

An Insight into the Lexico-Semantic and Grammatical Features of Cyber Begging

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Abstract: This study attempts an analysis of the lexico-semantic and grammatical features of cyber begging. The study draws insights from Systemic Functional Linguistics to analyse data, consisting of twenty cyber begging texts that were purposively sampled from four popular begging sites: www.cyberbeg.com, www.DonateMoney2me.com, www.ebeggars.com, and www.freebeg.com; through document analysis. Analysis reveals that while lexico-semantic features encompass compounding as associated with medical and accommodation issues and lexical repetition as deployed to project the seriousness of online beggars' financial pleas. Grammatical features constitute two main transitivity processes: material process connected with three discourse issues (indebtedness, accommodation, and medical needs) and relational process, associated with the same three discourse issues. The explication and comprehension of the lexico-semantic and grammatical features provides useful insights into cyber begging discourse.

Keywords: Cyber begging, Lexico-semantic features, Grammatical features, Cyber begging discourse.

Introduction

Begging is an age-long and universal phenomenon, although its practise may differ from one nation of the world to the other (Kamat, 2013). It is equally a natural occurrence as the needy beg from those who have in order to take care of their lack (Falade, 2018). Following Qaradawi (2013), the simple act of begging is not often generally condemned but becomes disapproved and condemned when it is practised as the only means of living. Begging has however entered into an age of technology. With the popularity and widespread use of the internet, many people have started begging online. This is referred to as Internet begging, cyber begging, e-begging or Internet panhandling. Cyber beggars ask members of the Internet community or the Internet public for money to meet immediate and other needs such as money, food, and shelter, among others. Cyber begging is therefore the online version of traditional begging which involves the beggars' occupation of physical locations.

Okpeadua (2012) categorises beggars into handicapped/sick beggars, circumstantial beggars, executive beggars and imposters, and acknowledges cyber begging as a new form of begging. Developing Okpeadua (2012)'s classification, this study offers a classification of beggars which accommodates both offline and cyber begging and their characteristic features. It is based on the factors of length of existence (between old and new) beggars' mode of operation (between traditional and modern), mode of contact (between real and virtual) location (between physical, geographical communities and virtual communities) and causal factors of begging. This classification is illustrated in the following table as adapted from Okpeadua (2012):

Table 1. Taxonomy of Beggars

BEGGING		
Length of existence	Old	New
Mode of Operation	Traditional (offline)	Modern (online)
Mode of Contact	Real	Virtual
Location	Real, physical, geographical communities (e.g. Nigeria, South Africa, USA, UK, India, China)	Virtual communities (personal /mega begging sites e.g. cyberbeg.com, donatemoney2me.com)
Nomenclature	Beggars, offline beggars, street beggars, panhandlers.	Online beggars e-beggars, cyber beggars, online panhandlers.
Typology	a) Handicapped/Sick Beggars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defective health condition (Natural/biological) - Accident victims (physically injured) - Patients of terminal illnesses - Mentally/Psychologically unstable. 	Typology ranges from a – d. This is determined by the online beggar's begging stories.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Circumstantial Beggars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retirees/pensioners - Job losers/seekers - Apprentices/Trainees - Students - Widows - Orphans - Victims of crimes/disasters c) Executive Beggars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professionals - Administrative officers - Field workers (skilled and unskilled) - Academics/teachers d) Imposters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pretenders/ impersonators 	
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Lexico-semantic and Grammatical Features of Language

Following Murphy (2015), lexico-semantics refers to the study of words meaning which is more specifically concerned with the study of lexical (that is, content) words meaning, as opposed to the meaning of grammatical (or function) words which implies lexico-semantics is more concerned with the open classes of noun, verb, and adjectives and with more contentful member of the verb and preposition clauses. Murphy (2015) however points out that while lexico-semantics focuses on content words; such words cannot be studied in an agrammatical vacuum as more lexical properties have effects throughout the sentence. Similarly, Palmer (1996) contends that while certain aspects of lexico-semantics are concerned with relation of senses between words, some other aspects have a unifying theme of the idea that only the meaning of words in terms of their association with other words (syntagmatic relations) is stated. On the other hand, grammatical feature (also referred to as a grammatical category) refers to a property of items within the grammar of a language, which has a number of possible values that are normally exclusive within a given category. Examples include tense, number and gender.

