

Digitalised English: A Survey of Lexico-Semantic Innovation in Digital Marketing in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines lexico-semantic innovations in Nigerian digital marketing discourse, with the aim of exploring how language adapts to socio-cultural and professional demands in digital communication. It surveys how digital marketing language in Nigeria varies across users and contexts, posing the central question of whether such variation reflects systematic linguistic innovation shaped by local and global influences. It is hypothesised that Nigerian digital marketing discourse exhibits patterned lexico-semantic innovations driven by the interaction of Nigerian languages, Nigerian Pidgin, and global digital terminology. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining descriptive and exploratory designs. The sample comprised digital marketing practitioners, students, and online users from southwestern Nigeria. Data were collected through questionnaires (Google Forms), semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions, supported by a bibliometric review of relevant literature. Findings reveal that digital marketing language in Nigeria is characterised by coinages, acronyms, and semantic shifts. Local expressions (e.g., “gist,” “sabi,” “jara”) co-occur with global terms (e.g., SEO, CTA), while phonological and orthographic adaptations reflect linguistic domestication. Educational background significantly influences lexical choices, with more educated users favouring standardised terminology and others relying on localised expressions. The study contributes to sociolinguistics, especially Nigerian English by demonstrating the dynamic evolution of Nigerian English in digital domains. It also offers practical insights for digital communication, and professional engagement in multilingual contexts.*

KEYWORDS: Digital Marketing, Semantic Shifts, Nigerian English, Lexico-Semantic, Variationist Sociolinguistic

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Introduction

The emergence of digital marketing in the twenty-first century has significantly impacted the use of English, giving rise to the invention of new words in the English vocabulary. These vocabularies function as specialised registers within digital marketing, reflecting the evolving communicative needs of users in technologically mediated environments. This global development affects a substantial proportion of digital marketers worldwide. Against this backdrop, this study investigates lexico-semantic innovation in Nigerian digital marketing. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to sociolinguistic and applied linguistic scholarship by demonstrating how Nigerian English adapts to digital communication contexts, while also offering practical insights for digital marketers and educators on effective audience engagement through language use. As a social language that embodies societal change, English continues to adapt to innovations in lexical and semantic usage, particularly within Nigeria's rapidly expanding digital space.

Since its inception, the English language has functioned as a dynamic social construct, continually evolving through contact with other languages and cultures. It is not restricted to a fixed system but remains open to lexical expansion and semantic transformation. In the context of digital marketing, lexico-semantics refers to the specialised vocabulary of the field, where meanings are shaped by domain-specific usage. These lexical registers enable marketers to communicate efficiently across global and local contexts, reinforcing the role of language as both a communicative and professional tool. Lexico-semantic innovation in digital marketing represents a relatively recent phenomenon, involving the creation, adaptation, and redefinition of lexical items to meet emerging communicative demands. Kupolati et al. (2021) examined Nigerian English lexical innovation during the pandemic, while Palma (1996, cited in Godwin et al., 2008) notes that lexico-semantic relations may be understood through syntagmatic associations and sense relations. Studies on African Englishes have identified processes such as semantic shift, extension, transfer, and borrowing. In the case of Nigerian English (NE), Jowitt (1991) outlines several lexico-semantic features, including local coinages that align with Standard English structures.

Despite these contributions, there remains a gap in research on how digital marketing discourse in Nigeria serves as a site of systematic lexico-semantic variation. The research problem of this study therefore centres on understanding how digital marketing language in Nigeria reflects both local linguistic realities and global digital influences. Accordingly, the major objective of this study is to examine the nature and patterns of lexico-semantic innovation in Nigerian digital marketing discourse, with particular attention to the role of social and educational factors in shaping lexical choices. The study is guided by three research questions: I. how digital marketing lexemes in Nigeria vary across social and educational groups II what forms of lexical innovation, including coinages, acronyms, and hybrid expressions, characterise Nigerian digital marketing discourse; and III. how semantic, morpho-syntactic, and orthographic processes contribute to the adaptation of English in this domain

Literature Review

Evolution of Digital Marketing

The development of new technology has given marketers additional changes to manage their websites and accomplish their business goals. For businesses to thrive, online advertising is a potent marketing tool for creating brands and boosting visitors Song (2001). Digital Marketing is

more cost-effective for calculating the Return-On-Investment (ROI) for advertising when it comes to creating outcomes and measuring success Pepelnjal, (2008). In a world where over 170 million people regularly use social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), every professional is expected to be at least familiar with the basic principles of digital marketing. Simply put, digital marketing promotes products over the Internet or electronic media (Chaffey, 2019). According to the Digital Marketing Institute, "digital marketing is the use of digital channels to advertise or market products and services to consumers and businesses in a targeted manner" (Digital Marketing Institute, n.d.) Digital marketing was first used in the 1990s (Hanson & Kalyanam, 2007). The digital age began with the advent of the Internet and the development of the Web 1.0 platform (Berners-Lee, 1999). The Web 1.0 platform allowed users to find the information they wanted but did not allow them to share it over the Internet.

Until then, marketers worldwide were still unsure about the digital platform (Yeshin, 2012). They were not sure if their strategies would work since the Internet was not widely used (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). In 1993, the first clickable banner went live, prompting Hot Wired to purchase some banner ads for its advertising (Briggs & Burke, 2005). This marked the beginning of the transition to the digital age of marketing. Because of this gradual shift, new technologies entered the digital market in 1994 (Negroponte, 1995). The digital marketing world saw its first steep surge in 2006 when search engine traffic was reported to have grown to about 6.4 billion monthly (ComScore, 2006). Not one to get left behind, Microsoft put MSN on the back burner and launched Live Search to compete with Google and Yahoo (Microsoft, 2006). Then came Web 2.0, where people became more active participants than passive users (O'Reilly, 2005). Web 2.0 allows users to interact with other users and businesses (Tapscott & Williams, 2006). Labels like 'super information highway' began to be applied to the Internet (Gilder, 1994).

