrowing, slang, or code-mixing, to convey their intended meanings in their WhatsApp interactions.

4.2.1.12 Contraction

Contraction, the process of shortening a word or phrase by omitting one or more sounds or letters, is also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “I’VE” for “I have” and “I’m” for “I am.” The relatively low frequency of contraction (4%) suggests that the students are not extensively employing this feature to achieve concision in their digital communication. “Contraction is a process whereby one or more sounds or letters are omitted from a word or phrase, resulting in a shorter form.”(Quirk et al.,1985).While contractions are commonly used in informal spoken and written language, the limited occurrence of this feature in the data may indicate that the students are relying more on other abbreviation strategies, such as clipping or acronyms, to streamline their WhatsApp messages.

Table 14: Instances of Contraction

Contraction	Expanded Form	Type	Description
I’ve	I have	Verb Phrase	A shortened form used to indicate possession or completion of an action.
I’m	I am	Verb Phrase	A shortened expression indicating the current state or identity of the speaker.
don’t	Do not	Verb Phrase	A contraction used to negate the verb "do."
can’t	Cannot	Verb Phrase	Signifies inability or permission not granted.
you’re	You are	Verb Phrase	Indicates the state of being for the subject.
they’re	They are	Verb Phrase	Refers to the state of being for multiple subjects.
we’ve	We have	Verb Phrase	Indicates possession or completion in the plural form.

Contraction, represented at a frequency of 4%, shows limited use among students, suggesting a preference for other abbreviation strategies such as; clipping and acronyms instead of relying heavily on shortened forms.

4.2.1.13Reduplication

Reduplication, the repetition of a word or part of a word, is also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “EWE EEEEEH” “SHARP SHARP” “CHEAP CHEAP”, “SHAKE SHAKE” and “CHAIIIII” as interjections. The relatively low frequency of reduplication (3%) suggests that the students do not extensively employ this feature to convey emphasis, intensity, or expressive meaning in their informal digital communication. Reduplication is a common linguistic phenomenon across various languages, often used to express qualities such as intensity, repetition, or plurality. While the data shows some instances of this feature, the limited occurrence may indicate that the students rely on other strategies, such as capitalisation or exclamations, to achieve similar pragmatic effects in their WhatsApp interactions.

Table 15: Reduplicated Words

Reduplicated Word	Components	Type	Description
eweeeeeh	EWE + EEEH	Interjection	An exclamation expressing surprise or disbelief.
sharp sharp	SHARP	Adjective	Used to emphasize the quality of being sharp or stylish.
cheap cheap	CHEAP	Adjective	Emphasizes low cost or affordability.
shake shake	SHAKE	Verb	A casual emphasis on shaking or moving vigorously.
chaiiiii	CHAI	Interjection	Expresses excitement or enjoyment, often in an exaggerated form.
go go	GO	Verb	Emphasizes urgency or readiness to leave or commence an action.
brown brown	BROWN	Adjective	Used to reinforce color description, often suggesting richness or warmth in tone.

The frequency of reduplication is 3%, indicating that while some expressions are used for emphasis and intensity, students may rely more on capitalisation or exclamatory phrases.

4.2.1.14Concord

Concord, the agreement in grammatical features (such as number, person, or gender) between different elements in a sentence, is also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “THERE ARE MANY ASSIGNMENT DUE TODAY” and “SHE DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE PARTY.” The relatively low frequency of concord (3%) suggests that the students are not placing a strong emphasis on maintaining strict grammatical agreement in their informal digital communication. Concord is a fundamental aspect of grammatical well-formedness in most languages, ensuring that the various components of a sentence are aligned and coherent. The limited occurrence of this feature in the data may indicate that the students are more focused on the overall communicative effectiveness of their WhatsApp messages, rather than adhering to formal grammatical conventions.

Table 16: Concord in the Data

Example Sentence	Error Type	Type	Description
there are many assignment due today	Subject-verb agreement error	Grammatical	Indicates a mismatch between verb form and subject plurality.
she don't want to go to the party	Subject-verb agreement error	Grammatical	Incorrect use of "don't" with a singular subject; should be "doesn't."
they is coming to the event	Subject-verb agreement error	Grammatical	Incorrect verb form used with the plural subject "they."
he enjoys the movie too	Correct usage	Grammatical	Demonstrates proper agreement in gender and number.
the teachers discussed the issue	Correct usage	Grammatical	Shows correct plural subject with verb agreement.
my friends was there	Subject-verb agreement error	Grammatical	Incorrect form; should be "were" with a plural subject.
the dogs runs in the park	Subject-verb	Grammatical	Incorrect form; should be "run"

	agreement error		to match plural subject.
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Concord appears at a frequency of 3%, reflecting a tendency among students to prioritise communicative effectiveness over strict grammatical agreement, leading to common errors.

4.2.1.15 Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia, the use of words that phonetically imitate or resemble the sound they describe, is also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “MTCHEEEEEWWWW” and “EWEEEEEEH” as exclamations.. Onomatopoeia is a linguistic device that can add vividness and expressiveness to language, particularly in contexts where the absence of paralinguistic cues may limit the ability to convey non-verbal information.

Table 17: Onomatopoeic Words

Onomatopoeic Word	Sound Imitation	Type	Description
mtcheeeeewwww	Phonetic imitation	Exclamatory	Represents a sound of disapproval or disgust.
eweeeeeeh	Phonetic imitation	Exclamatory	Conveys surprise or disbelief, used as an exclamation.
buzz	Phonetic imitation	Noun	Imitates the sound of a bee or a similar buzzing noise.
bang	Phonetic imitation	Noun	Represents a loud noise, often associated with impact or explosion.
pop	Phonetic imitation	Noun	Imitates the sound of something bursting or a sudden release.
whoosh	Phonetic imitation	Noun	Imitates a rushing sound, often associated with movement through the air.

The relatively low frequency of onomatopoeia (2%) suggests that the students do not extensively employ this feature to convey auditory or expressive meaning in their informal digital communication. The limited occurrence of this feature in the data may indicate that the students are relying on other strategies, such as capitalisation or interjections, to achieve similar communicative effects in their WhatsApp interactions

4.2.1.16 Ellipsis

Ellipsis, the omission of one or more words from a sentence or phrase, is also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “NOTHING TO DO WITH GPA OOOOOHHHH” and “COPY AND PASTE NOHHHH.”. Ellipsis is a common linguistic strategy employed in spoken and written language to create a more conversational and contextually-dependent style of communication, Halliday & Hasan, (1976).

Table 18: Elliptical Sentences

Elliptical Sentence	Omitted Elements	Type	Description
nothing to do with gpa ooooohhhh	(It has) nothing to do with GPA	Sentence	Omits the subject and verb for conciseness, implying a shared understanding.
copy and paste nohhhh	(You should) copy and paste	Sentence	Shortened to convey an instruction; the subject is implied.
keep calm and carry on	(You should) keep calm and carry on	Sentence	Subject is omitted, making it more directive and informal.
gone home	(I have) gone home	Sentence	Stripped of the subject for brevity; the message context is understood.
can't wait!	(I) can't wait!	Sentence	Expresses excitement without explicitly repeating the subject 'I.'

The relatively low frequency of ellipses (3%) suggests that the students are not extensively using this feature to achieve concision or informal language in their digital communication. The limited

occurrence of ellipses in the data may indicate that the students are more inclined to use other abbreviation techniques, such as clipping or acronyms, to streamline their WhatsApp messages.

4.2.1.17 Prepositions

Prepositions, the words used to indicate relationships between nouns, pronouns, and other parts of speech, are also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “FOR FAMILY HOUSE,” “ON THIS,” and “THROUGH OUT THE DAY.” The relatively lower frequency of prepositions (3%) compared to other lexical features suggests that the students may not be placing a strong emphasis on using explicit grammatical markers to convey spatial, temporal, or other relational meanings in their informal WhatsApp exchanges. Prepositions are a fundamental aspect of grammatical structure, as they are crucial in establishing the semantic and syntactic relationships between elements in a sentence, Quirk et al., (1985). The relatively low frequency of prepositions in the data may indicate that the students are more focused on conveying their intended meanings through other linguistic resources, such as lexical borrowing, code-mixing, or context-dependent deixis, rather than relying heavily on prepositional markers.

Table 19: Prepositional Phrases

Prepositional Phrase	Preposition	Type	Description
for family house	FOR	Preposition	Indicates ownership or purpose, used flexibly in casual conversation.
on this	ON	Preposition	Shows relationship or context, often vague in informal speech.
throughout the day	THROUGHOUT	Preposition	Denotes time and duration, helpful for expressing activities over a period.
in the morning	IN	Preposition	Used to specify a particular time; common in scheduling.
at school	AT	Preposition	Indicates location where activities occur.

with my friends	WITH	Preposition	Expresses companionship or inclusion, broad context in informal communication.
about the news	ABOUT	Preposition	Provides a topic of discussion or concern.

Prepositions are used at a frequency of 3%, suggesting that while they are present in students' digital communication; explicit grammatical markers are not being emphasized as part of their language use.

4.2.1.18 Deixis

Deixis, the use of words and expressions that refer to entities or concepts relative to the speaker's location, time, or perspective, is also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “THIS YEAR,” “THIS,” and “THAT FEE.” The presence of deixis (2%) suggests that the students are leveraging contextual cues and shared knowledge to communicate in their informal digital exchanges efficiently. “Deixis is a fundamental aspect of language use, as it allows speakers to anchor their utterances to the immediate context and shared understanding.” (Levinson, 1983)..

Table 20: Deictic Expressions

Deictic Expression	Type	Description
this year	Temporal	Refers to the current year, anchoring the context in time.
this	Spatial	Indicates proximity, often used to point out objects, ideas, or topics in conversation.
that fee	Spatial	Refers to a specific fee understood in context, anchoring it relative to shared knowledge.
here	Spatial	Indicates location, creating a sense of immediacy in

		conversation.
now	Temporal	Specifies the current moment, emphasizing immediate relevance.
		.
last night	Temporal	Anchors the conversation to a specific prior time, simplifying temporal references.

The relatively low frequency of deixis in the data, may indicate that the students are relying on a combination of linguistic and extralinguistic resources to convey their intended meanings in their WhatsApp interactions

4.2.2 Discourse Markers

Discourse markers, the words or expressions that signal the flow and structure of discourse, are also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “THEN,” “ANYWAY,” and “SO.” Schiffirin, (1987), defines discourse markers as “sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk.” These markers play a crucial role in structuring and managing discourse, signalling relationships between ideas, transitions between topics, and the speaker's communicative intentions (Jucker & Ziv, 1998). The relatively low frequency of discourse markers in the data may indicate that the students are relying more on other linguistic features, such as code-mixing or borrowing, to achieve similar pragmatic functions in their WhatsApp interactions.

Table 21: Discourse Markers

Discourse Marker	Type	Description
then	Sequential	Indicates a transition in narrative or thought flow.
anyway	Transitional	Signal that the speaker is moving on or dismissing a previous point.
so	Conjunction	Used to conclude thoughts or connect previous statements, often summarizing a viewpoint.

however	Contrastive	Introduces a contrasting idea or qualification to previous statements.
although	Concessive	Introduces a point that contrasts or qualifies previous statements.

