INTERNET RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH IN NIGERIAN LANGUAGES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the internet resources for research in Nigerian languages. The resources covered include concept of research, purposes of research, concept of Nigerian languages, language research, internet resource browser for research in Nigerian languages, internet resource search engines for research in Nigerian languages, internet issues that affect language research in Nigerian tertiary institutions and advantage of internet in language research in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Keywords: internet, tertiary institutions, research and Nigerian Languages,

Introduction

Globalization and technology is dynamic in nature and change with aspiration of time. Change processes which have been in tandem over past two decade have created a new global economy "power by technology, fueled by information and driven by knowledge." The illiterate of the 21st century" according to futurist Alvin Toffler, "will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." Global changes also put pressure on all groups to constantly acquire and apply new skills our world is changing around us in such a frantic pace that if we do not continue to grow and develop; we will soon be left behind in the 21st century, we all need to engage in research.

Resources are acts of helpful activity or aid rendered to accomplish a goal or achieve objective(s). Resources in the opinion of Chandram (2000) is any material one uses in the process of creating new goods such as buildings, equipment and services provided. Google eBook (2014) describe resources to include intangible products such as accounting, cleaning, consultancy, education, insurance, expertise, medical treatments among others.

Nigerian is a multi-lingual nation meaning, that there are more than four hundred and fifty (450) indigenous languages. Uche (1985) stated that most of these languages are classified as minor languages because of the small particular people that speak the language. The three languages which are classified as major are: Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo.

Language Research: Research is the driving and sustaining force and, indeed, the reason for the progress and advancement in knowledge witnessed today in all ramification of human life. For this reason, the survival, development and sustenance of indigenous languages depend so much on intensive language research to achieve that one need to known or have a skill on internet resources for research in Nigerian languages. UNESCO in 2013 warned that the number of these indigenous languages is dwindling by the day, overwhelmed by the influence of foreign languages such as English and French. Therefore, NINLAN needs to engage in depth utilization of internet resources for research in Nigerian languages development and publication of metalanguage for various concepts and domain in different Nigeria's indigenous languages.

Concept of Research

Research is a compound word Re and Search match together. Research is the creation of new ideas, knowledge or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate a new idea or new concepts. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes. According to the American sociologist Earl Robert Babbie, "Research is a systematic inquiry to describe, explain, predict, and control the observed phenomenon. Research involves inductive and deductive methods."

Research is a systematic inquiry to describe, explain, predict and control the observed phenomenon. Research involves inductive and deductive methods (Babbie, 1998). Inductive methods analyze the observed phenomenon and identify the general principles, structures, or processes underlying the phenomenon observed; deductive methods verify the hypothesized principles through observations. The purposes are different: one is to develop explanations, and the other is to test the validity of the explanations.

One thing that we have to pay attention to research is that the heart of the research is not on statistics, but the thinking behind the research. How we really want to find out, how we build arguments about ideas and concepts, and what evidence that we can support to persuade people to accept our arguments.

Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) proposed four types of knowledge that research contributed to education as follows:

Description: Results of research can describe natural or social phenomenon, such as its form, structure, activity, change over time, relationship to other phenomena. The descriptive function of research relies on instrumentation for measurement and observations. The descriptive research results in our understanding of what happened. It sometimes produces statistical information about aspects of education.

Prediction: Prediction research is intended to predict a phenomenon that will occur at time Y from information at an earlier time X. In educational research, researchers have been engaged in:

    a. Acquiring knowledge about factors that predict students' success in school and in the world of work.

    b. Identifying students who are likely to be unsuccessful so that prevention programs can be instituted.

Improvement: This type of research is mainly concerned with the effectiveness of intervention. The research approach includes experimental design and evaluation research.

Explanation: This type of research subsumes the other three: if the researchers are able to explain an educational phenomenon, it means that they can describe, can predict its consequences, and know how to intervene to change those consequences.

Purposes of Research

Patton (1990) pointed out the importance of identifying the purpose in a research process. He classified four types of research based on different purposes:

    1. **Basic Research:** The purpose of this research is to understand and explain, i.e. the research is interested in formulating and testing theoretical construct and propositions that ideally generalize across time and space. This type of research takes the form of a theory that explains the phenomenon under investigation to give its contribution to knowledge. This research is more descriptive in nature exploring what, why and how questions.