Social networks soon began to emerge. MySpace was the first social networking site to emerge, followed by Facebook (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Many companies realised that all these fresh new websites that were popping up opened up new opportunities for marketing their products and brands (Kotler & Keller, 2012). It opened new avenues for business and marked the beginning of a new business chapter. With new resources, they needed new approaches to promote their brands and benefit from the social networking platform (Li & Du, 2011). Digitally marketed products are available to customers at any time (Chaffey, 2019). 99% of digital marketers use Facebook to market, 97% use Twitter, 69% use Pinterest, and 59% use Instagram (Pew Research Center, 2020). 70% of B2C marketers have acquired customers through Facebook (HubSpot, 2020). 67% of Twitter users are likelier to buy from brands they follow (Twitter, 2020). 83.8% of luxury brands are on Pinterest (Pinterest, 2020). Marketers' top three social networking sites are LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook (Social Media Examiner, 2020).

The digital market is in constant motion. A digital marketing professional must find ways to keep up with this change (Solis, 2011). Digital marketing became visible in Nigeria around 2012 (Ajao, 2018). With the entry of e-commerce platforms like Jumia and Konga, the digital marketing arena began to make its mark (Jumia, 2012). The industry growth between 2012 and 2018 was enormous (Konga, 2018). Various figures on the web about digital marketing in Nigeria put the annual growth at 25% to 40% (Digital Marketing Nigeria, n.d.). The main reason digital marketing is growing is that the world is on the Internet; from social media to Google searches to our favourite apps, we all use the Internet throughout the day (Pew Research Center, 2020). With so many people interacting over the Internet, digital marketing is growing (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, it will continue to increase (Chaffey, 2019).

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is an electrical technology that generates, saves, and processes data. In contrast, marketing is any activity a corporation undertakes to advertise its products and services and increase its market share. Digital marketing, also known as online marketing, is the online exchange of products and services. With the introduction of the Internet in the 1990s, digital marketing grew in popularity. According to Santos (2020), one of the benefits of digital marketing is that it is low-cost but effective at drawing customers 24 hours a day. As a result, online marketing can be defined as advertising and selling goods and services using digital and virtual settings. Digitalisation is the process of developing new business models using digital technologies. According to Gartner, this is transitioning to a digital business, including using digital technology to alter a business model and offer new prospects for generating income and value. In other words, incorporating digital technologies aids in corporate transformation. The ability of digital technology to gather data, identify patterns, and improve business decisions is another aspect of digitalisation. It is also essential for enhancing production processes across various industries, making it necessary to create effective production and network plans and controls.

Digital marketing refers to using digital channels to market products and services to reach consumers. These digital services include social media platforms or TV ads, websites, mobile devices, search engines and other similar channels to promote products or services. This is also the promotion of brands to connect with potential customers using the Internet and other forms of digital communication.

When describing digital marketing, several crucial points must be addressed:

- Digital marketing entails marketing to consumers via any number of digital channels.
- This type of marketing is typically carried out on websites, mobile devices, and social media platforms.
- This type of marketing differs from internet marketing, which is done solely on websites.
- Digital marketing is a broad subject that includes recruiting customers through email marketing, content marketing, search platforms, social media, and other methods.

Social Media as a Digital Marketing Strategy

Social media has emerged as a vital digital marketing strategy, enabling businesses to connect with their target audience and effectively promote their products or services. According to Dewi (2020), social media can be viewed as a virtual medium that facilitates people's social interactions, allowing users to produce and share information and participate in social networking. This phenomenon has led to increased social media adoption among businesses, with many leveraging platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to reach their audience (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media marketing involves using social media platforms to promote products, services, or brands and has become increasingly popular among young people (Trusov, 2009). Businesses can share updates, videos, and stories to engage with their audience, build brand awareness, and drive website traffic (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing on social media is another effective strategy, enabling businesses to recruit new members, increase website visibility, and build trust with potential customers (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). To succeed in social media marketing, businesses must understand online social marketing initiatives and programs and performance assessment indicators (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). Authenticity is crucial in building trust with potential customers, and research has shown that social media users experience increased self-esteem and satisfaction, motivating business and marketing professionals to leverage social

media effectively (Arnott, 2013). Moreover, web experiences impact consumers' mental processes, influencing their online purchasing decisions (Cetine et al., 2012). As Yannopoulos (2011) notes, the Internet is the most effective tool for business, and social media marketing is an essential aspect of online marketing strategies.

Nigerian English

There are debates regarding the precise date the English language arrived in Nigeria. It is known that English sailors began visiting Nigeria's coasts frequently in 1553, especially the ports of Old Benin and Old Calabar. A simplified English dialect called pidgin developed between the English and the Nigerians. The language was employed for commercial purposes and was the language of diplomacy and business in the former Kingdom of Benin. Nigerian English is a variant of English that "has arisen in the Nigerian non-native environment, and it contains distinguishing elements displayed at the phonological, lexico-semantic, grammatical, and discourse levels," according to Bemigho and Olateju (2006). According to Kperogi (2007), Nigeria's literary, intellectual, political, and media elite speak and write in a variant of English widely used throughout the country's various regions and ethnic groups. He claims that the English spoken by educated Nigerians is Nigerian standard English.