The presence of discourse markers (2%) suggests that the students employ these linguistic devices to organise their messages, maintain coherence, and navigate the dynamics of their digital conversation

4.2.2.1 Narrative Strategies

Narrative devices, the linguistic tools used to construct and convey stories or personal accounts are also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include the use of past tense verbs, such as “DIDN'T SEE” and “HAVE BEEN BEGGING,” to describe past events, as well as the incorporation of reported speech, as in “HE SAID HE IS BUSY

Table 22: Narrative Strategies

Example	Type	Description
Have been begging	Past perfect verb	Narrates a prolonged action or state, adding depth to the storytelling.
He said he was busy	Reported speech	Provides details of dialogue, relating the speaker's perspective.
Went to the shop today	Simple past verb	Illustrates the completion of an action in a concise format, emphasizing time.
Remember when we went together?	Rhetorical question	Invites engagement and shared memory, emphasizing a past experience.
Last week was crazy!	Simple past verb	Captures the essence of personal experience, making communication relatable.

The presence of narrative devices (2%) suggests that the students are not only using WhatsApp to exchange information or make requests, but also to share personal experiences and construct

narratives. This could indicate a more holistic and expressive use of language in the digital context, where the students leverage various linguistic resources to tell stories and convey their lived experiences to their peers.

4.2.2.2.Hedging

Hedging, the use of words or expressions that mitigate the strength or certainty of a statement is also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include using “MAYBE” and “PROBABLY” to express uncertainty or tentativeness. “Hedging is an important pragmatic feature that allows speakers to navigate social situations, express uncertainty, and maintain politeness and face-saving.” (Hyland, 1998). The limited occurrence of hedging in the data may suggest that the students' WhatsApp interactions are characterised by a more informal and casual register, where explicit modulation of language is less of a priority.

Table 23: Hedge Expression

Hedge Expression	Type	Description
maybe	Adverb	Indicates uncertainty or possibility regarding a statement.
probably	Adverb	Suggests a likelihood without commitment, softening assertions.
I think	Phrase	Expresses belief or opinion while allowing room for doubt.
kinda	Informal adverb	Indicates a degree of uncertainty or approximation.
perhaps	Adverb	Formal expression of uncertainty or possibilities, indicative of tentativeness.

The relatively low frequency of hedging (2%) suggests that the students may not be placing a strong emphasis on using linguistic strategies to qualify or downplay their assertions in this particular digital context. This could indicate a more direct and assertive communication style,

where the students feel comfortable expressing their views and opinions without extensive mitigation

4.2.2.3 Expressive Interjections

Expressive interjections, the short exclamatory words or phrases used to convey emotion or reaction, are also present in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “EWEeeeeeeH,” “CHAIiiiiii,” and “MTCHEEEEEEEWWWWW.” “Interjections are a common feature of informal, colloquial language, as they allow speakers to add expressiveness, emphasis, and a sense of immediacy to their utterances.” (Ameka, 1992). The limited occurrence of this feature in the data may indicate that the students are employing other linguistic resources, such as capitalisation or non-standard spelling, to achieve similar pragmatic effects in their WhatsApp messages.

Table 24: Interjections in the Data

Interjection	Type	Description
eweeeeeeh	Exclamation	Expresses surprise, disbelief, or strong emotion in informal exchanges.
chaiiiiiii	Exclamation	Conveys excitement or enjoyment, often in an exaggerated form.
mtcheeeeeewwwww	Exclamation	Indicates disapproval or dismissal of something, often humorously exaggerated.
wow	Exclamation	Expresses astonishment or admiration, widely recognized in informal speech.
oops	Exclamation	Indicates a mistake or an accident; often used lightly to downplay errors in conversation.

The relatively low frequency of expressive interjections (2%) suggests that the students do not extensively rely on this feature to convey their emotional states or reactions in their digital exchanges. This could be a reflection of the more functional and informative nature of their

WhatsApp interactions, where the focus may be on exchanging information, making requests, or coordinating activities, rather than on expressing intense emotions or reactions

4.2.3 Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions, the questions asked not to elicit a response but to make a point or express a sentiment, are also observed in the WhatsApp text messages of the students. Examples include “U GET IT NORH???” and “WHICH PROF PLS?”. “Rhetorical questions are a common feature of persuasive and expressive language, as they allow speakers to engage the audience, emphasise a point, or create a sense of shared understanding.” (Quirk et al., 1985). The limited occurrence of this feature in the data may suggest that the students' WhatsApp interactions are more focused on transactional and informative functions rather than on using language for rhetorical or stylistic purposes.

Table 25: Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical Question	Type	Description
U get it norh???	Rhetorical	Engages the audience and seeks affirmation without expecting a response.
Which prof pls?	Rhetorical	Requests clarification but implies shared knowledge about the context.
Isn't it amazing?	Rhetorical	Expresses admiration while assuming agreement from the audience.
What do you think?	Rhetorical	Seeks input while implying the speaker's stance is already considered.
Can you believe it?	Rhetorical	Invites reaction to a surprising fact or situation without a call for a serious response.

The relatively low frequency of rhetorical questions (2.0%) suggests that the students do not extensively use this feature to engage their interlocutors or to convey their intended meanings in their digital exchanges. This could indicate a more direct and informative communication style,

where the students prefer to make statements or requests rather than relying on rhetorical strategies to achieve their communicative goals

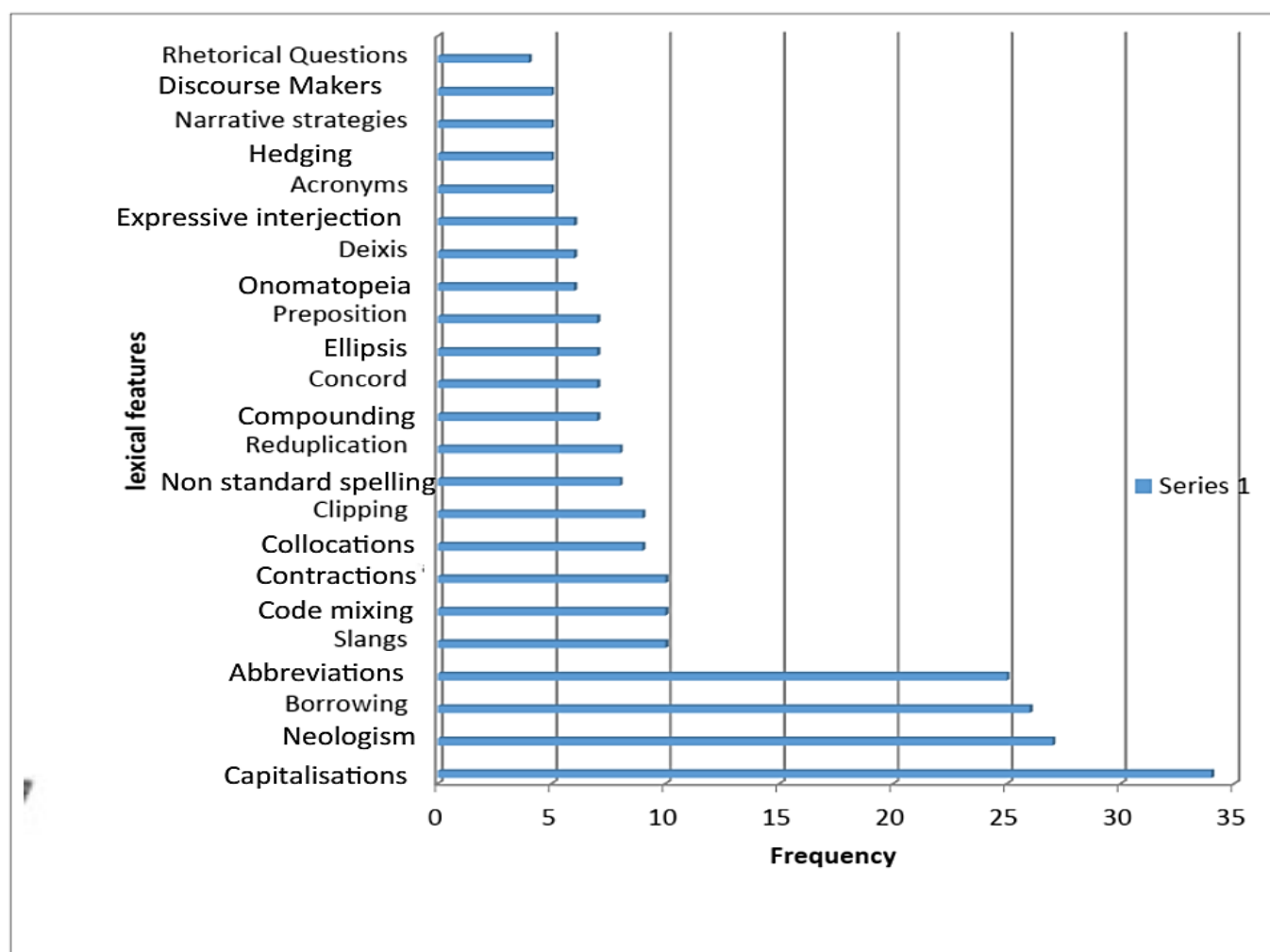


Figure 4: Frequencies of Lexical Choices

The data on the lexical features in the WhatsApp text messages of level four students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé I reveal a diverse and dynamic use of language. The students employ a range of linguistic resources, including capitalisation, neologism, borrowing, abbreviations, slang, code-mixing/switching, clipping, collocations, acronyms, non-standard spelling, compounding, contraction, reduplication, prepositions, deixis, discourse markers, narrative devices, hedging, expressive interjections, and rhetorical questions. The high frequencies of capitalisation, borrowing, abbreviations, and code-mixing/switching suggest that the students value concision, expressiveness, and the strategic use of their

multilingual repertoire to navigate the communicative demands of their WhatsApp interactions. The presence of slang, non-standard spelling, and expressive interjections indicates a more informal and playful approach to written communication, potentially to align with the conventions of digital discourse and to create a sense of in-group solidarity. The relatively lower frequencies of features like collocations, compounding, contraction, reduplication, prepositions, discourse markers, narrative devices, hedging, and rhetorical questions suggest that the students may be placing less emphasis on using conventional grammatical structures, formulaic language, and explicit rhetorical strategies in their informal WhatsApp exchanges. Instead, they appear to focus more on spontaneous context-dependent, and lexically-driven modes of expression.

4.2.4 Pragmatic Analysis

The WhatsApp text messages of the Level Four students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé I exhibit a rich area of pragmatic strategies, reflecting the students' deep use of language to achieve specific communicative goals within their online interactions.