Studies on Lexico- semantic and Grammatical Features of Language

There have been various studies, in differing contexts, whose concerns have been on features of language that include lexico-semantics and grammar. Such studies include Robert and Ukpongetuk (2014), Okunrinmeta (2014), and Ufot (2013), among others. Robert and Ukpongetuk (2014) attempt an evaluative assessment of lexico-semantic features of language of religion and advertising, stating the characteristics of both fields of discipline as they affect words and their meanings in context and offering a comparison; this is with the view to solving the problem of meaning in language use. The analysis of lexical features of language use reveals that the language of religion and advertisement is characterised by figurative expressions, emotive adjectives, informative expressions, eulogy and persuasion, the totality of which ensures an effective delivery of information. The relevance of the study to the current study lies in the fact that it draws from lexico-semantics and grammar which are also explicated in cyber begging in the current study.

Okunrimeta (2014) investigates the syntactic and lexical-semantic variations in the English of Nigerian students vis-à-vis its pedagogical implications and challenges in the English as Second Language (ESL) situation. The lexico-semantic features presented revealed a demonstration of the meaning of some English words and expressions to make them accommodate the various contexts created for them by the Nigerian languages and culture. Under syntactic variations, the study observes the pluralization of non-count nouns, the use of stative verbs as dynamic verbs, and the substitution of certain prepositions for others, among others. The study is similar to the current study in that its analysis dwells much on lexico-semantics, however, it is predicated on Nigerian English not cyber begging.

Ufot (2013) investigates the lexical and grammatical patterns in a selection of legal discourse. Employing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as well as Halliday’s scale and category grammar as its theoretical and analytical framework, the study reviews ESP with emphasis on register and jargon; and instantiates the gradual procedure and effectiveness of stylistic analysis in revealing the lexical and grammatical complexities of the legal discourse. Analysis of the lexical features reveals precision, preservation and prestige as the general principles behind the lexical items in legal discourse as occasioned by the plethora of loan words from Latin and old French. At the grammatical level, Ufot (2013) reveals that legal documents are characterised by the awkward piling and placing of subordinate clauses and phrases, excessive repetition, preference for periodic sentence structures and the constant use of passive verbs thus making the structure irregular and unintelligible to the general public. The congruousness of Ufot (2013) with the

current study is demonstrated by the fact that it is concerned with the investigation of lexical and grammatical features which are also examined on cyber begging in the current study.

Evidently, the examination of lexico-semantic and grammatical features in the foregoing review of studies is connected with discourses other than cyber begging, thus justifying the need to examine lexico-semantic and grammatical features of cyber begging, to fill the apparent gap in knowledge.

Systemic Functional Linguistics

This study draws insights from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which Halliday (1994) describes as a systemic theory of meaning as choice, by which a language or any other semiotic system is interpreted as networks of interlocking options of expressing meaning; as such, meaning is dependent on choice and determined by context. According to Eggins (2004), SFL is very valuable in the systematic analysis of language patterns and exposition of the construction of meaning in daily linguistic interaction as every human activity has to do with language. In this study, SFL has been chosen for the analysis of cyber begging texts because of its capacity to investigate the language choices of the participants in a context of situation in order to proffer meaning.

Methodology

This study draws from Systemic Functional Linguistics to analyse data, which were collected through document analysis, and involved purposive sampling. Five begging texts were drawn from each of www.DonateMoney2me.com, www.freebeg.com, www.cyberbeg.com, and www.ebeggars.com, totaling twenty. The sampled begging texts mainly connect with indebtedness, accommodation, and medical needs as the discourse issues; they were posted on the popular mega begging sites by online beggars, and were and retrieved in November 2021.

Lexico- semantic Features of Cyber begging

These features are the various instances of lexical selection by the beggars to express diverse issues that necessitate them to beg and which ultimately conditioned the style deployed. Consequently, the data reveals two major lexico-semantic related features which are compounds, and lexical repetition. These are discussed below:

i. Compounds

A compound is unit of vocabulary which comprises more than one lexical stems. It usually results from the combination of two free forms or words that otherwise exist independently (Johnson, 2017). As revealed in the data, a look at the lexical choices made by beggars in cyber begging discourse shows that through the employment of compounds, cyber beggars make specific references to the ailments, disorders, or conditions that they are confronted with by naming them. However, the compounds found in cyber begging predominately relate to only medical and accommodation as discourse issues, which constrain online beggars to seek financial aids. These are examined below:

Excerpt 1

I am a single, 38 year old female... I am mentally ill. I have been in and out of Psychiatric Units all of my life. I have contemplated suicide 8 times in my life... I am very poor and in poverty. I am a Christian. I am severely obese. My last weigh in,

I was about 489 lbs. I suffer from *bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, schizo- effective disorder, sleep apnea, high blood pressure/hypertension, post traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorder, panic attacks, acid reflux, bronchial spasms, high glucose, chronic severe back and leg pain*. My disc is slipping in my back. I have suffered from *back spasms* for 14 years of my life to date. I have had a *mild heart attack*. I have had a *urethra drop* and *gallbladder surgery*. I take about 20 pills daily, just for stabilization... (Italics mine)

In this excerpt, the data reveal medical need as a pertinent issue that informs the plea of the online beggar for funds. The compound, *Psychiatric Unit* shows the unit of the hospital where the cure for the ailment could be sought. His affliction with other various diseases is perhaps responsible for his poor financial condition. These diseases are specifically named by different compounds in the excerpt. For the ease of presentation, they are listed and explained in the table following:

Table 1: Compounds Related to Medical Issues and their Meaning

Compounds	Patterns	Meaning
<i>bipolar disorder</i>	Noun + Noun	A mental illness marked by extreme shifts in mood ranging from a manic to a depressive state (healthline.com)
<i>borderline personality disorder (BOD)</i>	Noun + Noun + Noun	A serious mental illness that causes unstable moods, behaviour, and relationships (borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com)
schizoaffective disorder	Noun+ Adj + Noun	A serious mental illness that has features of two different conditions- schizophrenia and an affective (mood) disorder that may be diagnosed as either major depression or bipolar disorder. (webmd.com)

sleep apnea	Noun + Noun	A potentially serious sleep disorder in which breathing repeatedly stops and starts (mayochinic.org)
high blood pressure	Adj + Noun + Noun	It includes a typical elevation of either the peak blood pressure at each heartbeat systolic pressure, or the running pressure between heart beats diastole pressure, or both. (webmd.com)
anxiety disorder	Noun + Noun	A psychiatric disorder causing feelings of persistent anxiety, such as panic disorder.(Encarta Dictionaries)
panic attack	Adj + Noun	A sudden overpowering feeling of fear or anxiety that prevents somebody from functioning. (Encarta Dictionaries)
acid reflux	Noun + Noun	An upward ejection of acid from the stomach into the esophagus causing pain known as heart burn. (webmd.com)
mild heart attack	Adj + Noun + Noun	A sudden serious, painful, and sometimes fatal interruption of the normal functioning of the heart (Encarta Dictionaries)
gall bladder surgery	Noun + Noun + Noun	The operations or manipulations done on a small muscular underside liver where bile is secreted and concentrated for digestion process. (Encarta Dictionaries,)
post traumatic stress disorder	Adj + Adj + Noun + Noun	A mental illness that some people develop after experiencing traumatic events (Encarta Dictionaries,)
bronchial spasms	Adj + Noun	The spasmodic contraction of the muscular coat of the smaller divisions of the bronchi. (Thefreedictionary.com).
back spasms	Noun + Noun	The involuntary contraction or tensing of the muscles in the lower back. (healthline.com).
Bariatric Gastric Bypass Surgeon	Adj + Adj + Noun + Noun	a surgeon who carries out a type of weight loss surgery (webmd.com)

A critical look at the above compounds reveals that the online beggar is confronted with a lot of life-threatening diseases, the reason for which he seeks financial assistance to finance treatment. Consequently, the plethora of ailments as projected by the compounds of various forms is enough to attract the sympathy of prospective donors to make donations.