According to Jowitt (1991), Akere (2004), and Egbe (2004), the classification of the type of English spoken in Nigeria typically correlates with educational attainment. This suggests that different dialects of English are recognised and categorised according to the educational level of the speakers in Nigeria. Banjo (1975) distinguished four varieties of Nigerian English. First-generation speakers tend to be semi-illiterate and have completed only elementary school. The second kind of speaker incorporates elements of their native tongue into their English. It is widely accepted locally but poorly understood internationally. Adegbija (2004) states, "English has been naturalised, nigeriansed, or acquired Nigerian citizenship, in Nigeria. English in Nigeria is being forced to do exactly what Nigerians want, just as a domestic worker does what the Lord commands. Due to the way that English has been domesticated and applied to all of our conveniences, experiences, nuances, and sensibilities, the usage of internationally developed English in Nigeria reflects local worldviews, social life, culture, and religion in the Nigerian setting, is now referred to as localisation rather than the globalisation of English.

Nigerian Lexico-Semantic Studies

According to Alabi (2007), cited in Osunbade & Adeniji (2005), various research has noted lexical inventiveness, deviations, or interference accounting for lexico-semantic novelties. Word description, or what words signify, is at the heart of lexico-semantics (lexical semantics). Lexico-semantic is commonly used to refer to grammatical and lexical statements and their meanings because semantics is understood in terms of social meaning. Generally speaking, lexico-semantics focuses more on "content words" than "grammatical words" when studying word meanings (Cruse, 2000, p. 25).

Some lexico-semantic elements share the common theme that only a word's meaning in terms of its affiliation with other words (syntagmatic relations) is presented, whilst other aspects are focused on the relationship of "senses" between words in general. Many studies examining the meanings of words in African English have highlighted certain lexico-semantic developments such as semantic shift, semantic expansion, semantic transfer, and purposeful borrowing. Jowitt (1991) lists eight lexico-semantic characteristics of Nigerian English (NE), including local coinages that

follow Standard English (SE) morphological principles, extended or restricted meanings of SE words, and foregrounded SE words. Words derived from pidgin, loan words, slang, and stylistic usage deviate from SE usage. He refers to these characteristics of popular Nigerian English as components and indexical indicators, demonstrating his distaste for NE.

Jowitt claims that NE is a variety of English that includes lexical items that have gone through a stage of interlanguage use during which they are stigmatised and viewed as errors before achieving some level of acceptance, particularly among the educated. Five other characteristics of the lexico-semantic variation in NE were discussed by Odebunmi (2001), referring to them as "types of lexico-semantic variations": transfer, neologism, analogy, acronyms, semantic shift, and extension. According to Bamiro (1994), there are ten different types of lexico-semantic variation in NE, including loans. Additionally, Osunbade (2005) uses categories from various researchers' submissions and identifies six lexico-semantic aspects of Nigerian English, which he adapts to his study of Kegites' English. These characteristics include meaning constriction, lexical borrowing, lexical extension, and semantic shift.

Figure Presentation of Lexical Variation in Digital-Marketing Terminology across Educational Levels in Nigeria

Figure 1: Lexemes for digital marketing among the highly educated



Figure 2: Lexemes for digital marketing among the less educated and uneducated



Description of Figures 1 and 2

Figure 1 displays the lexemes used for digital marketing among highly educated respondents. The figure shows a preference for more formal, specialised, and digitally oriented vocabulary, reflecting greater exposure to mainstream digital-marketing terminology. Figure 2 presents the lexemes used for digital marketing among less educated and uneducated respondents. The figure

indicates the use of more informal, functional, and locally adapted expressions, revealing how digital-marketing meanings are interpreted within everyday communication.

Theoretical Underpinning

This research is informed by the variationist theory, which explores how social factors influence linguistic differences, resulting in linguistic variation. This study delves into the regional dialect of Nigerian English (NE) spoken in the southwest, examining how social and contextual factors impact lexical choices in digital marketing communication. Previous studies have employed a variationist approach to investigate lexical variation in different English varieties, revealing that social factors like gender, region, social class, and context shape lexical selections (Grieve et al., 2018; Njuguna, 2018). While scholars have examined lexical variation in NE (Adegbija, 1989; Mgbemena, 2015), this study focuses on socially induced innovations and variations in digital marketing discourse, exploring how NE speakers adapt their language in response to digital marketing trends and online consumer behaviour.

This research aims to fill the gap by investigating lexical variation in a regional variety of NE in the context of digital marketing. By examining how social and contextual factors influence lexical choices in digital marketing communication, this study provides insights into the dynamic nature of language in online consumer interactions. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of how language variation impacts digital marketing strategies and consumer engagement in the digital landscape.

Methodology.

This study addresses the problem of limited empirical research on how digital marketing discourse in Nigeria reflects systematic lexico-semantic innovation across different linguistic levels and social contexts. Although digital marketing has grown rapidly, there is insufficient understanding of how Nigerian users integrate global digital terminology with locally generated expressions, as well as how such variations are influenced by social and educational factors. The study therefore investigates the multidimensional nature of lexico-semantic innovation in Nigerian digital marketing discourse. The study is guided by three research questions: how digital marketing lexemes in Nigeria vary across social and educational groups; what forms of lexical innovation, including coinages, acronyms, and hybrid expressions, characterise Nigerian digital marketing discourse; and how semantic, morpho-syntactic, and orthographic processes contribute to the adaptation of English in this domain. Based on these questions, the study hypothesises that Nigerian digital marketing discourse exhibits systematic lexico-semantic innovations shaped by the interaction of local linguistic resources, including Nigerian Pidgin and indigenous languages, and global digital marketing terminology, with variations influenced by social and educational background.