4.2.4.1 Speech Acts

Speech acts refer to the various communicative functions that language can perform, such as making requests, offering suggestions, or expressing gratitude, (Austin 1962, Searle 1969). The analysis of speech acts is a central tenet of pragmatic theory, as it examines how individuals use language to achieve specific communicative goals within a given context. The data reveals the students' adept deployment of various speech acts to navigate their WhatsApp conversations. For instance, when making requests, the students demonstrate a strategic interplay between direct and indirect approaches. Examples of indirect requests include “Sorry boss I didn't see you. I would have responded” (Message 1) and “PLS can I be your VP?” (Message 6). These formulations, using modal verbs and polite language, serve to soften the imposition and maintain social harmony. In contrast, the students also employ more direct request structures, as seen in messages such as “Give 7k now” (Message 27) and “Oya take treasurer alors” (Message 8). These direct approaches signal a closer relationship or a more urgent need, underscoring the students' pragmatic sensitivity to the contextual factors that shape their language use. The students' expressions of gratitude also demonstrate their pragmatic awareness, as evidenced in messages like “Ehennnnnnn be glad to receive twice” (Message 12) and “KK thks” (Message 32),

which not only convey appreciation but also work to cultivate and sustain positive rapport among the interlocutors.

4.2.4.2 Politeness Strategies

Politeness strategies are the linguistic and social mechanisms employed by speakers to maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships and mitigate potential face threats (Brown & Levinson, 1987). These strategies can range from using softeners and hedges to deploy positive politeness markers, such as compliments and in-group identifiers. The WhatsApp text messages also reveal the students' strategic employment of politeness strategies to maintain social harmony and mitigate potential face threats. For instance, the use of softeners like “small” in “I di ask so because I want shake small” (Message 19) and “small vacay” (Message 20) demonstrates the students' efforts to avoid imposing on their conversational partners and to preserve their positive face. Furthermore, the students engage in positive politeness strategies, such as offering endearments like “bb” (Messages 25, 106) and expressions of in-group membership like “bro” (Messages 39, 43), which serve to build solidarity and reinforce their social connections.

4.2.4.3 Turn-taking Patterns

“The organisation of turn-taking in conversation is a crucial aspect of pragmatic analysis, as it reveals how interlocutors coordinate their contributions and manage the flow of interaction.” (Sacks, et al.1974). The patterns of interruptions, backchannelling, and overlapping speech can shed light on the students' pragmatic awareness and their negotiation of conversational norms. The conversational dynamics observed in the WhatsApp data also provide insights into the students' pragmatic turn-taking management. While the asynchronous nature of the medium allows for more flexible turn-taking, the students nonetheless demonstrate an awareness of conversational flow and pacing. Instances of backchannelling, such as “norr” (Messages 2, 9), “naarr” (Messages 135, 137, 189), and “nahhh” (Message 189), signal the students' active listening and their attempt to maintain the momentum of the exchange. Occasional overlaps, where multiple students respond quickly, further highlight their pragmatic sensitivity to coordinating their contributions and ensuring a coherent exchange.

This chart summarises the key findings on pragmatic strategies used by students in their WhatsApp messages:

Table 26: Pragmatic strategies

Feature	Description	Example
Speech Acts	Making requests, offering suggestions, and expressing gratitude.	<i>Indirect request</i> : “PLS can I be your VP?” <i>Direct request</i> : “Give 7k now”
Politeness Strategies	Maintaining social harmony, mitigating face threats.	<i>Softener</i> : “I di ask so because I want shake small” Positive politeness: “bb” (endearment)
Turn-taking Patterns	Coordinating conversational flow.	<i>Backchanneling</i> : “norr” (acknowledgment) Overlaps (rare): Quick successive replies

The table displays how students strategically use language in their WhatsApp interactions. They use various “speech acts” to achieve goals, like making indirect requests with “PLS” or more direct ones like “Give 7k now.” Social harmony is maintained through “politeness strategies” such as softeners (“I di ask so because I want shake small”) or using friendly terms like “bb.” Finally, the table highlights their awareness of turn-taking patterns, evident in backchannelling with “norr” to acknowledge messages and occasional overlaps when multiple students respond quickly.

4.3 Discourse Markers and Cohesion

“Discourse markers are pragmatic particles that serve to signal relationships between units of discourse, facilitate the organization of information, and manage the interactive dynamics of the conversation.” (Schiffrin, 1987 & Fraser, 1999). “Cohesive devices, on the other hand, are linguistic resources that create links between different parts of a text, ensuring semantic continuity and coherence.” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). The students' strategic use of discourse markers and cohesive devices plays a crucial role in structuring their WhatsApp messages and guiding the flow of their conversations. Discourse markers like “so” (Messages 16, 41), “then” (Message 22), “because” (Message 19), and “but” (Message 23) are employed to signal transitions, highlight logical connections, and facilitate the organization of their thoughts. Additionally, the students use cohesive devices such as pronouns (e.g., “U,” “you,” “I,” “we”) and

repetition (e.g., “Education is the key” in Messages 33, 37, 43) to create coherence and ensure their messages are clear and well-connected.

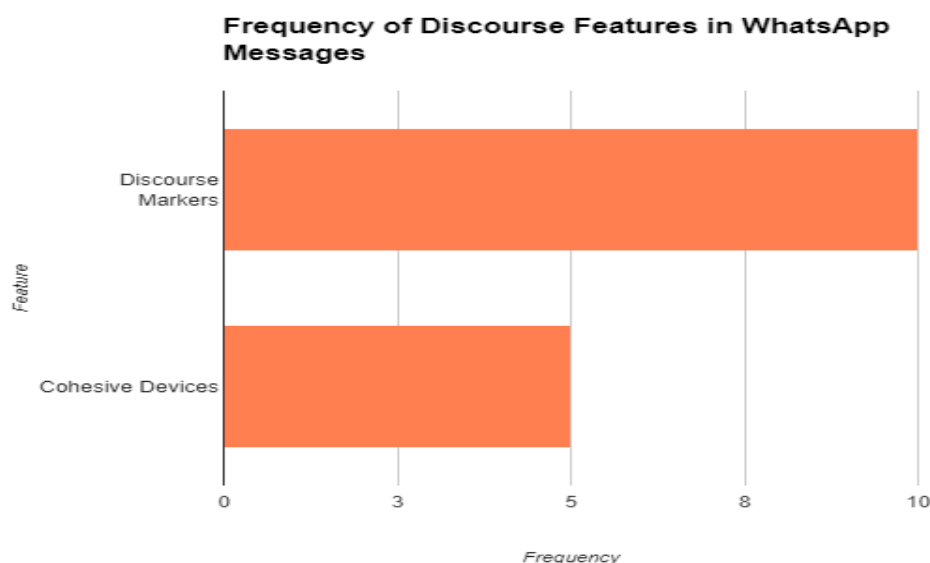


Figure 4: Frequencies on Markers and Cohesion

The chart depicts the frequency of various discourse markers and cohesive devices used by the students in their WhatsApp messages. Here, we see “Pronouns” (referring to participants like “U” or “I”) used most frequently, likely reflecting the conversational nature of the messages. Following closely are “Discourse Markers” that signal transitions or connections. Examples like “so” (seen in the table) are likely common to structure their messages. “Repetition” for emphasis appears less frequent, but still plays a role in highlighting key ideas. Overall, the data suggests the students rely on clear reference terms and transitional phrases to ensure their WhatsApp exchanges are well-connected and easy to follow.

4.4 Sociolinguistic Analysis

The WhatsApp text messages of the Level Four students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé I also provide valuable insights into the sociolinguistic dimensions of their language use, particularly in relation to their linguistic repertoire, the construction and

negotiation of social identities, and the influence of the digital medium on their communicative practices.

4.4.1Linguistic Repertoire

The sociolinguistic analysis of the Level Four students' WhatsApp interactions reveals a rich and diverse linguistic repertoire, reflecting their ability to navigate different registers, styles, and language varieties within the digital medium. The students' skilful code-switching between formal and informal linguistic forms, and their seamless integration of local linguistic features, exemplify their sociolinguistic competence and sensitivity to contextual norms, Gumperz(1982) and Hymes(1972). The data shows the students' remarkable linguistic versatility, as they seamlessly navigate and blend multiple languages and varieties within their WhatsApp interactions. The students' linguistic repertoire is evident in their use of English, French, and various local languages and dialects, as demonstrated in expressions like “D'accord boss” (Message 19), “Les gars” (Message 126), and “abeg” (Messages 17, 133). This linguistic dexterity reflects the students' ability to draw upon their multilingual resources to accommodate diverse audiences, express cultural affiliations, and create a sense of in-group solidarity.

4.4.2Identity Construction and Negotiation

The students' linguistic choices within their WhatsApp conversations are a powerful means of constructing and negotiating their social identities. Through the strategic deployment of linguistic resources, such as in-group markers, personal pronouns, and evaluative language, the students assert their membership in various social groups, position themselves about their interlocutors, and manage the impression they convey to their peers, Bucholtz & Hall(2005), and Ochs,(1993). The students' strategic deployment of lexical features also serves as a medium for constructing and negotiating their social identities. Using slangs, abbreviations, and code-switching, the students assert their belonging to specific social and academic communities. For instance, terms like “GOAT” (Message 130) and “AM” (Message 141) signal their familiarity with the norms and conventions of their peer group. In contrast, the use of endearments like “bb” (Messages 25, 106) and “swt” (Messages 60, 106) reflects their negotiation of interpersonal relationships and the performance of social roles.

Furthermore, the students' language choices and how they position themselves within the discourse can be seen as a means of constructing and affirming their identities as university students, English majors, and members of the broader campus community. This is evident in their discussions of academic matters, such as course content, assessments, administrative procedures, and their references to shared experiences and in-group dynamics.

The interplay between language and social identity is central in these students' WhatsApp messages. The chart reflects this, highlighting the importance of both “Linguistic Repertoire” and “Identity Construction.”

Table 27: Identity Construction and Negotiation

Feature	Description	Importance
Linguistic Repertoire	Ability to use multiple languages & styles.	High
Code-switching (Formal/Informal)	Mixing languages within messages.	Medium
Local Languages/Dialects	Use of Cameroonian languages (e.g., “abeg”).	Medium
Identity Construction	Expressing social identity through language.	High
In-group Markers (Slang, Abbreviations)	Terms specific to their social group (e.g., “GOAT”).	Medium
Evaluative Language	Expressing opinions and judgments.	Medium
Personal Pronouns (“I,” “We”)	Referencing themselves and their group.	High

Their ability to switch between formal and informal language, and incorporate local languages, shows their fluency in various registers (High). This linguistic dexterity also plays a role in shaping their identities. In-group markers like slang (“GOAT”) and personal pronouns (“we”) establish their connection to specific social circles (Medium). Evaluative language and how they position themselves within conversations likely play a role in further shaping these identities (Medium). Overall, the WhatsApp medium provides a platform for the students to navigate their social landscape through strategic language choices.