Excerpt 2

...I have a dream of owning house with a *fenced yard* large enough somewhere on the island where I can take care of the stray dog, cat, etc... If I could start a shelter then it would be non-profit with only a small fee to cover spaying and shots, in addition to being a *NO KILL SHELTER*... (Italics mine)

This excerpt bothers on accommodation needs. The online beggar's requests for financial assistance is to enable him start up a shelter where he can take care of animals, (pets) such as the stray dog, cat, etc. He employs the compound, *fenced yard* to refer to the area of land that immediately surrounds a house that is enclosed with a fence to describe his dream of a house where he can take care of animals. Also, his use of *NO KILL SHELTER* captures the peculiarity of the type of accommodation he requires to house the animals. *NO KILL SHELTER* is a compound which refers to a shelter for animals which does not kill animals that are healthy or treatable even when the shelter is full. The cyber beggar's concern for the welfare of pets as demonstrated in his plea for funds and projected in the compounds, *fenced yard* and *NO KILL SHELTER* has the strength of catching the interest of would-be donors, especially those who love animals (philotherians), thus making them respond quickly to his needs. The compounds have the following forms:

fenced yard – Adj + Noun; *NO KILL SHELTER* – Adj + Noun

ii. Lexical Repetition

Lexical repetition is one of the cohesive devices obtainable in the cohesive system of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The relationship that exists between an item of repetition and its antecedent is textual instead of structural (He, 2014). In cyber begging discourse, some cyber beggars repeat a number of lexical items for emphasis and for the projection of the seriousness and urgency

of their pleas for funds. Hence, in this study, lexical repetition refers to, and is marked by recurrence, replication or duplication of lexical items. The excerpts below serve as illustrations (Italics mine):

Excerpt 3

...I am in a very difficult life situation... Do not know what to do get injured because of this *disease* is activated (osteoporosis). I'm only 30 years old, and people get sick with the *disease* after 60 years. Here I am suffering. All The People refuse to *help*.. If we can *help*, Embassy does not *help*, *help* if you can..*disease* progresses every day it hurts me,.. No one wants to *help* me. please *help* than can... (Italics mine)

In this excerpt, the online beggar seeks financial help for osteoporosis, bone surgery hence, his deployment of the recurrence of the lexical items, 'disease' and 'help' with the view to laying emphasis on the essence of his plea and his request for help. The recurrence of 'disease' is exemplified in the following expressions: ...*get injured because of this disease*..., ... *people get sick with the disease*..., ...*disease* progresses every day... while that of 'help' is shown in the expressions, *If we can help, Embassy does not help, help if you can*..., *No one wants to help me, please help than can*... Through lexical repetition, the online beggar is able to register the importance of his request and impress it on prospective donors to have compassion for him on his plight and consequently accede to his request.

Excerpt 4

...I was collected 7000000 INR and all of my income from this company was invested there. Now the company was cheated with me and other agent. Now all the investors were come to me for their *money*. But i could not understand where from i *return* their money because the company was not *return* their money. So *please help* me to *return* their *money*... *please pls pls help* me... (Italics mine)

In this excerpt, the cyber beggar is grossly indebted to some investors who are all out to make him return the money he took from them. His request for financial help is therefore premised on the need to be able to pay up his debt. The lexical items, 'money', 'return', 'please' and 'help' are made prominent by their repetition in the begging text. This is illustrated in the following expressions: *Now all the investors were come to me for their money, But i could not understand where from i return their money because the company was not return their money, So please help me to return their money*..., and *please pls pls help* me.... This deployment of lexical repetition is sufficient to emphasize in the minds of prospective donors, the reason for the assistance being sought, and the passionate entreaty presented by the cyber beggar.

Grammatical Features of Cyber begging

The grammatical feature of cyber begging that is identified for discussions is the transitivity system as obtains in Systemic Functional Linguistics.

i. Transitivity Process

The system of transitivity relates to the ideational metafunctions, serving as the resource for understanding our experience, the instability of 'goings-on', as structural configurations; each consisting of a process, the participants that are engaged in the process, and the circumstances attendant on it (Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997). In this study, the data reveal two main categories of transitivity process: material and relational processes

a. Material Process

Material process is the prototypical action-type clause of the traditional grammar. It expresses the process of doing and the notion that "some entity does something which may be done to some other entity". While *Goal* is the participant that the action verb is directed at, both *Actor* and *Goal* refer to the participants in the process; while *process* means the *going-on* in the clause which are *verbs* in the traditional grammar orientations (Odekunle & Ogundele, 2012). As indicated in the data, this process type relates to the issues of accommodation needs, medical needs and indebtedness.

Excerpt 5

I am a senior citizen living in rented accommodation... The rent is due soon and *I do not have enough money for it. I will be evicted* and as *I have nowhere to go will become homeless*... Please help if you can. I thank you for taking your time to read this (Italics mine)

Excerpt 5 provides the sample of material process associated with accommodation. From it, the structure of the transitivity process is given below:

1.