The population of the study comprises digital marketing users in Nigeria, including professionals, students, and informal online marketers. The sample was drawn from south-western Nigeria using purposive sampling to ensure representation across different educational levels. This enabled the study to capture sociolinguistic variation between highly educated users and less educated or informal practitioners, thereby reflecting the diversity of digital language use in the Nigerian context. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining descriptive and exploratory research designs. The descriptive method was used to identify and categorise lexico-semantic features in

digital marketing discourse, while the exploratory approach allowed for the investigation of emerging linguistic patterns and innovations. Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered through Google Forms, as well as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. These instruments were designed to elicit participants' lexical choices, meanings, and usage patterns in digital marketing communication. In addition, relevant literature and digital content samples were consulted to support the analysis.

Data collection were carried out in stages. Questionnaires were first distributed to 550 participants online to gather quantitative data on frequently used digital marketing expressions. This was followed by interviews and focus group discussions to obtain qualitative insights into how participants use and interpret these expressions. The data collected were organised into thematic categories such as coinages, acronyms, semantic shifts, and social variation. Responses were coded according to educational background and linguistic patterns, and analysed using qualitative content analysis alongside basic quantitative categorisation to identify recurring trends. The data were presented using tables and figures, including charts and categorical distributions, to illustrate patterns of language use among respondents. The analysis focused on identifying different types of lexico-semantic innovation, including coinages, acronym formation, semantic extension, and morpho-syntactic variation. Interpretation was carried out by examining how these features reflect the interaction between global digital marketing practices and local Nigerian linguistic influences, as well as how social and educational variables shape lexical choices.

Demographic Analysis

Table 1: Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Percentage
AGE	
16-25	88.2%
26-35	11.8%
36-45	0
46-55	0

Table 1 shows the personal characteristics of the respondents reveal a predominantly young demographic, with an overwhelming majority of 88.2% falling within the age range of 16-25 years old. A smaller percentage of 11.8% are between 26-35 years old, while there are no respondents in the older age ranges of 36-45 and 46-55. This age distribution suggests that the sample is skewed towards younger adults, providing insights into the perspectives and experiences of this specific age group

Table 2: Social Status

Characteristics	Percentage
Student	62.5%
Employed	28.1%
Self Employed	9.4%
Unemployed	0

Table 2 gives a narration of social status characteristics of the respondents indicate that the majority (62.5%) are students, followed by employed individuals (28.1%) and self-employed individuals (9.4%). Notably, there are no unemployed respondents, suggesting that the sample comprises individuals actively engaged in education or the workforce. This demographic distribution provides a snapshot of the social status of the respondents, highlighting the prevalence of students and employed individuals in the sample.

Table 3: Educational Status

Characteristics	Percentage
Student	36.4%
Ex-Student	0
Undergraduate	42.4%
Graduate	15.2%
Masters	0
PhD	0

Table 3 shows the educational status characteristics of the respondents reveal a diverse range of academic backgrounds. The majority (42.4%) hold an undergraduate degree, while 36.4% are currently students. A significant proportion (15.2%) has completed their graduate studies. Notably, there are no respondents who have completed a Master's or PhD degree, and none who identify as ex-students. This distribution suggests that the sample is predominantly composed of individuals in the early stages of their academic careers, with a strong representation of undergraduate students and graduates

Table 4: Digital Marketing Awareness:

Characteristics	Per cent
Never	0%
Rarely	2.9%
Often	10.6%
High	39.4%
Extreme	47.1%

Table 4 gives show that almost everyone surveyed is familiar with digital marketing. No one reported being completely unaware, with just a small fraction (2.9%) saying they rarely encountered it. Around 10.6% of people mentioned they often encounter digital marketing. However, the overwhelming majority are very familiar with it—39.4% have a high awareness, and 47.1% are extremely aware. This shows that digital marketing is a well-known and commonly understood concept among the respondents

Table 5: Awareness of Digital Marketing Words

Characteristics	Percentage
Never	1.9%
Rarely	2.8%
Often	10.5%
High	43.4%
Extreme	41.4%

The data in Table 5 show that most people are familiar with digital marketing terminology. Only 1.9% of respondents said they were unaware of digital marketing words, while a small 2.8% rarely encountered them. About 10.5% of respondents often come across these terms. The majority, however, are highly familiar with digital marketing vocabulary, with 43.4% having a high level of awareness and 41.4% being extremely aware. This indicates that digital marketing language is well-known among the majority of the respondents.

Presentation of Results

The results of the analysis are presented in five sections: (i) Digital marketing lexemes and social class, (ii) Nigerian Digital Marketing Words, (iii) Presentation of Data on Acronyms, (iv) Digital marketing lexical innovations, and (v) Presentation of Data on Semantic shift/Extension

Discussion of Figures 1 and 2: Digital marketing lexemes and social class

The comparison of figures 1 and 2 highlights a sociolinguistic pattern that deeply relates to the lexical choices in describing digital-marketing practices in Nigeria. Figure 1, which explores the words used by highly educated respondents, reveals a clear move towards standardised, globally recognised, and domain-specific terminology. This particular group is very much into the use of words that are directly taken from the main discourse of digital-marketing. These are terms like SEO, analytics, content creation, traffic, algorithm, conversion, or paid ads. The fact that these words appear in their discourse is proof not only that these people are very familiar with professional digital-marketing vocabulary but also that they have had more exposure to digital literacies that are institutionalised and most probably they got them through formal education, workplace training, or higher engagement with digital-professional ecosystems.

This trend points to the fact that the highly educated digital marketing users employ a technical, standard, and coded linguistic frame of reference, thereby aligning their lexical choices with international digital-commerce norms. Their lexemes also indicate that they are semantically accurate as they highlight specialised functions (e.g., “optimise,” “target audience,” “conversion rate”). This is an example of lexico-semantic innovation where English is used in the digital-marketing context with minimal localisation which means it retains its globalised semantic load.