4.4.3 Influence of the Digital Medium

The WhatsApp platform’s digital affordances significantly impact the students' language use and communicative strategies. ‘Features such as; the asynchronous nature of the exchanges, the affordance of rapid message exchanges, and the blending of written and oral modalities shape the students' linguistic choices, promoting the use of abbreviations, creative orthography, and a more conversational style of interaction.’ (Crystal 2001 & Herring 2004). The WhatsApp platform, as a digital medium, has a significant influence on the students' language use and communicative practices. The messaging application’s informality, immediacy, and multimodal affordances shape the students' linguistic choices and discourse structures. The prevalence of abbreviations, such as “KK thks” (Message 32) and “thks” (Message 6), reflects the students' adaptation to the

need for efficiency and concision within digital exchanges. The creative orthography, as seen in the repeated use of “Eweeeeeeh” (Message 4) and “ooooohhhh” (Message 23), also aligns with the conventions of online communication, where expressive nuance and social signalling are valued. Furthermore, the students' strategic use of emoticons and emojis, such as; the “👍” in “KK thks” (Message 32) and the “👁️” emoji in “Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee” (Message 4) and “Probability dey say I go collect this year?” (Message 13), demonstrates their ability to leverage these paralinguistic cues to enhance the communicative impact of their messages. Moreover, the asynchronous nature of the WhatsApp platform influences the students' discourse organization and turn-taking patterns. The rapid exchange of messages, as evident in the back-and-forth conversations, reflects the students' ability to navigate the unique interactional dynamics of the digital medium. The overlapping responses and the use of discourse markers, such as “so” and “then,” further illustrate the students' strategic structuring of their discourse to maintain coherence and guide their interlocutors through the unfolding interaction. In sum, the sociolinguistic analysis of the WhatsApp text messages highlights the Level Four students' adept negotiation of their linguistic resources, social identities, and the affordances of the digital platform. By adapting their language use and communicative strategies to the conventions and constraints of the WhatsApp medium, the students can assert their positioning within the academic and social contexts of the University of Yaoundé I.

4.4.4 Discourse Organisational Analysis

The WhatsApp text messages of the Level Four students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé I also reveal insightful patterns in the organisation and structure of their online discourse. Examining the students' strategic use of various linguistic resources, we can better understand how they construct and manage their conversational exchanges within the digital medium.

4.4.5 Discourse Markers and Cohesion

The students' strategic organisation of their WhatsApp discourse, as evidenced by their use of discourse markers and cohesive devices, reflects their pragmatic awareness and their ability to structure messages coherently and meaningfully. This analysis sheds light on how the students

navigate the flow of information, signal relationships between ideas, and guide their interlocutors through the unfolding discourse Schiffrin (1987) and Halliday & Hasan(1976). In the WhatsApp data, the students employ a range of discourse markers to achieve various pragmatic goals. For instance, the use of the marker “so” in messages like “So by weekend, we’ll have everything on this, partner” (Message 16) and “so you go house come back bro????” (Message 41) serves to signal a result or consequences, helping the interlocutors follow the logical progression of the students' thoughts. The marker “then” in “Then GPA” (Message 22) indicates a temporal or sequential relationship, allowing the students to order the information being shared chronologically. Additionally, the use of “because” in “I di ask so because I want shake small” (Message 19) introduces a causal explanation, providing the rationale behind the student's request.

The contrastive marker “but” is deployed in “Nothing to do with GPA oooooohhhh but can count who knows” (Message 23), signaling a shift in the direction of the discourse and highlighting the students' ability to navigate and negotiate meaning through the strategic use of discourse markers. These discourse markers not only structure the students' messages but also contribute to the overall cohesion of their WhatsApp conversations. As Halliday & Hasan (1976) explain, cohesion refers to the linguistic devices that create links between different parts of a text, ensuring semantic continuity and facilitating comprehension.

In addition to the discourse markers, the students use various cohesive devices to maintain coherence within and across their messages. The strategic use of pronouns, such as “U” (Message 9), “you” (Messages 15, 25), “I” (Messages 1, 19), and “we” (Message 16), helps the students establish referential ties and guide the reader's attention to the relevant entities and relationships being discussed. Furthermore, the students employ repetition as a cohesive device, as seen in the recurring of the phrase “Education is the key” across multiple messages (Messages 33, 37, 43). This repetition reinforces the central idea, creating a sense of thematic unity and emphasis within the students' conversations. Through the skilful deployment of discourse markers and cohesive devices, the Level Four students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé I demonstrate their pragmatic awareness and linguistic competence in organising their WhatsApp interactions, guiding their interlocutors, and maintaining coherence within their online exchanges

4.4.6 Emotional Expression

As discussed in the previous section, the students' strategic use of emoticons and emojis, reveals a nuanced approach to expressing and conveying emotions within their digital interactions. Reinforcing the emotional tone already present in the textual content or adding subtle shades of meaning, the students demonstrate their pragmatic awareness and their ability to leverage these paralinguistic cues to enhance the communicative impact of their messages, Dresner & Herring(2010) and Vandergriff(2013). A close examination of the students' use of paralinguistic cues, such as emoticons and emojis, reveals a nuanced interplay between the visual representations and the textual content. In several instances, the students employ these semiotic resources to reinforce the emotional tone already conveyed in their written messages. For example, the inclusion of a “crying face” emoji in “I almost cry. The way pipo look me norr chiiiiiii. You can imagine” (Message 2) serves to amplify the sense of distress and anguish expressed in the verbal component of the utterance. Similarly, the “glad” emoticon in “Ehennnnnnn be glad to receive twice” (Message 12) directly mirrors and intensifies the feeling of happiness and elation communicated through the lexical choices. However, the students also demonstrate a more complex pragmatic deployment of emoticons and emojis, using them to add nuance and subtle shades of meaning to their messages. The use of a “winking face” emoji in “Very possible ooo bb” (Message 25) can be interpreted as a playful, teasing tone, imbuing the utterance with an air of flirtatiousness or light-heartedness that may not be readily apparent in the textual content alone.

4.4.7 Non-Emotional Functions

In addition to their role in emotional expression, the emoticons and emojis employed by the Level Four students also serve a range of non-emotional functions within their WhatsApp interactions. “These paralinguistic cues can be used to replace verbal expressions, lighten the mood, or add emphasis, further showcasing the students' pragmatic competence and their ability to use these semiotic resources strategically to achieve their communicative goals.” (Dresner &Herring, 2010, Vandergriff 2013).Beyond their role in expressing and reinforcing emotions, the emoticons and emojis employed by the Level Four students also serve a range of non-emotional functions within their WhatsApp interactions. In some instances, these paralinguistic cues replace or abbreviate verbal expressions, acting as concise communicative tokens. For

example, the “👍” emoji in “KK thks” (Message 32) functions as a succinct way of signalling agreement or approval, reducing the need for a more verbose response. Furthermore, the students strategically deploy emoticons and emojis to lighten the mood and create a sense of levity within their conversations. The repeated use of the “👁️👁️” emoji in “Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee”(Message 4) and “Probability dey say I go collect this year?” (Message 13) suggests an underlying playfulness and excitement, potentially serving to mitigate the seriousness or frustration that may be present in the textual content. In addition, the students employ emoticons and emojis to add emphasis and intensify the expressive force of their messages. The “ooooohhhh” in “Nothing to do with GPA oooooohhhh” (Message 23) and the multiple exclamation marks in “Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee” (Message 4) work in tandem with the emojis to convey a heightened sense of emotion, surprise, or emphasis.

This table summarises the key findings on how students use discourse markers to organise their WhatsApp messages:

Table 28: Discourse Markers

Feature	Description	Example	Observation
Discourse Markers	Signal transitions and connections between ideas	“so” (introduce reason): “So by weekend, we'll have everything on this, partner” (Message 16) “then” (sequence): “Then GPA” (Message 22) indicates a temporal order. “because” (cause-effect): “I di ask because I want shake small” (Message 19) explains the request. “but” (contrast): “Nothing to do with GPA oooooohhhh” (Message 23) highlights a shift in the conversation.	Students strategically use discourse markers to structure their messages and guide the flow of conversation.
Cohesive Devices	Create coherence	Pronouns (“U,” “you,” “I,” “we”) refer to participants: “U nor see my	Effective use of pronouns and

	and clarity within and across messages	message since?” (Message 9) uses “U” to reference the recipient. Repetition (e.g., “Education is the key”) emphasises ideas: Repeating “ Education is the key ” across messages (33, 37, 43) reinforces the central theme.	repetition ensures messages are clear and well-connected.
Emoticons (Emotional)	Reinforce the emotional tone already present in the text	Crying face emoji for distress: “I almost cry. The way pipo look me norr chiiiiiii. You can imagine” (Message 2) amplifies the sadness. Glad emoticon for happiness: “Ehennnnnn be glad to receive twice :)” (Message 12) mirrors the feeling of elation.	Emoticons add depth to emotional expression, potentially intensifying the message.
Emoticons (Non-Emotional)	Add nuance or replace words	Winking face emoji for playfulness: “Very possible ooo bb ;)” (Message 25) suggests a teasing tone. “ KK thks ” (Message 32) uses “ KK ” emoji as a concise way to say “okay, thanks”. “ Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee” (Message 4) uses “emoji for lightheartedness.	Emoticons can also serve purposes beyond emotions, like adding humour or shortening messages.
Ellipsis (...)	Indicates a pause, unfinished thought, or trailing off	“See you around...” (Message 138)	Ellipsis can create suspense or invite further conversation.
Questions (Open-Ended & Closed)	Gather information, initiate	“ What's up guys ” (Message 1) - Open-ended to start a conversation. “ Did you see my	Question types influence the flow and purpose of the

	dialogue, or check understanding	message?” (Message 9) - Closed-ended for a specific answer.	conversation.
Abbreviations & Acronyms	Shorthand for common phrases or terms	“LMAO” (Laughing My Ass Off) (Message 140)	Efficiency and informality can be achieved through abbreviations.

Through their strategic and nuanced use of emoticons and emojis, the Level Four students in the English Department of the University of Yaoundé I demonstrate a sophisticated pragmatic awareness. They leverage these semiotic resources to not only express and modulate emotions but also to manage the interactive dynamics, create emphasis, and navigate the complexities of their online discourse.

4.5 Discursive Analysis

In examining the WhatsApp text messages of Level Four students from the University of Yaoundé 1, the analysis uncovers a rich array of language that not only serves to convey information but also functions as a medium through which social realities are constructed and negotiated. "Language is a social practice that both reflects and shapes the world.”(Fairclough, 1995) This perspective aligns seamlessly with the observations of the lexical features displayed in the students' daily digital communication. By closely analysing these messages, we can discern how the students actively engage in acts of language that embody their social practices and positional ties. The interplay of discourse reflects the contextualization of their communication, the negotiation of power dynamics, and the collective construction of meaning within their academic and social spheres. Through a critical discourse analysis lens, we recognize that each message is more than a simple communicative act; it is a socially embedded practice that reveals insights into the students' identities, emotions, and relationships. For instance, the use of colloquialisms and code-switching in their messages, ranging from local dialects to English, demonstrates not only a linguistic flexibility but also a conscious positioning within their social environment. As Gee (2014)notes, "language is a tool for both constructing and communicating social identities," which is particularly evident in the WhatsApp exchanges

of these students. Using of informal language, humour, and familiar references, the students forge connections, establish a sense of belonging, and embody their cultural contexts, all of which contribute to the broader discourse of their educational experiences.

