

Utilization of Modern Trends in Linguistic Research among linguistics Lecturers in Tertiary Institutions in Niger Delta, Nigeria

Omonigho Josephine Akporokah

Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe- Oghara
School of General Studies, Department of Arts
&

Prof. Jane Ifechelobi

Department of English Language and Literature
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Abstract

This quantitative study investigates the correlates with the uptake of modern trends in linguistic research among linguistics lecturers in tertiary institutions in Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This study is a descriptive survey of correlational type. A validated self-constructed questionnaire with high reliability (Cronbach's alpha of 0.93) was administered to 200 lecturers from 18 universities across nine states in the Niger Delta (Cross River, Edo, Delta, Abia, Imo, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa-Ibom and Ondo States) using a multi-stage sampling technique. Majority of the respondents 57.9% were females while 42.1% were male. The study found that the overall uptake of modern linguistic research trends was poor, with only 38.2% of respondents demonstrating a significant level of uptake. Also, it was found that age ($r=0.53$), Work Experience (0.34), and Self-Efficacy ($r=0.64$) had significant influence on uptake of modern linguistic research trends ($P<0.05$). However, religion had significant influence on uptake of modern linguistic research trends ($r=0.032$, $P<0.05$). It was then concluded that the lecturers in Niger Delta regions of Nigeria had poor uptake of modern linguistic research trends with the level of uptake influenced by age, work experience and self-efficacy. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that the government in collaboration with ministry of education, labour, Academic staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and Linguistic Association of Nigeria should design and implement targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance the integration of contemporary research methodologies in linguistic studies within the Niger Delta region.

Keywords: Linguistic research, Niger Delta, Lecturers, Modern trends, Utilization

Background

Linguistics, being a complex academic discipline, has seen significant transformation in recent years due to the emergence of novel lines of investigation and advancements in research methodologies. This transition has underscored the importance of understanding the determinants that motivate linguistics lecturers, particularly those in Nigeria's Niger Delta region, to incorporate these innovative approaches into their teaching practices. According to Trask (2022:2), "*Linguistics is the academic discipline that encompasses the examination of language, encompassing its historical development, grammatical structures, and pragmatic usage.*" It is imperative for language educators and researchers to be abreast of the most recent advancements in the field in order to ensure its ongoing pertinence and high quality (Law, 2020).

Linguistics encompasses various branches of language study, including phonetics, syntax, semantics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and other related areas. The study serves as the basis for understanding interpersonal communication and deciphering the content of spoken exchanges (Jucker, 2017). Taavitsainen, I., & Jucker (2020:14) also added that "scholars in the discipline of linguistics investigate the mechanisms behind language, encompassing its structural organization, historical evolution, communicative functions, and its role in shaping social and cultural identities." Studies conducted by the scholars such as Osoba (2014), Ponelis and Holmner (2015), Okudo (2016), Kibiya (2018), and Haitao and Yanni (2020) contribute to the advancement of our understanding of the acquisition of language, the emergence of linguistic difficulties, the evolution of languages over time, and the methodologies employed to accommodate linguistic variations.

Recent advancements in linguistic research methods and technologies have reshaped the field. Authors like Friederici (2017) have utilized neuroimaging tools like fMRI to explore the neural underpinnings

of language processing, while Goldberg (2020) has harnessed Natural Language Processing (NLP) for applications such as sentiment analysis and machine translation. Corpus linguistics with big data analysis, demonstrated by Biber (2021), offers insights into linguistic patterns, while eye-tracking (Rayner, 2009), acoustic analysis, speech recognition (Boersma, 2001), and mobile apps and crowdsourcing (Podesva et al., 2015) have expanded research horizons. Virtual Reality (VR) (Keshavarz et al., 2019) and advanced statistical analysis (Gries, 2015) further transform linguistic research, offering interdisciplinary opportunities and enhancing our comprehension of language in various dimensions. Unfortunately, most of these modern methods in linguistic research are not maximized by lecturers in the developing countries including Nigeria. Therefore, Hopmah and Myxinh (2021) argued that it is imperative for linguistics lecturers to be informed about current advancements in order to furnish their pupils with current knowledge and contribute significantly to the field through their own scholarly investigations. So as to embrace modern ways of research. In fact, below is exactly how Haitao and Yanni, (2020:94) puts it