On the other hand, Figure 2 which is the opposite of Figure 1, shows the difference in the sociolinguistic pattern for lexical choices in the description of digital marketing in Nigeria figures 1 and 2 combined disclose a clear pattern in social linguistics of the lexical/nomeinal choices when describing digital marketing practices in Nigeria. Lexical items for the learners with the highest qualifications, as presented in Figure 1, show a strong inclination towards standardised, globally recognised, and subject-specific terms. This set of data reveals nomenclatures that frequently come

from the core digital-marketing discourse—lexical units such as SEO, analytics, content creation, traffic, algorithm, conversion, or paid ads are among the terms used by this group.

The items' occurrence indicates not only the use of professional digital-marketing vocabulary but also that these users have been exposed to institutionalized digital literacies, which they have most likely acquired through formal education, workplace training, or higher engagement with digital-professional ecosystems.

This pattern indicates that the highly-educated group of people employ digital marketing within a technical, standardised, and coded linguistic frame character of the type which is in line with international digital-commerce norms. Their lexemes also display semantic accuracy as they highlight specialised functions (e.g., “optimise,” “target audience,” “conversion rate”). This is an example of lexico-semantic innovation where English is used in the digital-marketing context with minimal localisation which means it retains its globalised semantic load.

Figure 2 showing contrast in sociolinguistic patterns for lexical choices in descriptive digital marketing ... Nigeria figures 1 and 2 combined disclose a clear pattern in social linguistics of the lexical/nominal choices when describing digital marketing practices in Nigeria. The local learners (less educated and uneducated), as in Figure 2, seem to rely more on a lexicon that is mostly functional, descriptive, and context-dependent with grounds more in practical usage than in the formal training of digital-marketing. Instead of using specialised terms, this group of people will most likely explain these activities by using words such as online selling, showing goods, posting market, advert for a phone, Facebook selling, or other colloquial forms which simply describe digital-marketing activities in common, experience-based language.

These words feature a kind of grassroots digital English, where universal digital concepts are filtered via local and communicative needs. This group, instead of taking up the industry-standard terminology, innovates semantically by the use of English lexemes either newly created or modified to suit the familiar communicative environments. Semantic innovation, in this case, becomes a mediator between these individuals and the formally established digital-professional discourse. Their linguistic behaviour localises the meaning whereby it is drawn from practical engagement rather than through formalised training.

A close comparative analysis of Figures 1 and 2 also reveals the very significant influence that educational background has on one's lexical access, semantic load, and stylistic orientation of digitalized English in Nigeria. The highly educated group, as a global digital bilingual model, is able to switch effortlessly between Nigerian English and international digital marketing jargon while the less educated group represents a localized, community-based digital English that draws its roots from the socio-cultural and linguistic realities of the home they come from. Nevertheless, both have become the two main pillars supporting the structure of Nigeria's digital sociolect, which is still evolving, and, thus, they are making dissimilar but still significant contributions to the lexico-semantic innovation phenomenon in the digital-marketing field.

Basically, the results together reveal that besides reshaping marketing practices, the digitalization process attracts new linguistic layers of creativity which in turn lead to the formation of parallel vocabularies that mirror the sociolinguistic diversities of the Nigerian digital users. The lexico-semantic innovations evidenced by the two groups serve as a proposition to the central assertion of this research: the digital-marketing discourse in Nigeria is a multilayer one that cuts across educational, social, and experiential lines thereby giving rise to divergent yet equally productive lexical pathways.

Nigerian General Digital Coined Lexical Items

Word	Meaning	Origin	Use
Gist	Information, news, or gossip, often shared informally.	Derived from English "gist" meaning the substance or essence, but in Nigerian Pidgin, it evolved to mean "gossip" or "news."	In digital marketing, it refers to updates or content that engages the audience, e.g., "Our newsletter gives you the latest gist on digital trends."
Sabi	To know or to be knowledgeable about something.	Nigerian Pidgin, borrowed from the Portuguese word "saber" meaning "to know."	Used to highlight expertise, e.g., "Our team sabi how to boost your social media presence."
Halah	To make noise or cause a commotion.	Nigerian marketing slang, possibly influenced by Yoruba language, is used in contexts with loud publicity or noise.	Used to describe a campaign that draws a lot of attention, e.g., "Our new product launch go halah for social media."
Jara	An extra or bonus is added to a purchase or deal.	Yoruba origin, where "Jara" means "extra" or "bonus."	Used in promotions to indicate additional value, e.g., "Buy this service and get jara content creation."
Gbedu	Big grand opening of a new product, celebration, or hype.	Yoruba origin, originally referring to a large drum used in celebrations, now used to mean any big event or hype.	Used to describe a major event or product launch, e.g., "Join the gbedu for our grand opening sale!"

Marketing Strategies

Word	Meaning	Origin	Use
Hype	To promote or build excitement around something.	English origin, but it often refers to exaggerated or intense promotion in Nigeria.	Used to build excitement for a product, e.g., "We dey hype our new software release this week."
Blow	To become famous or widely known.	Nigerian Pidgin, derived from the English word "blow," referring to sudden fame or success.	Used to describe a viral campaign, e.g., "Our video content go blow for sure!"
Trend	Something currently popular or widespread.	English origin, widely adopted in global and Nigerian digital spaces.	Used to describe popular topics or content, e.g., "We need to tap into the latest trend for our campaign."

Word	Meaning	Origin	Use
Hustle	Persistent effort or work, often in entrepreneurial contexts.	English origin, but in Nigeria, it connotes relentless pursuit, often in challenging circumstances.	Used to describe the hard work behind successful campaigns, e.g., "Na serious hustle to get this many leads."
Push	To promote or advocate for something aggressively.	English origin, but in Nigerian Pidgin, it implies a forceful or determined promotion.	Used to describe strong marketing efforts, e.g., "We need to push this product to the top of the market."
Vibe	The mood, atmosphere, or feeling associated with something.	English origin, widely adopted in Nigerian slang to describe emotions or atmosphere.	Used to describe the overall feel of a campaign, e.g., "The vibe of this campaign is on point for our audience."
Jiggle	To adjust or tweak slightly.	Nigerian slang, likely inspired by the English word "jiggle" which means to shake slightly.	Used to describe minor adjustments in strategy, e.g., "We need to jiggle the ad copy for better engagement."