4.5.1 Language as Action

One of the foremost aspects of the WhatsApp discourse among Level Four students at the University of Yaoundé 1 is the notion of language functioning as action. This concept shows that the utterances exchanged between students are not merely vehicles for conveying information; rather, they perform actions that significantly shape interpersonal relationships and societal structures. According to speech act theory, as articulated by Austin (1962), when individuals communicate, they often engage in actions through spoken or written words, what he referred to as "performative utterances." This perspective highlights how the students' messages function not only as representations of thought but as catalysts for interaction and relationship dynamics.

For example, when a student messages, "PLS can I be your VP?" the utterance transcends simple inquiry; it embodies an aspirational action toward leadership within a communal context. The abbreviation "PLS" (please) indicates not only a request but also a certain informality and approachability, signalling a comfort level among peers often absent in more formal exchanges. As noted by Searle (1969), requests carry implications of power and social interaction. In this case, the student is asserting agency within their social group by seeking to fulfil a role traditionally associated with positions of authority.

Similarly, directives play a vital role in the WhatsApp conversations. When one student states, "Oya take treasurer alors," the phrase melds Nigerian Pidgin and French, reflecting cultural nuance and camaraderie. This directive does more than instruct; it highlights communal expectations about responsibility and participation. The term "oya," invites action or attention, and encourages a culture of mutual involvement, prompting the recipient to engage proactively. As Bakhtin (1981) emphasises, language is inherently social and dialogic, reinforcing that communication functions as a dynamic interplay between individual Speech Acts and the larger social fabric.

Additionally, expressions reflecting frustration, such as "I don't suffer for family," encapsulate personal sentiments while simultaneously generating empathy among peers. Here, the language serves not only to communicate distress but also to invite supportive responses, thereby reinforcing social ties within the WhatsApp group. As Hymes (1974) suggests, how language is used within specific contexts reflects the cultural norms and values of the individuals involved, suggesting that such expressions embody shared understandings of struggle and resilience.

In this light, these students' WhatsApp messages illuminate how language functions as action, revealing the intricate ways in which their communication reflects and shapes their social interactions and structures. The mundane exchanges captured in their digital conversations become sites of power negotiation, relationship building, and collective identity formation, transforming everyday interactions into meaningful social practices.

4.5.2 Discourse as Social Practice

The WhatsApp exchanges reveal how discourse is situated within and helps to shape social practices. The language used encapsulates the hallmarks of a specific cultural context, emphasising relatability and shared understanding among students. For instance, the usage of idiomatic expressions like; "GPA dey say I go collect this year?" (Example 13) not only infuses humour but also resonates with the cultural significance of academic performance within their community. This expression implies a collective concern regarding academic success and societal expectations, hence forging an implicit social contract among peers about their shared academic ambitions.

Moreover, interpretations of social identity are deeply ingrained in their communicative practices. The frequent use of local vernacular, such as "pipo" instead of "people" (Example 2), is an indicator of cultural anchoring. It reflects a shared linguistic heritage that imbues their messages with a sense of belonging, distinguishing them from broader linguistic norms often found in more formal academic settings.

Expressions of camaraderie saturate the conversations, reinforcing social cohesion. For instance, "Hot oooooo Ngoa Ekelle" (Example 76) serves not only as a greeting but also as an affirmation

of communal well-being, attaching emotional weight to the simple act of saying hello. This greeting reinforces bonds by evoking a shared local context, expressing enthusiasm, and fostering a sense of community.

Conversely, the informal tone utilised in references to authority figures also highlights the negotiation of power dynamics within the group. For example, in the utterance, "Saturday is not good chiiiiii" (Example 135), the casual dismissal of a proposed schedule reflects a subtle challenge to authority while invoking shared understanding among students. This form of resistance signifies the students' comfort level within the WhatsApp group where rigid structures are relaxed, allowing for an open discussion of institutional constraints.

4.5.3 Contextualisation in Communication

Contextualisation plays a pivotal role in shaping the meaning of the messages exchanged. The unique blend of cultural, social, and situational contexts in student communication enriches interpretations and enhances understanding. Gumperz (1982) posited that contextualisation cues are instrumental in assisting interlocutors in interpreting the subtleties of discourse. This is well illustrated in the exchange, "Hope we don't hear?? FAR na the new style" (Example 65), where the term "FAR" (standing for "Forward As Received") denotes a specific academic format understood among the students. The casual question indicates an underlying premise of shared understanding regarding class requirements, taking for granted that all participants are aware of the trends shaping their educational experiences.

Additionally, the cultural references in messages indicate a well-defined local script, as seen in phrases such as "Education na the key go uu" (Example 37). This assertion underscores the importance of education in their cultural context while also functioning as a motivational call to action. Local dialects serve as a contextual anchor that reinforces group identity and enriches the messages through culturally specific dialogue.

Moreover, situational cues are critical in this discourse. Take the question, "What is cap bro?" (Example 39), for instance. This query underscores an informal tone within academic discussions that blends comprehension with camaraderie. Recognising shared scholarly contexts allows

students to engage in peer-led information dissemination rather than relying solely on formal educational settings.

4.5.4 Power Dynamics and Negotiation

The WhatsApp messages also highlight the complex power dynamics inherent in student interactions. Discourse here serves as a site of negotiation about authority and individual agency, showcasing how language can reflect and shape social hierarchies. The playful yet serious undertone in messages such as “You are not always the scapegoat booo, I did that because you are a strong man and I know your stand already” (Example 116) exemplifies how students seek to navigate the relational dynamics of accountability while disarming potential conflicts through subtle humour.

Furthermore, authority figures are referenced indirectly, often with a familiarity that reflects a shift in traditional dynamics. For instance, “We are going to stay in this country, study here, get married here, and raise our children here. Who di feel me??? Or make I come again???” (Example 177). Such declarative statements affirm individual perspectives while simultaneously inviting group agreement. Here, rhetoric subverts traditional hierarchies, as the speaker aligns with their peers while challenging the broader institutional expectations that may govern their future.

This dynamic is also reflected in exchanges where students proactively question institutional decisions. For instance, “Can I come in, or he will send me away?” (Example 155) illustrates the uncertainty that students face regarding class attendance rules. Yet, the very act of questioning denotes empowerment as students assert their right to engage in discussions about structural norms governing their educational experience.

The interplay of humour and frustration in responses, as demonstrated in “Wahala up pan down say school” (Example 163), encapsulates collective discontent towards administrative roadblocks while simultaneously fostering a sense of unity. This narrative of shared frustration serves as a rallying point, emphasising resistance against perceived injustices while allowing students to bond over common goals and aspirations.

4.5.5 Construction of Meaning through Collective Engagement

Meaning within these messages is not merely expressed; but constructed through interaction, narrative storytelling, and emotional expression. Personal narratives emerge robustly, as evidenced in the poignant declaration “I don’tes over suffer for family” (Example 21). Here, the speaker communicates vulnerability, inviting empathy and support from peers within their communal context. Such candid sharing not only constructs meaning that resonates emotionally but fortifies bonds and facilitates collective identity.

The humorous language prevalent in their exchanges, such as “I’m selling suicide ropes... cheap cheap” (Example 93), serves as a coping mechanism amid academic pressures. This strategic use of humour reflects a critical social function: to mitigate stress through shared laughter, transforming personal struggles into relatable experiences. By doing so, students foster a space where vulnerability is normalized, and collective resilience is reinforced through shared experiences.

Community construction further manifests in conversations that emphasise inclusivity, slow down post-exam anxieties, and promote collective celebration. Messages like “My birthday is around the corner. We need to shake off some stress” (Example 72) highlight the importance of social gatherings as a means of emotional reprieve, emphasising that individual milestones are, in fact, shared community experiences.

In essence, the messages reveal that meaning is a dynamically negotiated process reflective of individual identity and collective engagement, underscoring the synergy between personal narratives and community-building within the digital spaces occupied by these students.

In conclusion, the discursive analysis of WhatsApp messages among Level Four students reveals a multifaceted landscape of communication that transcends mere text. Language is an action-oriented medium through which social identities, power dynamics, and collective meaning are actively constructed and negotiated. The findings illustrate that the informal discourse embodied in these messages provides insights into how students navigate their academic and social realities, reflecting the nuances of their cultural context and communal experiences. Therefore,

this analysis shows the potency of language as a social tool, capable of shaping relationships, fostering solidarity, and grounding individual experiences within the fabric of shared student life.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to present and analyse the findings of the study, which investigated the standard lexical features used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages. The chapter began by describing the data corpus, which consisted of 220 anonymised WhatsApp messages exchanged by students in the Department of English at the University of Yaoundé I, covering a range of topics related to university life, such as social interactions, course-specific discussions, planning and coordination of activities, as well as expressions of emotions, humour, and frustration. The subsequent analysis revealed that the students employed a diverse array of lexical features, including high frequencies of capitalisation, borrowing, abbreviations, slang, and code-mixing/switching, which were examined in detail and discussed about relevant theoretical frameworks. The quantitative and qualitative data analysis provided valuable insights into the students' linguistic choices and pragmatic strategies. It highlights how they leveraged these lexical resources to navigate their digital interactions, construct their identities, and cultivate a sense of community within the WhatsApp medium.

CHAPTER FIVE

GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This study set out to conduct a discursive analysis of the lexical features employed by Masters 1 students of the Department of English at the University of Yaounde I in their WhatsApp text messages. The primary objective was to examine the common linguistic resources and strategies used by these students in their informal digital interactions. Guided by this goal, the research question that underpinned the investigation was: What are the common lexical features used by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages? This chapter summarises the key findings from the study, discussing the prevalent lexical features identified and the pragmatic insights they provided. Building upon these findings, the chapter then offers a set of recommendations to inform language education, highlighting the importance of incorporating the analysis of computer-mediated communication into curricula and fostering multilingual and multicultural perspectives. Additionally, the chapter outlines several avenues for future research that could further expand our understanding of the dynamic interplay between language, technology, and the communicative practices of university students.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The analysis of the WhatsApp text messages exchanged by Masters 1 students in the Department of English at the University of Yaounde I revealed a diverse and dynamic use of language. The students employed a wide range of lexical features to navigate their digital interactions, including capitalisation, neologism, borrowing, abbreviations, slang, and code-mixing/switching. The frequent use of capitalisation (14%) to convey emphasis, emotion, and intensity aligns with the observation that capitalisation is a conspicuous feature of computer-mediated communication used to draw attention and express strong feelings (Herring 2012, Androutsopoulos 2006). This suggests that the students leverage capitalisation as a strategic linguistic resource to enhance the expressiveness and impact of their WhatsApp messages. Neologism (11%) is another feature with a high frequency showing students' tendency to create new words to suit new contexts. These neologisms serve various functions, including expressing identity, humour, and emotional

states, while also reflecting cultural influences and the students' educational context. This linguistic creativity not only enriches their interactions but also reinforces group identity, showing the evolving nature of language as they navigate their social and academic landscapes. The high frequency of borrowing (11%) from other languages, such as French and Cameroonian Pidgin English, Arabic, Japanese, Russian, and Turkish indicates the students' engagement in linguistic mixing to accommodate multilingual audiences, express cultural identities, and create a sense of in-group solidarity (Montes-Alcalá 2007, Androutsopoulos 2013). This linguistic practice reflects the students' multilingual repertoire and their ability to navigate the communicative demands of their digital interactions by strategically drawing on diverse linguistic resources. The significant presence of abbreviations (10%) suggests the students' preference for brevity, and concision, which potentially aligns with the constraints of digital communication and the conventions of informal online discourse (Crystal, 2001; Herring, 2012). This linguistic strategy allows the students to convey information efficiently and maintain the pace of their WhatsApp conversations.