I	do not have	enough money	for it
Actor	material process	Goal	Circumstances

2.

I	will be evicted
Actor	Material process

3.

And	As I have nowhere to go	will become	Homeless
	Circumstances	Material process	Goal

4.

Please	help	if you can	
	Material process	Circumstances	

5.

I	thank	You	for taking your time to read this
Actor	Material process	Goal	.Circumstances

The foregoing items, (1 -5), give the structural pattern of this excerpt. From item 1, the actor, ‘I’, represents the beggar that is in need of help as indicated in the process, ‘do not have’. What he does not have is represented by the ‘goal’ slot of the clause, and this is *enough money* indicating the assistance he needs from donors. In the ‘circumstances’ slot is a pronoun, an anaphoric reference, indicating rented accommodation which is the real issue for which he needs money to solve. In item 2, the process, ‘will be evicted’ indicates the consequence of not being able to offset the rent due for the accommodation. Its use here is deliberative and capable of drawing the sympathy of prospective donors to make them render assistance. The process, ‘will become’ and ‘goal’, ‘homeless’ in item 3 also constitute deliberative style, indicating harsh consequence of being evicted from the rented apartment. The reason for becoming homeless is found in the ‘circumstances’ slot of item 3 which is ‘as I have nowhere to go’ ‘Please’ in item 4 is a politeness marker while ‘help’ (a material process) is a marker of hortative style, urging donors to assist in solving his accommodation problem. Item 5 indicates appreciation by the actor, who is the online beggar as indicated by the pronoun ‘I’, the marker of appreciation is indicated in the process, which is ‘thank’ while ‘you’, ‘the goal’ represents ‘circumstances’, and this is the time spent by prospective donors to attend to his plea as marked by ‘for taking your time to read this’. This means the online beggar in this excerpt is conscious of the value of time prospective donors spent in the bid to assist him.

Excerpt 6

...I hurt my back in 1997, and had 32 years of constant pain. This has now been joined by arthritis, including in my feet!... The pain levels are up, despite daily stretching and exercise... (Italics mine)

This excerpt has the following transitivity structures:

1.

I	Hurt	my back	in 1979
Action	Material process	Goal	Circumstances

2.

and	had	32 years of constant pain	
	Material process	Goal	

3.

This	has now been joined	by	Arthritis
Goal	Material process		Actor

In this excerpt, the cyber beggar, as represented by the pronoun, ‘I’, is the ‘actor’ suffering from backache. This is indicated by ‘hurt’ which is the ‘process’ in the clause, and it represents the goings on while ‘my back’ which is the ‘goal’ indicates the part of the body being hurt. ‘in 1979’ the ‘circumstance’, provides information on the longevity of the constant pain under the ‘goal’, ‘32 years of constant pain’ in item 2. Obviously, this is capable of evolving the sympathy of prospective donors. Worsening the matter is item 3, ‘This has now been joined by arthritis’. Here, the ‘goal’, ‘this’ (an anaphoric reference) referring to the ‘32 years of constant pain’ takes the frontal position in the clause, typical of passive constructions. The ‘process’, ‘has now been joined’ indicates the addition of another ailment. The choice of this type of transitivity is to evoke in the donor, the need to come to the aid of the online beggar.

Excerpt 7

... since then, I have been notified that I owe the IRS over & 45,000. I have no idea how I’m going to come up with that money. I have no assets, no 401K, no savings. I don’t even have a life insurance policy that I can cash... (Italics mine)

Excerpt 7 has the following transitivity pattern:

1.

Since then I have been notified that	I	owe	the IRS	over \$45,000
	Actor	Material process	Goal	Circumstances

2.

I	have	no idea	how I'm going to come up with that money	
Actor	Material process	Goal	Circumstances	

3.

I	have	no asset, no 401K, no savings		
Actor	Material process	Goal		

4.

I	don't	even	have	a life insurance policy
Actor	Material process		Material process	Goal

5.