Social Media

Word	Meaning	Origin	Use
Share	To distribute content across platforms.	English origin, standard in global social media use.	Used to encourage the dissemination of content, e.g., "Share our latest post to reach more people."
Tag	To mention or identify someone in a post.	English origin, standard in global social media use.	Used to involve others in content, e.g., "Tag your friends in the giveaway post."
Slide	To send a private message, typically on social media.	English origin, popularized in digital and social media contexts.	Used to encourage direct messaging, e.g., "Slide into our DMs for exclusive offers."
Drop	To release or post content online.	English origin, used globally but with specific connotations in Nigerian social media.	Used to announce new content, e.g., "We just dropped our latest video on YouTube."
Go	To participate in a live event or trend.	English origin, with usage influenced by Nigerian Pidgin.	Used to encourage joining live sessions, e.g., "Go live with us at 8 PM today!"
Live	Broadcasting in real-time on social media.	English origin, widely used in digital marketing globally.	Used to promote real-time engagement, e.g., "Join our live Q&A session now!"

Word	Meaning	Origin	Use
Vibes	The emotional tone or mood conveyed through posts.	English origin, but heavily adopted into Nigerian Pidgin to describe overall feelings or atmosphere.	Used to describe the feel of social media content, e.g., "This post has good vibes, it's relatable."
Gist	Information or news shared informally.	Nigerian Pidgin English, evolved from the English word "gist."	Used for sharing updates or news in a relatable manner, e.g., "Check our IG stories for the latest gist."
Yawa	Trouble or problems, especially in social contexts.	Nigerian Pidgin English, derived from Hausa.	Used to describe issues arising on social media, e.g., "Yawa don gas in the comments, people no happy."

E-commerce

Word	Meaning	Origin	Use
Paystack	A popular online payment gateway in Nigeria.	Founded in 2015 by Shola Akinlade and Ezra Olubi, now widely used across Nigeria.	Used to facilitate online payments, e.g., "Secure your transaction with Paystack."
Konga	A major Nigerian e-commerce platform.	Launched in 2012, founded by SimShagaya.	Used as a platform for buying and selling goods, e.g., "List your products on Konga for wider reach."
Jumia	A leading e-commerce platform in Nigeria.	Founded in 2012, part of the Jumia Group.	Used for online shopping, e.g., "Shop your essentials on Jumia and enjoy fast delivery."

Presentation of Data on Acronyms

ACRONYM	
WORDS	MEANING
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
SEO	Search Engine Optimisation
CTA	Call-To-Action
B2B	Business To Business
B2C	Business To Customer
USP	Unique Selling Point

The data illustrated in Table 4.2.3 emphasizes a set of acronyms that are most frequently referred to in conversations concerning digital marketing in Nigeria. These acronyms—CEO, SEO, CTA, B2B, B2C, and USP—are the shortest forms of highly conventionally abbreviated terms by which the number of words in expressions is drastically reduced. The table demonstrates that each acronym originates from the first letters of the words forming the phrase and is voiced as one unit, thus conforming to worldwide English norms for use in professional and digital-media communication.

These acronyms in the dataset reveal the degree to which digitalized English in Nigeria assimilates global marketing and business jargon, thus, lexical items from international digital-commerce registers are borrowed to a large extent. To a great extent, digital-marketing operations are characterised by such terms as SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and CTA (Call-To-Action), thus online engagement strategies are the main focus in this specialized field. Along with B2B and B2C that denote e-commerce models and market-segmentation frameworks, USP (Unique Selling Point) is also used to indicate one's knowledge of branding discourse.

Additionally, these acronyms serve as the midway stage in the movement from the usage of a lengthy expression to that of a shorter one capable of giving the same information quickly in a fast digital environment. This characteristic fits Crystal's statement that digital communication leads to linguistic brevity and efficiency. Besides, these acronyms present to different respondents imply that regardless of their respective backgrounds, Nigerian digital-marketing practitioners are still linguistically competent in a globalised, professionalised English lexicon which is one way of them adhering to the interconnectedness of local and international digital-marketing practices.

From the data presented, it is clear that acronyms are one of the main sources of semantically innovative lexico-semantic changes in Nigerian digital-marketing English. Their incorporation reflects not only the impact of global digital discourse but also the progressive linguistic skills of Nigerian users who are capable of navigating online business.

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Presentation of Data on Coinages

Coinages are a form of language used in English with a specific cultural connotation, despite being comparable to loanwords. They are recognised as brand new words developed for novel situations, particularly when language users lack the necessary words to express themselves or fulfil the communicative needs of their immediate surroundings.

Term	Origin	Usage
Traffic	Derived from hold-up, popular in some cities in Nigeria.	Usage: Refers to the significant volume of digital activity. Digital marketers focus on <i>Traffic</i> metrics to gauge the reach and impact of digital advertisements, ensuring campaigns are effectively targeted at this bustling city's active online audience.
Naija Hustle	<i>Naija</i> is an informal term for Nigeria; <i>Hustle</i> reflects the entrepreneurial spirit prevalent in Nigeria.	Usage: Describes marketing campaigns that resonate with the industrious and ambitious nature of Nigerians. <i>Naija Hustle</i> strategies often highlight narratives of perseverance and success, appealing to consumers who value resilience and determination.