The use of informal, non-standard language (3%), or slang, reflects the students' casual and colloquial communication style, drawing on linguistic resources characteristic of their peer group and social context (Eble 1996, Dumas & Lighter, 1978). This linguistic feature contributes to the creation of a shared in-group identity and cultivates a sense of camaraderie among the Masters 1 students. The alternation between multiple languages (11%), including English, Arabic, Japanese, Turkish, French, and Cameroonian Pidgin English, demonstrates the students' strategic leveraging of their multilingual repertoire to navigate the communicative demands of their WhatsApp interactions (Auer 1998, Gumperz 1982). This code-mixing/switching practice allows the students to express their cultural affiliations, accommodate diverse linguistic backgrounds, and convey nuanced meanings within their digital exchanges.

The analysis also revealed lower frequencies of other lexical features, such as clipping, collocations, acronyms, non-standard spelling, compounding, contraction, reduplication, concord, onomatopoeia, ellipsis, prepositions, deixis, discourse markers, narrative devices, hedging, expressive interjections, and rhetorical questions. This suggests that while the students employ a wide range of linguistic resources, they may place less emphasis on using conventional grammatical structures, formulaic language, and explicit rhetorical strategies in their informal

WhatsApp exchanges, focusing instead on more spontaneous, context-dependent, and lexically-driven modes of expression.

The pragmatic analysis of the students' WhatsApp messages further highlighted their strategic use of speech acts, such as requests, expressions of gratitude, and the construction of narratives, to achieve specific communicative goals within their digital interactions. This demonstrates the students' pragmatic awareness and ability to leverage language to navigate the social dynamics and contextual factors shaping their online exchanges.

The study has also established that the discursive analysis of WhatsApp text messages exchanged among Level Four students at the University of Yaoundé 1 reveals that their digital communication functions as a complex interplay between language, identity, and social dynamics. It demonstrates that the students utilise language not merely to convey information but as a performative tool that shapes their interpersonal relationships and communal belonging. The analysis highlights various linguistic features such as code-switching, colloquialisms, and performative utterances, which play a critical role in constructing social realities and negotiating power dynamics within their academic environment. Through these modes of communication, students express solidarity, assert agency, and navigate their identities, showcasing the richness and multiplicity of meanings embedded in their everyday interactions. Overall, the findings underscore the significance of language as an active force in shaping social practices and constructing communality among the students.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

To begin with, incorporating the analysis of computer-mediated communication, including WhatsApp interactions, into the curriculum of English language programs would provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the evolving linguistic landscape and equip them with the skills to navigate digital communication effectively. This approach would help address the growing importance of digital literacy and the need for students to develop effective communication strategies in technology-mediated environments.

Thus, encouraging the integration of multilingual and multicultural perspectives in language education is crucial, as it recognises the students' diverse linguistic repertoires and the value of

code-mixing and borrowing as communicative strategies. Embracing and validating the students' multilingual practices, language programs can foster a more inclusive and empowering learning environment, better aligned with the realities of the globalised world.

Further provides opportunities for students to engage in guided discussions and reflections on the pragmatic aspects of digital communication, such as the strategic use of speech acts, can enhance their pragmatic competence and communication skills. This approach would help students better understand the contextual factors, social dynamics, and communicative goals that shape their WhatsApp interactions, ultimately improving their ability to communicate effectively in various digital settings.

Again, developing language-learning activities that focus on the creative and expressive use of language, including capitalisation, slang, and other informal features, can better align with the students' preferences and communication styles in digital contexts. This would acknowledge the students' linguistic agency and empower them to leverage their linguistic resources to express themselves authentically and engage meaningfully in online discussions.

Based on the findings from the discursive analysis, it is recommended that educational stakeholders at the University of Yaoundé 1 be mindful of the linguistic and cultural practices evident in students' digital communications. Faculty members and administrators should consider integrating informal and digital communication styles into academic contexts to foster engagement and relatability among students. Workshops or seminars could be organised to facilitate discussions on effective digital communication strategies, highlighting the importance of social identity and collective meaning-making within academic discourse. Additionally, encouragement of collaborative projects utilising platforms like WhatsApp can serve to further enhance peer relationships and promote a sense of community, reinforcing the active role of language in shaping a supportive educational environment

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

To expand our understanding of lexical features in WhatsApp communication further, the following areas are recommended for future research: investigating the influence of sociodemographic factors, such as age, gender, and academic discipline, on the usage of lexical features in WhatsApp interactions among university students would provide valuable insights into the sociolinguistic dynamics shaping digital communication. This line of inquiry could

reveal how individual and group-level characteristics shape students' linguistic choices and communicative behaviours in their WhatsApp exchanges. In addition, further research can focus on exploring the role of social dynamics and group affiliation in shaping the linguistic choices and communication styles of students in WhatsApp group discussions would shed light on how interpersonal relationships, group norms, and shared identities influence the students' language use within digital communities. This research could further our understanding of the social and contextual factors that affect lexical features in computer-mediated communication. More so, the research could be made on the relationship between lexical features in WhatsApp messages and the students' language proficiency, academic performance, and overall communication competence could provide valuable insights into the potential implications of digital communication for language learning and development. This research could inform the design of educational interventions and language support programs tailored to the needs of university students. Lastly, given the elasticity of this field of study, research can also be done on the impact of technology-mediated communication on the development of language skills and the potential implications for language teaching and learning would contribute to our understanding of the evolving role of digital technologies in shaping language use and communication practices. This line of inquiry could inform the development of pedagogical approaches that effectively integrate digital communication into language education.

5.4 Conclusion

This study has evaluated the diverse and dynamic lexical features employed by Masters 1 students in their WhatsApp text messages. The findings reveal the students' strategic use of capitalisation, neologism, borrowing, abbreviations, slang, and code-mixing/switching to navigate their digital interactions and achieve their communicative goals. The analysis also highlights the students' pragmatic awareness and ability to leverage language in context-dependent ways. The recommendations proposed in this chapter aim to inform language education by incorporating the analysis of computer-mediated communication into the curriculum, fostering multilingual and multicultural perspectives, enhancing pragmatic competence, and embracing the students' creative and expressive language use. Furthermore, the suggested areas for future research offer a roadmap for expanding our understanding of lexical features in WhatsApp communication, with the potential to inform language learning and teaching practices.

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APPENDICES

Data from Level Four Students' WhatsApp Groups

1. sorry boss I didn't see you. I would have responded. Life no too hard like that
2. OMG! I almost cry. The way pipo look me norr chiiiiiii. You can imagine
3. ma come tiff sombori work
4. Eweeeeeeh!!!! I never pay dat fee 🙄
5. make we no only join hands kee person ooooo
6. PLS can I be your VP? Thks in advance man
7. You go be ma DAAC, FYI
8. Oya take treasurer alors
9. U get it norhh???
10. Come and check your name
11. Loml abeg check my name
12. Ehennnnnn be glad to receive twice
13. Probability dey say I go collect this year?
14. Na so they di do ehh
15. Have you heard any feedback as regards resumption???
16. So by weekend, we'll have everything on this, partner
17. Massa abeg rest with that your TMI
18. Abg get out!!!! Respectfully
19. D'accord boss. I di ask so because I want shake small
20. Ma friend want take small vacay for family house???
21. I don fes over suffer for family house. Imagine say reme send me make I go buy salt
ontop heels
22. Then GPA
23. Nothing to do with GPA oooooohhhh, but can count who knows
24. Wandafu. How possible is that?
25. Very possible ooo bb, you know right?
26. How can I solve your pb

27. Give 7k now
28. Nope I collected 50k but there are people who have higher GPAs than me, so IDK
29. Na true they said if you have never gone for resit you stand a chance but I don't know if it's true
30. Which prof pls?
31. Computer norr bae
32. KK thks 
33. Education is the key we will all attend the class for a better future
34. Mtcheeeeeewwwww
35. I have been begging him to come earlier but he said he is busy through out the day
36. Na only time for watch match ei see?
37. Education na the key go you
38. Na only CAP this semester
39. What is cap bro?
40. heeeeeeee copy and paste nohhhh
41. so you go house come back bro????
42. Hummmmmmmmm, SMH
43. education is the key bro, make man no mess golden opportunity 4 go school
44. no lecturer?????
45. meeeerde
46. keyboard don fail uu mama
47. shift..... azucar,just go far eeeghh
48. U minam BFF?
49. She was in the same group with us dear. In Doc's group work. The tall black slim and succulent bb la hot norh, send her pic guy
50. WOYYYYY, i will BRB, make i check find yi pic
51. chief also promised 25k for the best logo plus the 1k for the book that never reach us
52. As if 1k wasn't money
53. I hardly make error man
54. I am on the bar, with ma fam
55. Are u in class????

56. Nope
57. Who has succeeded in paying school fees ei bad ehh
58. Bad network everywhere
59. Go and win sister. Do well to prosper where you are
60. Okay thks swt
61. Bobe wusai u dey??? or u still take brekky in bed as wuna di claim love 4 this class
62. Massa is it true that exams will be essay??
63. Yeahh abeg give hankie make I wipe sweat b4 tension kill me
64. Na just to FAR this time. Meaning if your plug sends a written material, u just forward as received when you are done copying
65. Hope we don hear?? FAR na the new style, for FOMO, make all man read this info oohhh well
66. I am wondering the funny guy who came in to write. A question was directed to him and we all answered before he could say a word. Why are we like this eeeyyyy, lol
67. Haaaahaahaaa
68. We are AS
69. meaningggggg???
70. Active students
71. Wow wow!!!!
72. My birthday is around the corner. We need to shake off some stress as a fam, remember YOLO oohh life no get duplicata
73. Drink drunk dance. The 3 Ds and take pics too
74. So na operation 3 Ds after exams???
75. Oyaaa we are ready na birthday di delay, we need to flex guys
76. Hot ooooo Ngoa Ekelle
77. You don't need to calculate what to give him. Ladies surprise him
78. Pls what is happening on Wednesday?
79. Ash Wednesday
80. I did not ask u mami show show
81. And T shirts for this day are available
82. The price is diff for u, so send ur money

83. Our price is x2
84. Okay bimami
85. Weti di happen?
86. Let the single breathe
87. Coming from a singleton
88. I'm telling u oooo, brekkie in bed go too much, yi di always lit
89. If only someone's daughter here is aware that the son of Adam will break your heart like
no one's business, she won't be running Valentine's day like an over excited magot,
girls are always salty after dis day lol
90. You make me laff swt
91. Coming from a singleton
92. Best life for the moment swt
93. I'm selling suicide ropes... cheap cheap
94. Good morning guys. Pls anyone with an empty gas bottle on sale should pls ib
95. I'm waiting to see why we gave 1k each, lecturers just di shade us
96. I fit open mop
97. It's not funny booo. Why will u want to change your speciality??? Where will have time
to study all that was done in the 2nd semester level 3 to meet up with the speciality u want
to change to..... think naaww
98. Tomorrow sharp sharp campus
99. The girl can't get missing even if she is insane, na the tea now for campus
100. Pa y u check so????
101. she is not quite green, so, could be consumed by hungry lions parading the
corridors
102. Calm down bb, be +ve
103. Good morning dele, I want to invite u but since my name didn't pop up
hahahaaaaa
104. 108 I forgot to mention u swt
105. Hon, how u??
106. Gr8t swt and u bb?