The scientific research paradigm is essential for discovering the laws of a language. Philosophy of science, a sub-field of philosophy, specially defines what science, theory and the scientific research paradigm are. Today's scientists hold that scientific research must be conducted using scientific methods. While the concept that "linguistics is a branch of science" is accepted by most linguists, linguistics has yet to be widely recognized by the science community. A reason behind that is linguistics' failure to fully recognize and comply with the modern scientific research paradigm. It makes no sense for linguistics to go against scientific methods while being recognized as a branch of science. This does not mean that the traditional data-free practice is improper. Anyone who is serious about his or her research is respectable. More importantly, data may help us make discoveries. A good example in daily life is photography. Photos of the same scene taken using different lenses (tele-photo, standard, wide-angle, fisheye) give you different feelings. When you look at the same thing, what you see through a microscope is very different than through a telescope—to those without such experience, the inspirations gotten from it are beyond imagination. So, can our perceptions of language research change as we now have access to more data? Why not introduce microscopes and telescopes, which are easily available now, into language studies?

The propensity to adopt innovative methodologies in the field of linguistics may vary notably across different age groups. Younger researchers may exhibit a greater propensity for embracing innovative methodologies and technologies due to their exposure to the internet and contemporary research procedures from an early age. In contrast, more senior members of the academic community may exhibit a certain degree of reluctance towards embracing change, since they tend to adhere to established methods of instruction and research. According to Haitao and Yanni (2020:11), "*Younger researchers are more at par with modern technology in research compare to the older ones.*" This is explainable by the fact that all older researcher are digital migrants while most of the younger ones are digital natives.

The incorporation of novel approaches in the field of linguistics research may also be shaped by the practical experiences gained in professional settings. Experienced instructors may exhibit a tendency to adhere to established practices and preferred sources in their instructional approaches (Nilson, 2016). Nevertheless, it is plausible that they possess a considerable amount of expertise and perspective that can contribute to and propel the current level of knowledge in scholarly investigations.

The degree to which researchers are receptive to novel methodologies and alternative viewpoints may be significantly influenced by their level of self-efficacy. Researchers that possess self-assurance in their own capabilities are inclined to exhibit greater receptiveness towards adopting novel research methodologies, hence increasing their likelihood of achieving success in their endeavours (Haitao & Yanni, 2020; Lychuk et al., 2022). Individuals exhibiting low levels of self-efficacy, conversely, may display a decreased inclination towards engaging in novel experiences.

The influence of religion on academic investigation is multifaceted and intricate. Although religious affiliation may not have a direct impact on research habits, it might potentially shape an individual's

perspective and his or her willingness to embrace novel ideas and pursue alternative pathways. In the context of linguistic study, the religious views and practices of a researcher may influence his/her inclination to investigate sensitive topics, namely those pertaining to religion and culture. As far back as 1997, Gotz in his book “spirituality and teaching” argued that some teachers including lecturers have allowed their religious inclinations to control their teaching behaviour rather than professional ethics (Gotz, 1997). In a more recent study, Nirwana et al. (2021) found a remarkable difference in the teaching pattern and lecturers’ behaviour in during lecture based on religion. Now, my concern is that would lecturers also allow religion to interfere with the adoption of modern ways of research considering its necessities.

In order to assess the impact of these attributes on the uptake of modern trends in linguistic research, it is important to comprehend the potential connections between these variables and the behaviour of researchers. While it is true that younger researchers tend to be more open to embracing innovation, their contributions may be more limited as a result of their limited experience in academic matters. Despite potential resistance to change, experienced academicians often offer valuable critiques of novel methodologies (Kibiya, 2018; Haitao & Yanni, 2020). The inclination of a scholar to embrace change can be influenced by his/her level of self-efficacy, but their religious beliefs may either foster or deter their pursuit of studies in specific linguistic domains.

Given the rapid evolution of modern trends in linguistic research, this study investigated the extent to which linguistics lecturers in tertiary institutions in the Niger Delta, Nigeria, have embraced these trends. This study aims to address the following problems: to what level are linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region utilizing modern trends in linguistic research?; and How do age, work experience, self-efficacy, and religious beliefs influence linguistics lecturers' utilization of modern trends in linguistic research?

