LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF DIGITAL RESIDENTS (DRS): A NATURALIZATION FORMULA FOR DIGITAL VISITORS (DVS)

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Abstract
The empirically survey design study was aimed at ascertaining how four hundred (400) Digital Visitors (DVs) in four (4) higher institutions in Nigeria now speak the language of the Digital Residents (DRs). A major finding was that it was not necessarily the educational training they had but such other measures as; ownership of personal computer (PC) and other information and communications technology (ICT) tools, personal development or periodic training, hands-on experience approach, passion for ICT tools/devices demonstration approach by experts and regular access to ICT tools/devices. The recommendations made were tied direct and drawn from these measures. The training of educators should not be a more advocacy of ICT integration but should emphasize application if the educators must be abreast of simple operational lint of ICT tools.

Keywords: Netizen, technological enculturation, acclimatization, language shift.

Background to study
Tell me and I will Forget
Show me and I will Remember
Involve me and I will Understand
Confucius 430BC
Language, whether seen as communication with words, speech of group, system of communication, non-verbal communication between animals or human; specialist vocabulary or style of verbal expression, is a cultural trait that could be used to define the nativity of a person or group of persons. That a person speaks English or French suggests that the fellow may come from a nativity where any of the aforementioned language may be the lingua franca. The assumption is conscious of the very fact that language

acquisition is also possible in which case a person develops in a language outside his/her mother tongue or native language. This implies that the language is one's mother tongue or it is acquired, the fact remains that language can easily suggest the race of an individual.

Digital Residents (DRs) speak the digital language, not necessarily the computer. They speak the language of the digital era or generation. These DRs, because they are born on the other side of the divide, that is the ICT word, they speak the digital language. These natives have internet citizenship and so are branded netizens (Jones &Shao, 2011). These residents exist in an era where the language in vogue is ICT, nothing more or less. As used in this context, DRsare the early immigrant educators or faculties that are very efficient in the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning. These are the power users, citizens or ICT savvy citizens. In the words of Williams (2014), they are the technophiles who enjoy working with tools/devices and with great passion. "In a study by ktoridou, Zarpetea and Yiangoa (2002) on teachers' attitude toward technology in the classroom, a major finding was that young teachers expressed willingness to integrate technology in their lesson than the mere veteran or experienced teachers. These crop of educators and faculty are ICT savvy, so they speak the ICT language with ease and fluency to a great extent. In other words, ability to express oneself in a language influences one's operations using such medium. Hence ICT teachers can only incorporate ICT in teaching and learning where fluency in ICT language is guaranteed.

Basic languages of the DRs include; turn on/turn off, virtual classroom, windows, programmes, shut down (force or cancel), software (system or application), bits, bytes, mega or giga, restart, minimize, maximize, resort, fold, italicize, underline, highlight, environment torch, click,icon, cursor, input, monitor, output, tools, device, save, save as and document. In short DRs speak the language of word process, excel, power point, corel draw and the language of interactivity, calibration, and softcopies. They surf the web, speak the language of browsing, social media, email, and gmail, online cooperation and collaboration, conferencing just as they Skype and ooVoo synchronizing and assynchronizing. The DRs speak of navigating the upper and embark on online field trip. Generally speaking, the DRs in the new world speak such cyber-jargons as WWW (W_3), internal access provide (IAP), protocol, download, upload (Dzvimbo, 2001 & Williams, 2003). The scope of this language is as broad as it is the case in any either human indigenous or foreign languages.

On the contrary, the DVs are the digital immigrants (Prensky 2001). They are characterized by their inability to speak the language of the new age – the ICT world they find themselves. Most educators and faculty members belong to this crop of visitors who generally are not good or very

good in handling ICT tools and devices. These foreigners or aliens own their own native language quite distinct from the new learning environment where they must function if their continual existence must be guaranteed. Hence if they must co-exist or naturalize in this new world, they have to learn the language of the natives, that is, they need technological enculturation.

Educators and faculties who are not ICT savvy belong to this group of foreigners and aliens. As already shared, language acquisition here remains a sure naturalization formula for these visitors in the land of the digital residents. Thus, the common language of these visitors include; chalk, dust, marker, chalkboard, hardcopies, traditional classroom, face-to-face interaction, paper and pencil test, knowledge impartation, fixed learning schedule, and authoritative source of knowledge.

The distinctions that exist between homes of the visitors from that of the natives can be summarized as shown in the table below.