That	I	can cash		
	Actor	Material process		

In this excerpt, the pronoun 'I' depicts the 'actor' who is the online beggar. The 'process', 'owe' indicates indebtedness while 'the IRS', the 'goal', represents the entity he is indebted to. The 'circumstances', 'over \$45,000' provides information on the tune of indebtedness which is the issue for which the 'actor' seeks help. Item 2 of the analysis reveals the alarming depth of the online beggar's level of indebtedness as he has no idea of how to raise money to offset the payment of the debt. This is further reinforced by a part of item 3 'have no asset, no 401k, no savings'; and 'I don't even have a life insurance policy' (item 4) 'that I can cash' (item 5).

b. Relational Process

Relational process is the process of *being*, and is realized typically by the verb *be*, and include such verbs as *is*, *are*, *was* and *were*. They are also realized by copular verbs such as *seem*, *become*, *appear*, and so on (Bloor and Bloor, 1995; Halliday, 1985). Revealed in the data are relational processes connected with medical needs, accommodation needs and indebtedness.

Excerpt 8

Hello my name is Britney. I am here to raise money for my grandmother who is in need of Urgent back surgery which will cost thousands. ... Roughly 18,000 dollars is what it would cost for this type of procedure as well as recovery... (Italics mine)

This excerpt is analyzed below:

1.

Hello	my name	is	Britney
	Identifier	Relational process	Identified

2.

I	am	here to raise money for my mother who is in need of Urgent back surgery which will cost thousands	
Carrier	Relational process	Attribute	

3.

Roughly 18,000 dollars	is	what it would cost for this type of procedure as well as recovery	
Identifier	Relational process	Identified	

Item 1 of the analysis is employed by the cyber beggar to introduce himself. In item 2, however, we have this sequence: the 'carrier', 'I', 'process', 'am', and 'attribute', 'here to raise money for my mother who is in need of Urgent back surgery which will cost thousands,' where we have the description of the ailment for which medical help is being sought, and this is 'back surgery'. In item 3 of the excerpt, the 'identifier,' 'Roughly 18,000 dollars' provides information on the cost of the treatment of the disease as found in the 'identified' slot in the table, 'what it would cost for this type of procedure as well as recovery'

Excerpt 9

.... *There is a quite a few available housing units that would be large enough anywhere in the area.* If I could start up a shelter then it would be non-profit with only a small fee to cover spaying and shots, in addition to being a NO KILL SHELTER... (Italics mine)

The excerpt above has the following structure:

There	is	quite a few available housing units that would be large enough anywhere in the area.
Identifier	Relational process	Identifier

This excerpt is connected with accommodation issues meant to save animals in a NO KILL SHELTER. Consequently, the online beggar is providing information on the availability of housing units large enough to house the animals.

Excerpt 10

...I am posting this ad in regards to my current situation. *Well basically I am in a financial crisis... My family is in the same situation as me...* (Italics mine)

This excerpt is analysed as follows:

1

Well basically	I	Am	in a financial crisis
	Carrier	Reprocess	Attribute

2

My family	Is	in the same situation as me
Carrier	Relation process	Attribute

In this excerpt, ‘I’ is the ‘carrier’, referring to the beggar; ‘am’ is the ‘process’ that expresses the goings on in the clause while the ‘attribute’ is ‘*in a financial crisis*’ that announces the financial status of the online beggar. Consequently, the online beggar deploys the relational process to provide information on the level of his indebtedness so that prospective donors can be persuaded to help. It is more pathetic that his family is also in the same condition as found in the ‘attribute’ slot of the analysis, ‘*in the same situation as me*’. This is capable of drawing the sympathy of donors and it is the purpose for which deliberative style is employed.

Conclusion

As observed in the study, the features of lexico-semantics in the discourse are classified into compounds and lexical repetition. The paradigmatic relation of the lexical-semantic pattern of the discourse reveals the choice of compounds which predominantly relates to the discourse issue of medical needs as instantiated by collocations projecting various ailments bedeviling the online beggars. Lexical repetition is employed in the discourse to create emphasis and project the seriousness of online beggars’ pleas for funds. On the whole, the lexical-semantic patterns of the discourse reveal that online beggars deliberately choose words to achieve persuasion and meaning. However, the data in this study reveal transitivity processes as the main grammatical features of the discourse; these processes are material and relational processes, which offer logical explanation for most of the clauses in the begging texts. They are utilized by online beggars in their construction of identities and deployment of styles, in online begging discourse, to offer essential information on the challenges they have about issues concerning accommodation, health and education as well as indebtedness, which have prompted their pleas for funds. The grammatical features of online begging discourse thus connect with the semantic features to negotiate and explicate meaning as neither the two sets of features can independently achieve a thorough meaning construction.

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