107. American Lit..... we gotta create our specialty forum, so by Monday we are all for infos.....
108. Yes, shake shake no dey, wait small, yi dey like dele don ghost me
109. Pls I need a home to go and eat Passover tomorrow, who is inviting me??
110. Come home ASAP else u go miss golden opportunity
111. LOL hahahahhaaa
112. Happy birthday swt, waiting for yogurt and cake birthday vibes go hot
113. Good morning dear friends. Hope we are doing well? we have finally come to the end of our 1st semester holiday. As we all have seen the hand writing on the wall that school has begun and we are supposed to be in school this week. Hoooraay to a new semester, we won the game, our batch will go viral guys
114. Oooppss we lost 2 days already bcas the timetable delayed. Let's not allow the remaining days slip away too. Keep your books and pens ready as we prepare to effectively start tomorrow. TTYL guys
115. You are saying this after removing me naaarr? I'm always the scape goat
116. You are not always the scape goat booo, I did that because you are a strong man and I know your stand already
117. Pls say something abt question 6. Who were the 1st pple to choose that topic?
118. dele come and resolve this ooohhhh, you said pple should ib u 4 topics right
119. U pple should take another topic naahhhh
120. Can u imagine I've been here since morning and the department is as dry quiet as a grave yard
121. Weehhh uuhhh ashia u yaaaa
122. Pls how can we have the course outline?? Pls can someone snap and send??
123. My phone's camera is not cameraring heheheh the workload too much
124. I think u pipo should create another forum. We shouldn't be saturating here when we hv lecturers. Just a suggestion. Mk person no stone me lol
125. Bae plz resend her messages
126. Les gars come dans mon inbox un peu
127. Send in the group so all could benefit, which one be, come dans ton inbox
128. Pls hafa with classes??

129. I haven't been able to attend a single class since school started, i no get notebook
130. Na wuna be the GOAT of the department, attend classes or not, you guys still validate with good GPA. We no go follow wuna absent school. I know where I'm coming from
fake news, i'm just humming
131. He should do Wednesdays abegggggg
132. Dele, pls beg him for us, cry if need be hahaha
133. yes dear dear Saturday is not good chiiiiii
134. dele u are hearing naarr? Saturday is not good merde le weekend? Whoosh!
135. pls our soft dele, samedi la gars, sa peut pas donner
136. pls write in English lemme know if I'm agreeing or disagreeing with u. but if what u mean is that Saturday is not good, then I support u. class 4 Saturday no give at all naarr
137. See you around.....lecturer is not even responding, maybe he has vex
138. All the SO in this group are not saying anything
139. na so dem dey. They will wait for us the AM to complete the assignment for them to pop in and start begging we add their names. All the silent observers no near me abegg LMAO
140. bro I'm lost on this oohhhh. What do you mean when you say all the SO
141. hahaha I'm not surprised oohhh, I forgot that you and many others are not of this android generation, this blue app too sweet
142. simple question na yi you go take tell me nonsense
143. hihihhi SO refers to silent observers and AM refers to active members
144. Prof says he will be there tomorrow
145. bc of Y? Last week was crazy
146. do we have him tomorrow dele????
147. let him come daily he is my fav!!!!
148. Prof is in class hurry guys
149. U n lie eeeyyyyy
150. KK stay at home& be taking selfie, u will testify, they are many assignments due today

151. you culd have told him that the students are not yet there, warisdis???
152. laisse comme sa man
153. pls where is the class?
154. Can I come in or he will send me away?
155. IDK, come in and BANG the door if u like
156. Nononono he said in the afternoon, and he was busy in the morning
157. Fear this school yaaaa
158. Good mnx class. We have a class at 11, let the info go viral oohh
159. Gm dele, which class nahhhh?
160. I did all oohh. But cannot submit bc pple didn't do theirs
161. Can U listen to urserf. I no come this school with pple, come we go submit
abeggggin fact we just be classmates no schoolmates sef
162. Wahala up pan down say school, who fit dash me millions make i complete ma
big dreams
163. Delegate de ton etat, still trekking to school, massa shift
164. Can U pls help me out? A student is on my throat
165. Send selfie oohh, make we see who is on ur throat just remember we have 2
courses to treat, so hasten ur footsteps mates
166. Lemmmmmme take cafe`
167. You don't even attend classes, just stay quiet and let the serious be, after wuna
come write, they is coming to the event hahaha
168. When u finish BUZZ u send me notes pls bisous my sunshine
169. just write FAR we will understand dear
170. Hot oohh. We always FAR, they take their time read and digest well and end up
with better grades than us. This life no balance
171. Presentations on going. Where are U guys pls??????
172. Dans le taxi
173. U are always dans le taxi
174. On my way bb, heavy rain block me
175. So we shud tell the lecturer U are on ur way?? hot oohh bimami, ur home is ur
SAFE PLACEabeg stay there

176. Nobody is going anywhere. We are going to stay in this country, study here, get married here, and raise our children here. Who di feel me??? Or make I come again???
The conversation deep nohhh?
177. Warisdis?? What is going on?? I no sabi fake news
178. Presentatons are ongoing. Where u dey bimami??
179. Ngoa with hot yaaaa, happenings in Ngoa na movie and he enjoys the movie
180. C'est ne pas toi bb, se ce que tu connais la
181. Est-ce que t'as d'abord vue cmt il as subtract les marks ?? calm down bb
182. Lep seulement mon cœur
183. Oohh so he didn't come today? thks
184. Ooooww tnk G
185. Opppss!!!! Y tnk G when some of us wasted money to pay taxi
186. I tell U, ma chop money 4 3days wasted
187. LOL God will provide money 4 strong coffee, keep calm and carry on
188. Nonono dele pls tell him it won't be possible narrrrr. Saturday was not part of the agreement narrrr, I hv to travel. All ma chop don finish, money finish. Somebody's son will die in Ngoa ooohhhh
189. Class 4 Saturday? How come?? Since when?
190. Thks 4 the concern. Never worry some of us are hooked btw job & school. But I'm hopeful & gre8ful 4 positive results in the days ahead
191. Nope, u will hv to beg her if u weren't there the day she was sharing the texts
192. Man go die running after lecturers. Voila! I tokam, have been begging, remember when we went together
193. Not only running after them oohh, running begging & crying. This is Ngoa 4 us
194. Wandassssss with my friends, it's the audacity 4 me
195. greeting good piple and my close friends
196. at what time are we finishx
197. OMG! Did you guys see that crazy lady with funny dresses like pajamas?
198. Lol. You will never change, what about the other news?
199. Happy birthday to darl!
200. Who is in Ngoa?

201. Good luck on everyone! Gone home
202. am not going there, heavy rain for our quarter ooohh, and yi go be throughout the day
203. Did anyone understand that madam?
204. When is exams?
205. Wandas shall never end
206. This year is just somehow
207. Must we pay fees again before defence
208. At wat time is he coming? He is still on the bed with pajamas
209. Help me wit any notes on theories
210. the man is sooo difficult to understand.
211. This class is come and seeee, but no wahala cos we go validate
212. Anyone else struggling with the workload in ?
213. Does anyone have dat textbook given by prof?
214. I don't want ratrappage
215. Who don finish d project? With sentences like; my friends was there, she don't want to go to the party. English pikin dem
216. Feeling bored with all too much readings guys, went to the shop today and i'm just on Facebook
217. This seminar class is actually pretty interesting! Next rendezvous na when? Can't wait
218. Need help on some research articles for Research methods. Any suggestions? I'm at school
219. Anyone else thinkx abt 421?
220. We go talk about that in the morning, "The dogs runs in the park" is the book i'm reading now guys

January 10, 2024

🔒 Messages and calls are end-to-end encrypted. No one outside of this chat, not even WhatsApp, can read or listen to them. Tap to learn more.

Hello my son 18:01 ✓✓

It's Mummyvicky 18:01 ✓✓

Please add me up to your group 🙏🙏🙏 18:01 ✓✓

You

Please add me up to your group 🙏🙏
🙏

You are there already
Mama. Hope you are doing
well.

19:49

I will figure out what to do.

19:45

Okay dear 19:45 ✓✓

Do you have a deadline for
the data collection?

19:52

Yes dear, March 🙏🙏🙏

20:16 ✓✓

You

Yes dear, March 🙏🙏🙏

God will help us.