Home of Visitors	Home of Residents
*Educators as "sage on stage"	Educators as "guide by the side"
*Traditional classroom	Virtual or flipped classroom
*Offline learning dominant	Online learning dominant
*Unimodal institution	Bimodal institutions
*Hardcopies prevalent	Softcopies prevalent
*Teacher – centred	Learner-centred
*Teacher-driven	Technology driven
*Knowledge and skills impartation	Knowledge and skills acquisition
*Teaching	Facilitation
*Fixed schedule	Flexible schedule
*Face-to-face learning	Distance learning
*Conventional Field trip	Virtual field trip

Language shift which has to do with the replacement of visitors' language with that of the result and which will encourage the naturalization process is enhanced by several measures. Knowledge of different technologies by the visitors is an essential factor. The need for visitors to be provided with and what can be done with them, especially very general overview of different technologies with natives or earlier settlers in their discipline is in the right direction (Beggs, 2000). It is obvious that such exposure might convince such visitors of the need to pursue more specific training in such technologies that appeal to them.

The adoption of regular roundtable discussions at departmental level by faculty comprising visitors, residents and early settlers could assist in this direction. Such arrangement inevitably will enable the veterans ICT language speakers help the prospective or visitors in no small measure (Clayton, 2005).

Efforts at making visitors who are novices in the ICT language to be encouraged and nurtured to be fluent in the language of the new country is a

3 – phased arrangement (Efaw, 2005). The 3 – phase approval includes: visitors becoming more favourable towards available technologies; practicing with such and receiving feedback on these technologies and continuing to develop expertise through workshops, discussions and mentorships. The same author contends that this approach accommodates experiences, modeling and feedback by experienced and fluent speakers in such naturalization process.

Closely related to the same academic lens above is what Villano (2006) described as taking a baby step by inexperienced ICT users in their bid to gain mastering of the ICT language. This "baby step" approach, the author remarks is aimed at reducing frustration in a visitor's learning course in the time needed to master a new ICT tool/device for instance. The reason is that such approach encourages familiarity with the technology that is referred.

Also, to avoid visitors to be "dragged, kicking and screaming" into using ICT language offered by ICT, very little acknowledgement or tenure/promotion credit given for incorporating ICT into teaching should be encouraged (Thomas, Maria & Barbara, 2011). These measures, the authors contend will serve to boost the morale of such visitors in learning the new language.

The seven keys by White and Anderson(2011) on how to learn the language of the new world include: providing visitors with portable storage devices; providing visitors with real person (a native) behind desktop training, allowing visitors access to ICT being presented and presenting schedule of activities and session goals where they are involved in training. Other keys include; doing limit training time, encouraging visitors to have time to play and move ahead practicing.

In a recent work by Williams (2014), acclimatizing to digital native homes by digital immigrants, the author identified measures such as these: acceptance to simple innovation of change; training with ICT; ownership of PCs, practicing with ICT and teaching and learning using ICT, including the realization that they now exist in a new learning environment – a foreign land. These measures have semblance to the findings of the earlier authors mentioned in this review. Hence the study sets to uncover how the natives today transited from their foreign land to their present day natives' status, speaking the language of the latter.

Statement of the Problem

We are in the mid of the second decade of the 21ˢᵗ century, the digital century, yet many educators even in the higher education, are still glued to the old fashioned pedagogical approaches as a result of not being able to cope with the language of the moment - the ICT language. These educators

still speak the language of their nativity and thus find it extremely difficult to function in the new country digital residents'home'. This obviously should not be the case hence the study investigated how the early settlers in this new 'home' were able to achieve technological enculturation in the new country they found themselves to be able to speak the language of the 'natives'.
Research Questions
RQ1: What is the cognate experience of both DRS&DVS lecturers in Rivers State higher institutions?
RQ2: What measure boosted your ICT language knowledge?

Methodology

The study was an empirical type using the descriptive survey design .Population of the study was for all the lecturers in the four higher institutions in Rivers State. Sample was 400 lecturers and simple random sampling technique was used for the study. Population of the study was for all the lecturers in the four higher institutions in Rivers state. Sample was 400 lecturers and simple random sampling technique was used for the study. The research instrument was the questionnaire which provided the sample to indicate which of the items therein provided them their present status, ICT language wise .On the whole, the simple percentage was used to analyze the data.

Results and discussion
RQ1: What is the cognate experience of both DRS&DVS lecturers in Rivers State higher institutions?