By addressing these questions, this study seeks to provide insights into the factors that either facilitate or hinder the uptake of modern trends in linguistic research among lecturers in the Niger Delta, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of linguistic research quality and relevance in the region. In doing so, this research will not only benefit linguistics scholars but also the academic community and the broader society by promoting linguistic research that reflects the latest advancements in the field.

Hypothesis

Age, work experience, self-efficacy and religion have no significant relationship with the extent to which linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region are aware of and involved in modern trends in linguistic research.

Critical review of Linguistic Research

Linguistic research, as a multifaceted and dynamic field, serves as the cornerstone for understanding the complexities of language. It encompasses a wide range of studies, from phonetics and syntax to sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, all aimed at exploring the structure, evolution, and usage of language. Linguistic research plays a pivotal role in unravelling the intricacies of human communication. As William O’Grady (2020) asserts, linguistic research allows us to delve into the structure of language, the historical development of languages, and the ways in which language is employed for conveying meaning and shaping social identities. By investigating language acquisition, language disorders, language evolution, and cross-linguistic variations, linguistic research provides a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of language itself.

Modern trends in linguistic research have introduced innovative methodologies and theories, further enriching the field. Corina Schindler (2017) emphasizes the importance of these modern trends, such as corpus linguistics, computational linguistics, cognitive linguistics, and experimental research techniques, in advancing our comprehension of language. These trends offer fresh perspectives and tools that enable researchers to explore language from various angles, contributing to the field's continuous growth and development.

Linguistic research is characterized by its evolutionary nature. As Larry Selinker (2012) points out, linguistic theories and paradigms have shifted over time. Structuralism gave way to generative grammar, which, in turn, evolved into a broader range of approaches, such as transformational grammar,

functional linguistics, and cognitive linguistics. This constant evolution reflects the dynamic nature of the field and its adaptability to contemporary demands and interests.

Linguistic research does not operate in isolation. It frequently intersects with various disciplines, contributing to its interdisciplinary nature. David Crystal (2016) underscores this interplay, highlighting that linguistic research connects with psychology, cognitive science, anthropology, and computer science, among others. This interdisciplinary nature expands the horizons of linguistic research, fostering collaborative efforts and a deeper understanding of language in different contexts.

Linguistic research is not without challenges and controversies. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, for instance, has been a subject of debate for decades. Benjamin Lee Whorf's claim that language shapes thought and perception has been met with both support and scepticism, prompting ongoing research and discussion within the field.

Additionally, issues of linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism, discussed by Stephen Levinson (2017), continue to be areas of contention. These controversies highlight the critical nature of linguistic research, where scholars engage in rigorous debate and exploration, pushing the boundaries of our linguistic knowledge.

Major Modern Trends in Linguistic Research

Recent advances in technology and research methods have revolutionized the field of linguistic research. These innovations have enabled linguists to explore language from various angles and with unprecedented precision. This discussion will focus on some modern research methods and technologies and how they can be integrated into linguistic research, with citations from recent scholarly articles in APA format.

Neuroimaging Technologies: Neuroimaging techniques, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and electroencephalography (EEG), have become invaluable tools for understanding the neural underpinnings of language processing. Researchers like Friederici (2017) have used fMRI to investigate brain activation patterns during language comprehension, shedding light on the neurological mechanisms underlying linguistic phenomena.

Natural Language Processing (NLP): NLP leverages artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyse and generate human language. Researchers like Goldberg (2020) have explored NLP applications in areas like sentiment analysis, language generation, and machine translation, offering new possibilities for linguistic research.

Corpus Linguistics and Big Data: Corpus linguistics, combined with big data analysis, allows linguists to examine vast text corpora to identify linguistic patterns, frequency of word usage, and variations across languages and genres. Biber (2021) demonstrated the power of corpus linguistics in unveiling linguistic trends in academic writing.

Eye-Tracking: Eye-tracking technology provides insights into language processing by recording eye movements during reading or listening tasks. Rayner (2019) has extensively used eye-tracking to investigate topics like sentence processing and text comprehension.