20:20



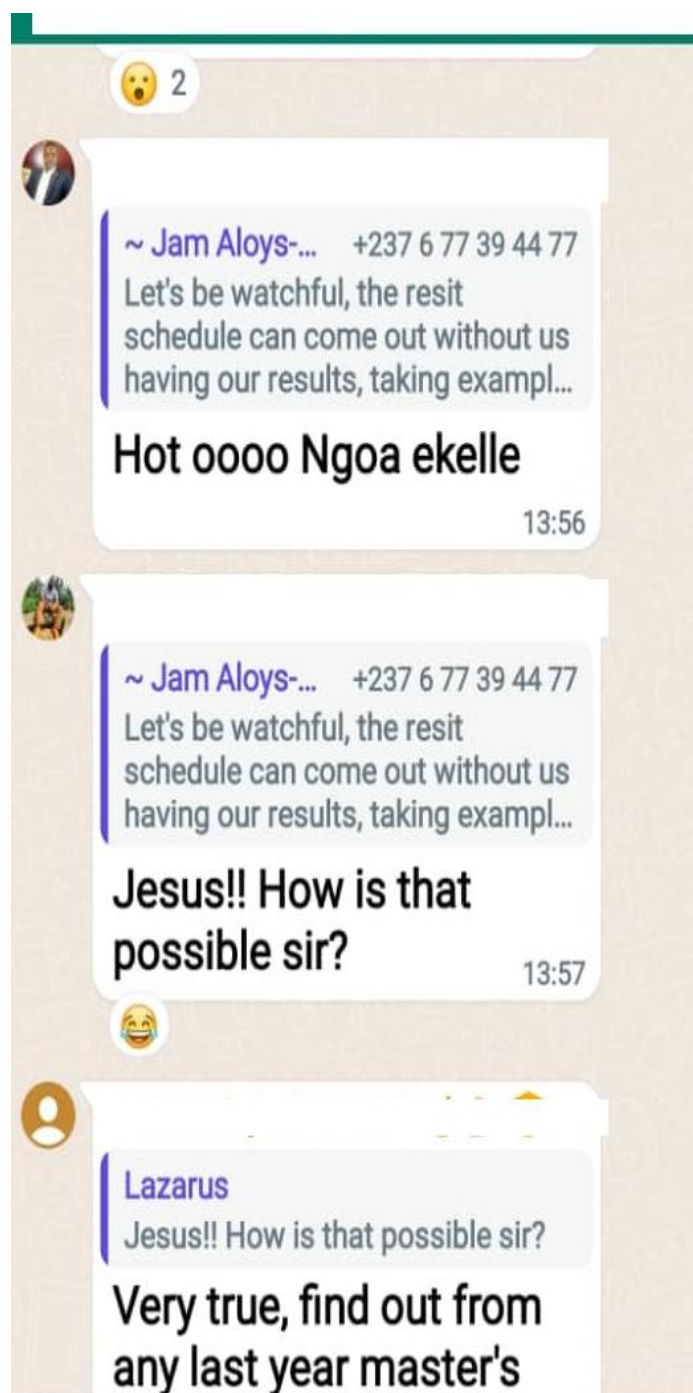
20:22 ✓✓

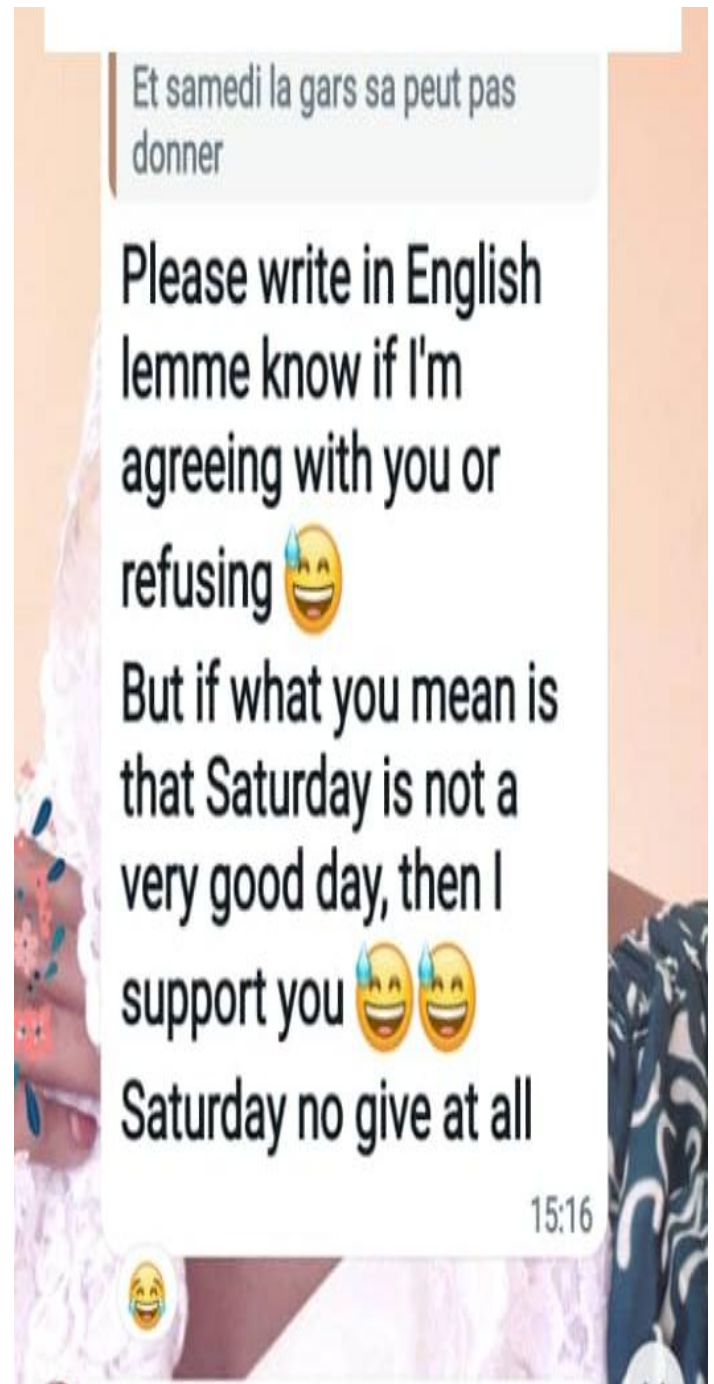
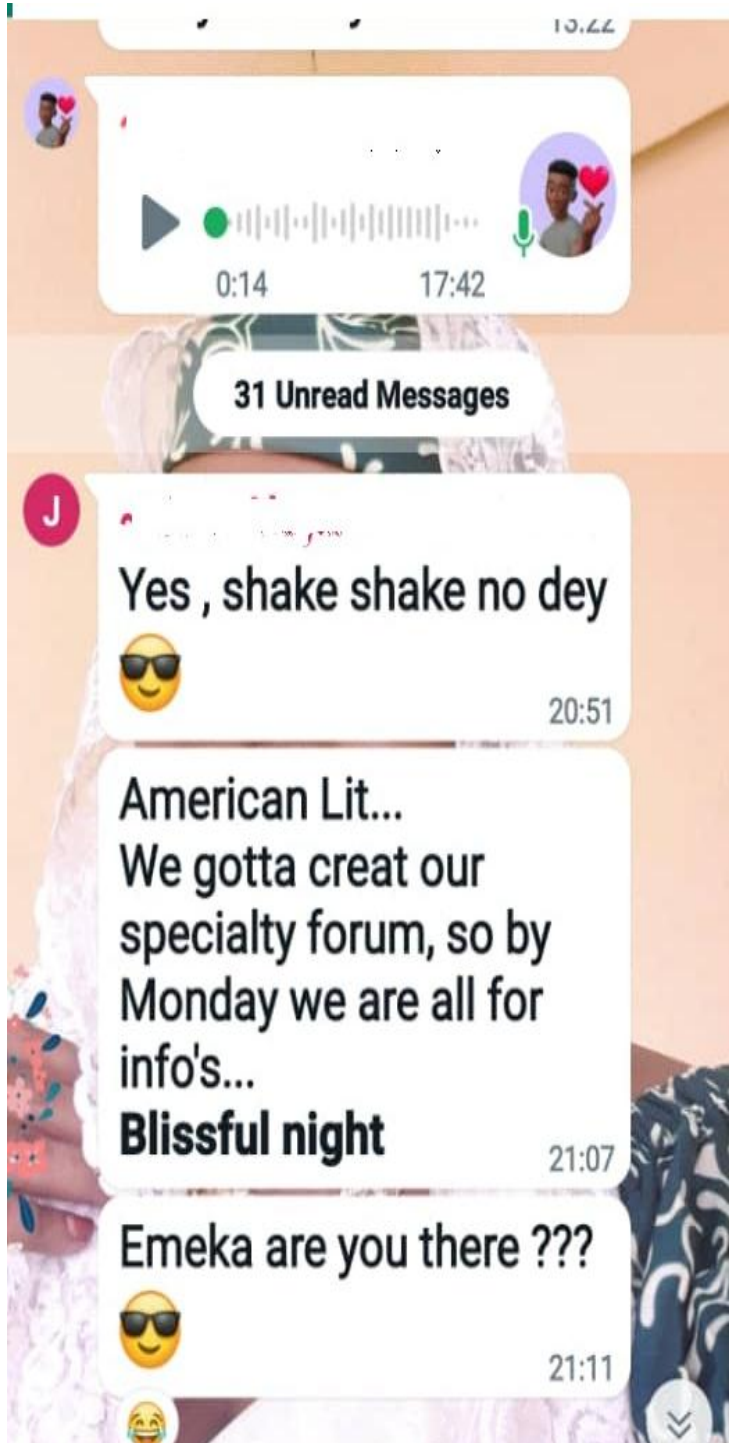
February 8, 2024



1:11

21:18 ✓✓





Hahahah

20:14

I no di fall for this trap

20:14

I no di fall for this trap

Ok bye alors...
conclusion is; you can't.

20:15

Ok bye alors... conclusion is; you
can't.

414 kB

20:28

It's just funny to me 😂😂.
You've not always wanted this
post but here you are now 😂😂...



11:27

2 Unread Messages

And I will not always text because
it's tiring. So if you wish, follow the
voicemails, if you don't, then don't...

Bc of y sis?

12:58

~ David & t... +237 6 91 24 20 15

~ Christ In... +237 6 73 62 39 45
Bc of y sis?

Who's your sis?

12:59

Hahahah

20:14

I no di fall for this trap

20:14



~ Nene B +237 6 72 54 86 42

~ Barbara'... +237 6 76 81 95 07

I no di fall for this trap

Ok bye alors...
conclusion is; you can't.

20:15

B

~ Barbara's... +237 6 76 81 95 07

~ Nene B +237 6 72 54 86 42

Ok bye alors... conclusion is; you
can't.

📎 414 kB

20:28

D'accord boss. I di ask so bc I be wan
shake small

Ma friend want take small
vacay from family house ?



19:59

Ma friend want take small vacay from
family house ? 🤔🤔

I don fes over suffer for
family house. Imagine say
reme send me make I go
buy salt ontop heels??? 😂



20:01

~ sharonangel741 +237 6 53 03 55...

Miss Nee 📧

Ella don tok fes. U go be my DAAC

I no be DAAC at least I
be fair small 🥹🥹🥹

21:40

I no be DAAC at least I be fair
small 🥹🥹🥹

Oya take treasurer alors

21:41



U get it norh? 💔🥹🥹

21:41

Then GPA

11:44

Then GPA

Nothing to do with GPA
ooh

11:46

Nothing to do with GPA ooh

Wandafu.
How possible is that?

11:47

~ Lim's 🌹❤️ +237 6 54 77 55 54

Wandafu.
How possible is that?

Very possible oo bb

11:48

Please I need a home to go and eat the Passover tomorrow. who is inviting me?

Come home

13:33

Come home

ASAP

13:34

TVM

13:34

Forget kī u there 😊

🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔 LOL

13:34

Tomorrow sharp sharp Campos

16:42

~ Marie Noelle E... +237 96428631
Tomorrow sharp sharp Campos

Me too

16:42

Okay me too about 10am

17:14

It is a bit late

17:16

~ Mari... +237 96428631



0:15

15:18

He should do Wednesdays abegggggggg 😭

15:19

Delegate please beg him

15:19

Cry even

15:19

Prof Ewane isn't available during the weeks madam 😊

U want make i find ur