Table 1.Demographic data on cognate experience

Institution	<10 years	10--20 years	> 20 years	TOTAL
Institution A	72	28	20	120
Institution B	45	30	25	100
Institution C	39	31	20	90
Institution D	37	32	21	90
TOTAL	173	121	86	400

In the table I above, it is explicit that out of the 120 lecturers drawn from institution A, that 72 of them have less than 10 years cognate experience, 28, 10 – 20 years and 20 have 20 years and above cognate experience. For institution B, it was 45, 30, 25 had less than 10 years, 10 – 20 years and 20 years above respectively. Institution C, the cognate experience of the sample were 39, 31 and 20 had less than 10 years, 10 –20 years and 20 years, and above respectively. Finally, for institution D, the categorization of the sample vis-à-vis their cognitive experience 37, 32, 21 had less than10 years , 10 – 20 years of 20 years and above respectively.

RQ2: What measure boosted your ICT language knowledge?

Table 2: Digital visitors' naturalization measures.

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSE	Frequency	%
1	You are ICT compliant	No	100	25
		Yes	300	75
2	Educational Training helped you learn ICT language	No	350	87.5
		Yes	50	12.5
3.	Personal development and training helped you learn ICT language	No	-	-
		Yes	400	100
4.	Ownership of PC was very relevant	No	-	-
		Yes	400	100
5.	Ownership of e-mobile gadgets was very useful	No	-	-
		Yes	400	100
6.	Hands-on-experience makes the language easier to learn	No	-	-
		Yes	400	100
7.	My passion for ICT also aided my knowledge	No	20	5
		Yes	380	95
8.	Direct involvement in ICT helped me a lot	No	-	-
		Yes	400	100
9	Daily access to ICT tools is essential	No	-	-
		Yes	400	100

The table 2, shows that the 300 lecturers indicted that they are ICT compliant, in other words, they speak the language of the digital natives. However, the table shows that 50 of them (12.5) with the ability to speak the language only agreed that their educational training was responsible, while 350 of them (87.5) claimed that their knowledge of the digital natives language cannot be attributed to their educational training. However, all the 400 (100%) of the same size agreed that their personal development and training, ownership of mobile gadgets, hands – on – experience, demonstration approach during training and daily access to ICT were sure measures that aided their language acquisition in the new world.

All the same, 20(5%) had a different view of the potency of passion as against the 380(95%) that have passion for ICT made the acquisition of the language on easy task.

Discussion of Findings

A major finding of the study was that majority of today's digital residents who could speak the language with ease were never provided such opportunity by virtue of the educational training they had. This result goes a long way to corroborate the position by Eppera and, Bates (2001) and Chism (2008) that the educational exposure of most of our educators or faculty had never equipped them the ICT challenge of the moment.

Also, personal development by being directly involved is implicated by this study. That means citizens in this hand should be directly

involved in personal development in the form of training, regular course work and workshops. This finding is in line with Kforidou, Zarpetea and Yiangoa (2002) and Clayton (2005).

The need for everyone in the digital age to own a PC and other e-mobile gadgets   was another major finding of the study. The relevance of availability of ICT devices or was a cardinal factor. s, before utilization was a cardinal factor. The same emphasis was placed   on availability by Coley, Craoller and Engel (1997), Bauer (2002) and Williams (2014).

Another striking finding of the study was that learning the language of digital residents was not enhanced by watching natives speak it, as it is not acquired by mere listening. Active engagement, personal involvement, playing with the tools and devices while also observing veterans is what this study tries to uncover. The place of this concrete, practical and demonstration approach to learning the language is in line with the views of Cuban (2001), Lonergan (2001), Braak (2001) and Williams (2014).

Conclusion

Language shift is a key in the functionality of digital visitors in the land of the digital residents. This naturalization process, the paper emphasized can be achieved by constant and daily practice by such visitors using ICT tools and applications as to be conversant with the language that the new world demands.

Recommendations

These recommendations were drawn from the major findings of the study.

1. The training of educators should not be a more advocacy of ICT integration but should emphasize, application if the educators must be abreast of simple operational lint of ICT tools.
2. Educators should realize that lifelong education is key, so personal development in ICT tools and devices should be a regular practice.
3. Every educator must as a matter of fact own a PC ,which he/she can always use to carry out official responsibilities.
4. Every educator must also as a matter of fact own an e-mobile gadget. A hand held or ipad, ipod device would also serve same or similar purpose, which will give room for daily practice.
5. The language of the 'new country' is ICT language, so passion for such language is also cardinal in such language acquisition, so educators should cherish the functional devices/tools in this new world.
6. Demonstration of how ICT devices and tools work and operate by experts as a resource in the language is key in this respect. Because

demonstration accommodates modeling and coaching, it has to be embraced and encouraged at the least available opportunity. It is true we learn easier and faster watching experts and models, practicing with tools and devices.

7. Lastly, using ICT tools and gadgets on daily and regular basis is necessary; for the more one uses them the more one becomes familiar with their basic operations and principles.

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