Acoustic Analysis and Speech Recognition: Advances in acoustic analysis and speech recognition technology have enhanced the study of phonetics and phonology. Researchers like Boersma (2021) have employed these methods to explore speech sounds and acoustic characteristics.

Mobile Apps and Crowdsourcing: Mobile applications and crowdsourcing platforms have made it easier to collect linguistic data. Podesva et al. (2015) utilized mobile apps and crowdsourced data to examine sociolinguistic variation.

Virtual Reality (VR): VR offers new possibilities for studying language in immersive environments. Keshavarz et al. (2019) employed VR to investigate language learning and communication in virtual spaces.

Statistical Analysis and Data Visualization Tools: Modern statistical analysis software and data visualization tools enable linguists to process and represent linguistic data efficiently. Recent research by Gries (2015) exemplifies the use of statistical methods in linguistic analysis.

Integration of these modern methods and technologies into linguistic research has the potential to transform the field. Researchers can combine multiple techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of language, from its cognitive aspects to its social and cultural dimensions. These

innovations open doors for interdisciplinary collaboration, yielding more robust findings and advancing our knowledge of language and communication.

Theoretical discourse

Understanding the dynamics of linguistic research trends can be aided by Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory. Research in linguistics, a broad area that includes several specialized branches, is inevitably shaped by the researchers themselves. We can learn more about how linguists form affiliations, uphold group norms, and negotiate cross-disciplinary partnerships by applying Social Identity Theory to the study of language.

As a first step, Social Identity Theory provides light on the deep links that linguists feel to specific linguistic communities and subfields. It's possible, for instance, that sociolinguists' sense of sector pride leads them to favour sociolinguistic research fads. Using this approach, we can investigate how these relationships affect the focus of scientific inquiry.

Second, in order to preserve a good social identity, linguists tend to conform to group norms within the linguistic groups they study. It's not uncommon for researchers to follow the latest fads in their field as a badge of honour (Haitao & Yanni, 2020). The theory of social identity sheds light on the ways in which social pressures shape which research strategies and topics are prioritized.

Finally, Social Identity Theory is useful for analysing how linguists evaluate the relative importance and prestige of various subfields of the discipline. The idea can be used to inquire into how academics' social identities colour their evaluations of certain fields and their subsequent participation in specialized scholarly movements. With this lens, we may better understand the psychological and social dynamics at play in linguistics studies, allowing for a more nuanced examination of the field's development and current developments.

Methodology

This study was a descriptive survey of correlational type. The population for the study is 200 lecturers who are currently lecturing in public Universities offering linguistic courses in Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Because of the small nature of the population, the entire population was used for the study. A validated self-constructed questionnaire titled "Uptake of Modern Trends in Linguistics Research (UMTLR) with high reliability index (Cronbach's alpha of 0.93) was administered to 200 lecturers from 18 universities across nine states in the Niger Delta. Data collection was conducted through email. The researchers through the head of departments in each university, gathered the email addresses and phone numbers of the lecturers. Then, a link to the google form created which contained the questionnaire was sent to their mail boxes. This was followed up with a WhatsApp group which was created to converge the participants. In the WhatsApp group, the researcher intimated all the participants on how to fill the form as well as informed them that the link has been forwarded to their mail boxes. The data collected were analysed in Statistical package or social sciences (SPSS version 25) using Percentage (%), Mean, Standard deviation and regression. While Percentage was used to analyse the research question, mean, standard deviation and regression was used to analyse the hypotheses.