Term	Origin	Usage
Shine Your Eye Deals	<i>Shine Your Eye</i> is a Nigerian Pidgin expression meaning to be vigilant or alert.	Usage: Refers to promotions that require consumers to be attentive and act quickly. <i>Shine Your Eye Deals</i> are typically time-sensitive, urging consumers to seize offers promptly, thus leveraging a sense of urgency and attentiveness.
Padi Promo	<i>Padi</i> means friend in Nigerian Pidgin.	Usage: Promotions that are shared through personal networks and word-of-mouth. <i>Padi Promo</i> leverages relationships to boost engagement and trust, often employing referral codes or exclusive offers targeted at friends and family.
Gist Content	<i>Gist</i> means news or informal information in Nigerian Pidgin.	Usage: Refers to content based on popular gossip or trending news. <i>Gist Content</i> is used to attract and engage audiences by discussing current events, celebrity news, or local happenings, thereby driving traffic and fostering relatability.
Pepper Dem Ads	<i>Pepper Dem</i> is Nigerian Pidgin for flaunting or showing off.	Usage: Advertisements designed to flaunt luxury, success, or high-status lifestyles. <i>Pepper Dem Ads</i> aim to attract attention and create envy by showcasing achievements or premium products, thus standing out in a crowded market.
Ajebutter Ads	<i>Ajebutter</i> is Nigerian slang for someone from a privileged or affluent background.	Usage: Ads targeting affluent or high-income individuals. <i>Ajebutter Ads</i> are crafted to appeal to upscale market segments with sophisticated messaging and imagery that reflect wealth and luxury, focusing on premium consumer demographics.
Naija Trend	<i>Naija</i> is an informal term for Nigeria.	<i>Naija Trend</i> involves staying updated with popular trends and integrating them into campaigns to maintain relevance and appeal to the Nigerian audience.
Koko Content	<i>Koko</i> means crux or core in Nigerian Pidgin.	Usage: Content that emphasises the core benefits or main selling points of a product or service. <i>Koko Content</i> is used to focus on the most important features, clearly highlighting why consumers should choose a particular offering.
Omo Naija Branding	<i>Omo Naija</i> translates to "child of Nigeria," reflecting national identity.	Usage: Branding strategies that emphasise Nigerian cultural identity and pride. <i>Omo Naija Branding</i> often includes local symbols, languages, and cultural references to create a strong emotional connection with Nigerian consumers and enhance brand loyalty.

Term	Origin	Usage
Hustle Pulse	<i>Hustle</i> reflects Nigerian entrepreneurs' energetic and driven nature; <i>Pulse</i> indicates central activity.	Usage: Marketing strategies reflecting the dynamic and ambitious nature of Nigerian entrepreneurs. <i>Hustle Pulse</i> involves highlighting entrepreneurial success stories and motivational content to engage a motivated and driven audience.
Local Glimpse	<i>Local</i> refers to something specific to a particular area; <i>Glimpse</i> means a brief view.	Usage: Provides insights into local consumer behaviours and cultural nuances. <i>Local Glimpse</i> strategies involve understanding and leveraging local preferences and cultural dynamics to create more effective and tailored marketing campaigns.

Presentation of Data on Semantic Shift/Extension

Semantic shifts are English words' modifications for use and purpose in Nigeria. These instances involve shifting, limiting, or expanding the original English meanings.

SEMANTIC SHIFT/EXTENSION	
WORDS	MEANING
PROMOTION	Promotion as a verb is used as a noun in digital marketing to mean pushing one's products and services to the targeted customers.
SERVICE	Service as a verb is used as a noun in digital marketing to mean professional digital service that helps in online advertising and marketing.
DESIGN	Design as a verb is used as a noun in digital marketing to mean a deliberate, purposeful plan.
OFFER	Offer as a noun is used as a verb in digital marketing to express readiness to do or give something if desired.
CALL-TO-ACTION	Call-to-action sounds like a doing word, which is a verb, but in the context of digital marketing, it means a prompt on a website that tells the user to take some specified actions.

Semantic Shift/Extension Analysis

1. Promotion

- **Current Meaning:** In digital marketing, "promotion" is predominantly used as a noun to describe activities aimed at increasing the visibility and appeal of products or services.
- **Analysis:** The term "promotion" traditionally refers to the act of raising awareness or publicising a product or service. As a noun, it is indeed used to denote marketing strategies or campaigns designed to push products to target audiences. The shift here is from its more general use to a specific marketing context.
- **Refinement:** Promotion is not used as a verb in this context; it remains a noun. The verb form "promote" is the action taken to achieve this noun's purpose.

2. Service

- **Current Meaning:** In digital marketing, "service" is used as a noun to refer to professional activities or solutions provided to aid in online advertising and marketing efforts.
- **Analysis:** "Service" traditionally refers to the act of helping or doing work for others. In digital marketing, it has shifted to denote a range of professional offerings such as SEO, content creation, or social media management. It remains a noun, and its meaning has extended to cover specialised professional services within the industry.
- **Refinement:** The term "service" is used as a noun in digital marketing, reflecting professional help rather than being used as a verb.

3. Design

- **Current Meaning:** In digital marketing, "design" is used as a noun to refer to the creation and planning of visual elements such as website layouts, graphics, or user interfaces.
- **Analysis:** Traditionally, "design" is a verb meaning to create or plan something. In digital marketing, it is primarily used as a noun to describe the outcome of the design process, including visual and functional aspects of digital content. The semantic shift involves a focus on the result (the design) rather than the action of designing.
- **Refinement:** "Design" retains its noun form but is applied to the specific context of digital marketing and advertising materials.