2. **Applied Research:** The purpose of this research is to help people understand the nature of human problems so that human beings can more effectively control their environment. In other words, this type of research pursues potential solutions to human and societal problems. This research is more prescriptive in nature, focusing on how questions.

3. **Evaluation Research:** (Summative and Formative): Evaluation research studies the processes and outcomes aimed at attempted solution. The purpose of formative research is to improve human intervention within specific conditions, such as activities, time, and groups of people; the purpose of summative evaluation is to judge the effectiveness of a program, policy, or product.

4. **Action Research:** Action research aims at solving specific problems within a program, organization, or community. Patton (1990) described that design and data collections in action research tend to be more informal, and the people in the situation are directly involved in gathering information and studying themselves.

Concept of Nigerian Languages

Language is a system of human communication used by community or nation. Language is an important aspect of a community and an important index of identification. It serves as a repository of a people's culture, exploits and history etc.

Nigeria has three major indigenous languages such are: Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo.

Nigerian Languages can be classified into two categories, using different criteria as; endoglossic and exoglossic languages. The endoglossic languages are those languages that are considered to be indigenous to Nigeria, and they are about five hundred of the languages listed in Grimes Ethnolgue, while Crozier and Blench on their own listed over four hundred (Urua 2004). The exoglossic ones are those introduced into Nigeria over the years by reason of political, colonization, diplomacy, religious and commerce. They are Arabic, French and English. There is also Nigerian Pidgin.

Language Research

Research is the sustaining force and, indeed the reason for the progress and advancement in acquiring knowledge witnessed today in all areas of human endeavour. For this reason, the development, survival and sustenance of indigenous languages depend so much on intensive language research. It is evident that a good majority of Nigeria's indigenous languages have not developed adequately in the areas of syntax, general grammar and phonology. Development of

these aspects of a language is the only sure way to maintain their existence, enhance their use and ensure their sustenance. The question of language marginalization, degeneration, extinction or death is a reality facing most Nigerian native language. UNESCO in 2018 warned that the number of these indigenous languages is dwindling by the day, overwhelmed by the influence of foreign languages, especially French and English. Therefore, NINLAN needs to engage in in-depth research, development, publication and witting of text book of metalanguage for various concepts and domain in different Nigeria indigenous languages.

Internet Resource Browsers for Research in Nigerian Languages

Web browser is actually a software application that runs on Internet connected computer. It allows the user to view Web pages, as well as use other content and technologies such as video, graphics files, and research information for a Nigeria language writer. Some browsers will translate only text while others support graphics and animation since Web browsers are not all created equal, and Web pages also will not be displayed the same in different browsers. According to Webopedia (2014) major browsers include:

OperaWeb Browser: Opera is an international Web browser, developed in Norway. It is available for Windows 3.x and Windows 9x/NT/2000/XP/2003 in four different languages. Its recent versions include features such as widgets, support for BitTorrents, wide variety of image, audio, and video formats, as well as enhanced HTML features, JavaScript, server push capabilities, Opera email, voice technology, and client side image mapping. Opera is another popular browser that is easy to use; However, it can have some compatibility issues with various websites. OperaWeb Browser is easier for browsing information in Nigerian languages.

Mac Safari: Safari is a Web browser available for the Macintosh (Apple) and Windows operating systems as well as the iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad. Specifically, for Mac users, Safari is an excellent choice for a Web browser, with fast load and good compatibility with most websites out there especially in Nigerian languages.

Netscape Web Browser: The first commercial Web browser was Netscape. The latest version is available for Windows XP, Windows 2000, Windows 98 SE and Windows ME. Netscape Browser 8x is the next-generation release of Netscape's venerable and once extremely popular Web browser. Version 8.0 is based on code from company spin-off Mozilla, borrowing much of the functionality and format from the increasingly popular Firefox browser. This also a web

browser that enable flexibility of information sharing in Nigerian, which makes it easier and faster

AOL Explorer: AOL uses Microsoft's Trident engine, the same engine that powers Internet Explorer. The latest 1.5 version offers enhanced security, built-in pop-up control, tabbed browsing in Nigerian languages and a feeds screensaver. It uses themes to customize the look, feel of the browser, and also creates desktop widgets from panels.

Green Browser: Green Browser is an open source Web browser that uses Microsoft's Trident engine. It offers some unique features in Nigerian languages research such as the option to search direct by dragging text in the browser.

Lunascape: Lunascape is a 'triple-engine' Web browser that uses Microsoft's Trident. This is appropriate in forming triple browser when searching or researching in Nigerian languages. The Mozilla Foundation's Gecko is developed by the Mozilla Foundation, and WebKit (also used for Google Chrome). Lunascape specific features include anti-crash technology, triple engines that can represent every web site on the planet quickly and precisely, plus design skills customizable to the user's content.

Internet Resource Search Engines for Research in Nigerian Languages

An Internet search engine is an information retrieval system designed to help find information stored on a computer system (Voorhees, 2010). A search engine is a web-based tool that enables users to locate information on the World Wide Web (Designhammer, 2009). Search engines are programs that explore documents for specified keywords and return a list of the documents where the keywords were found. The followings below are internet resources search engines for research in Nigeria Language.

Google: Google is the undisputed king of 'spartan searching'. While it does not offer all the shopping center features of Yahoo!, Google is fast, relevant, and the largest single catalogue of Web pages available to date.

Yahoo!: Yahoo! is several things: it is a search engine, a news aggregator, a shopping center, an email box, a travel directory, a horoscope and games center, and more.

Bing (formerly MSN): Bing is Microsoft's attempt at unseating Google. Bing, formerly MSN search was updated in 2009.

Duck Go: At first, DuckDuckGo.com looks like Google. But there are many subtleties that make this spartan search engine different.

Yippy (formerly 'Clusty'): Yippy is a Deep Web engine that searches other search engines for users' information. Unlike the regular Web, which is indexed by robot spider programs, Deep Web pages are usually harder to locate by conventional search.

Webopedia: Webopedia is one of the most useful websites on the World Wide Web.

Dogpile: Years ago, Dogpile was the fast and efficient choice before Google. Dogpile faded into obscurity, and Google became king.

The Internet Archive: The Internet Archive is a favourite destination for longtime Web lovers.

Mahalo: Mahalo is the one 'human-powered' search site, employing a committee of editors to manually sift and vet thousands of pieces of content.

Internet issues that affect Language research in Nigeria tertiary institution

There are some main problems facing internet. Therefore, before accepting internet globally there is a need to address such problems. The followings are some problems militating against internet for language research.

Security: Security is a very important issue that needs to be addressed before generally adopting internet for language research globally.

Privacy: As a result of the popularity of internet and its usage in information and communication, it therefore becomes more problematic in the area of privacy for technology management; especially by developing nations of the world.

Cost: The internet use devices for interconnection of networks for the purpose of sharing information or data on the Internet. For the internet adoption to grow, the cost of equipment needed to procure such things as sensors, wifi and control mechanism need to be relatively accessible in the future.

Data management: This is an important area of internet. When considering a global interconnectivity and exchange of all kinds of data, information or the generated information, the process involved in the handling of these data becomes a critical issue.

Energy: Energy is very vital in the internet. Due to energy constraints in some countries, it has become increasingly difficult to access energy for the proper use of Internet.

Advantage of Internet resources of languages in Nigerian tertiary institutions

The followings are some advantages of internet resources of languages in Nigerian tertiary institutions:

Flexibility: The internet allows for researchers in languages to search whenever they want and wherever they want. This allows for flexibility of information and research in Nigerian languages.

Response: The internet offers the possibility of instant feedback to learners. This greatly enhances the research in languages. This makes it possible for Nigerian languages learners to identify problem areas in learning such languages.

Durability: The internet for research in languages is 24/7. It never tires. This makes the learning of Nigerian languages shorter.

Modality: The internet is a multimodal learning tool. It stimulates in a rich sensory and cognitive and thus fertilizes language acquisition successfully.

Specificity: The internet allows the language researcher choose in both what and with who will be learned. The internets therefore specify the right choice of words and the pronunciation in learning such languages.

CONCLUSION

Internet is a media to help researchers in Nigeria languages to get much materials, enrich lecturer's pedagogy when selecting the material and methods in Nigeria languages learning. Around the world and indeed Nigeria, there is growing inclination towards a complete overhaul of manual system for computing, though there are certain aspects of life that are yet to be explored. This system centres on using Internet resources for research in Nigerian languages. There are many Internet resources available to the linguistics for utilization for many research activities. However, the adoption of the identified strategies would greatly improve research writing and ease of research supervision in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

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