4. Offer

- **Current Meaning:** In digital marketing, "offer" is used as a noun to describe a special deal or incentive provided to potential customers.
- **Analysis:** The term "offer" traditionally means a proposal or suggestion to give something. In marketing, it has extended to denote specific promotions or discounts intended to attract customers. The shift is from a general sense of offering to a targeted marketing context.
- **Refinement:** "Offer" is used as a noun in this context, referring to promotional deals rather than as a verb.

5. Call-to-Action (CTA)

- **Current Meaning:** "Call-to-Action" refers to a prompt in digital marketing that encourages users to take a specific action, such as clicking a button or signing up for a newsletter.
- **Analysis:** The term "call-to-action" is a noun phrase that describes an element of digital content designed to provoke a response from the user. While "call" and "action" may suggest verbs, the phrase functions as a noun to describe the specific feature intended to drive user interaction in this context.
- **Refinement:** The term "Call-to-Action" is a noun phrase in digital marketing that describes the element that prompts user engagement.

Morpho-Syntactic Level

Syntactic innovations in digital marketing include using complex noun phrases like "content marketing strategy" and "social media engagement" to convey precision. Verb phrases like "go viral" and "convert leads" showcase the dynamic nature of digital marketing language. Sentence structures are also optimised for persuasion, with short, imperative sentences like "Shop Now" and "Click Here" prevalent in digital advertising.

At the spelling level, the data revealed that the orthography of their L1 was intruding into that of English. So, we have spellings such as Kostroma, kilienti and so on. The foregone indicates substituting letters or alphabets in L2 that are not available or sound differently in L1 with a similar alphabet. Similar to the observations made in the provided sample, the orthography of Nigerian languages often intrudes into the spelling of English words in the digital marketing context. For instance, terms like "Kostroma" (instead of "customer"), "kilienti" (instead of "client"), "maket" (instead of "market"), "kampany" (instead of "campaign"), and "konsumer" (instead of "consumer") exemplify this phenomenon. Additionally, words like "Beta" (instead of "better") and "Komot" (instead of "come out") also demonstrate the adaptation of English to Nigerian phonetic systems. This substitution of letters or alphabets reflects the challenges of adapting English to the phonetic system of Nigerian languages.

Cultural and contextual influences significantly shape digital marketing innovations in Nigeria. The incorporation of Pidgin English elements has led to terms like "gbas-gbos marketing" (aggressive marketing) and "wahala marketing" (overcoming challenges). Local cultural references and idioms can enhance brand resonance, demonstrating the importance of understanding the Nigerian context in digital marketing.

Findings and Discussion

The study demonstrates how Nigerians have stretched the English language to fit their native tongues better. According to Bamgbose (1995), English has been pidginised, nativised, acculturated, and twisted to reflect strange thoughts and social norms. This demonstrates how different the English spoken in Nigeria is from other English varieties. The language of digital marketing in Nigeria is a fascinating topic that has garnered significant attention in recent years. Studies have shown that Nigerian digital marketers have developed a unique blend of English, Pidgin English, and local languages to engage with their audience effectively. This blend of languages has given rise to Nigerian-specific terms such as "Giveaway" and "Jara," which reflect local cultural nuances and marketing strategies.

Furthermore, the current research has revealed semantic shifts in Nigerian digital marketing, where English words take on new meanings. For instance, "Promotion" and "Service" have been adapted to fit local marketing strategies. Additionally, morpho-syntactic innovations have emerged, including complex noun phrases, verb phrases, and sentence structures optimised for persuasion. Orthographic adaptations have also been observed, where the orthography of Nigerian languages intrudes into English spellings, resulting in words like "Kostroma" and "kilienti". Cultural and contextual influences have also shaped digital marketing language, incorporating Pidgin English elements and local cultural references, such as "gbas-gbos marketing" and "wahala marketing".

These findings align with research on language contact and adaptation in digital contexts (Androutsopoulos, 2006; Blommaert, 2010). The Nigerian digital marketing language reflects a dynamic, hybridised form of communication shaped by local cultural and linguistic realities.

Conclusion

This study discovers that the digital marketing global insurgence has significantly influenced Nigerian English, cutting across all of Nigeria's regions. It was revealed that most people in the digital marketing space are educated. However, as education varies according to levels, it also affects the use of words among the users. The direct usage of the mother tongue hardly influences the vocabulary of digital marketing due to educational status. Nevertheless, some terms, such as *Kostroma*, could be affected by the influence of the modern tongue. This implies that the vocabulary of digital marketing worth in Nigeria is differently conceived by different regions depending on social status and experiences. The findings reveal that Nigerian digital marketing discourse is characterised by a dynamic interplay between global and local linguistic elements. Highly educated users tend to employ standardised and globally recognised terminology, while less educated users rely more on locally adapted, context-driven expressions. Lexical innovation occurs through processes such as borrowing, coinage, acronym formation, and semantic shift. These findings support existing literature on Nigerian English and African Englishes, while also confirming the study's hypothesis that social and educational factors significantly influence lexico-semantic variation in digital marketing discourse.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that digital marketing language in Nigeria is highly dynamic and reflects both global digital influences and local linguistic creativity. The research questions have been addressed, and the hypothesis has been validated through the identification of systematic lexico-semantic innovations. The objectives of the study have therefore been achieved. The study contributes to knowledge on Nigerian English in digital contexts and offers practical implications for digital communication, language teaching, and marketing practice. It is recommended that future studies expand the scope of data and explore additional digital communication domains. Future research can delve into developing a corpus of Nigerian digital marketing texts to facilitate further linguistic analysis.

Declarations

Ethical Approval

Not applicable. This study did not involve human participants, animal subjects, or any procedure requiring ethical clearance from an Institutional Review Board or Ethics Committee.

Consent to Participate

Not applicable. No human participants were involved in the study.

Consent to Publish

Not applicable. The study does not include any personal or identifiable information requiring consent for publication.

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Availability of Data and Materials

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