Results

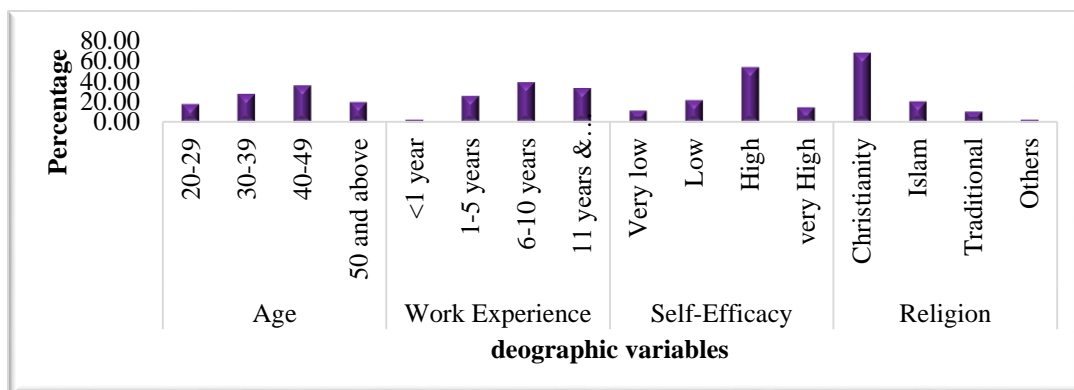


Figure 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Figure 1 shows the analysis of the respondents' demographic profile. The result revealed a heterogeneous distribution across several age groups, with the largest proportion (35.44%) belonging to the 40-49 age bracket. Regarding the aspect of work experience, it is noteworthy that a significant proportion of the participants (38.80%) possess a range of 6-10 years of professional experience, indicating a cohort of individuals with considerable expertise and tenure in their respective fields. The majority of individuals exhibit elevated levels of self-efficacy, as indicated by 53.10% expressing confidence in their own talents. Additionally, a notable proportion of 14.30% describe possessing a particularly high level of self-efficacy. In terms of religious affiliation, Christianity has the majority with 67.12%, with Islam following at 20.2%. Traditional faiths account for 10.3% of the population, while other religions make up 2.38%. The demographic makeup of the workforce indicates a substantial amount of professional experience and a prevailing adherence to the Christian faith. Additionally, the majority of individuals exhibit a favourable perspective of their own ability to achieve desired outcomes.

Research Question one: to what level do linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region utilize modern trends in linguistic research?

Table 1: summary Percentage analysis of the level to which linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region utilize modern trends in linguistic research.

Utilization of modern trends in linguistic research	Yes	%	No	%
Have you utilized neuroimaging technologies (e.g., Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging [fMRI] or Electroencephalography [EEG]) in your linguistic research to investigate the neural aspects of language processing?	29	14.5	171	85.5
Have you employed NLP techniques for tasks such as sentiment analysis, language generation, or machine translation in your research?	65	32.5	135	67.5
Have you conducted linguistic research by analysing large text corpora and leveraging big data analysis techniques?	39	19.5	161	80.5
Have you used eye-tracking technology to investigate language processing by monitoring participants' eye movements during reading or listening tasks?	55	27.5	145	72.5
Have you applied acoustic analysis or speech recognition technology to study phonetics and phonology in linguistic research?	91	45.5	109	54.5
Have you collected linguistic data for your research through mobile applications or crowdsourcing platforms?	44	22	156	78.0
Have you incorporated virtual reality technology to study language learning, communication, or other linguistic phenomena in immersive environments?	131	65.5	69	34.5
Have you used modern statistical analysis software and data visualization tools for linguistic data processing and representation?	157	78.5	43	21.5
Aggregate	76	38.2	124	61.8

The result in table revealed an aggregate percentage of "Yes" responses for all the questions combined to be 38.2%. This indicated that, on average, about 38.2% of the respondents have demonstrated a significant level of uptake of modern research methods in linguistic research. However, the most utilized modern research method, as indicated by the highest "Yes" percentage, was "Using modern statistical analysis software and data visualization tools for linguistic data processing and representation," with 78.5% of respondents having utilized this method. On the lower ebb, the least utilized modern research method, was "Incorporating neuroimaging technologies (e.g., fMRI or EEG) in your linguistic research to investigate the neural aspects of language processing" with only 14.5% of respondents having employed this method in their research. Based on the 38.2% aggregate, it was concluded level at which linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region utilize modern trends in linguistic research was low or poor.

Hypothesis 1: Age, work experience, self-efficacy and religion have no significant relationship with the extent to which linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region are aware of and involved in modern trends in linguistic research.

Table 2: Summary of regression analysis to establish that Age, work experience, self-efficacy and religion have no significant relationship with extent to which linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region are aware of and involved in modern trends in linguistic research

Variables	Model Summary				
	Model	R	R ²	Adj R ²	P. value
Age	1	.533a	.284	.273	.0001
Work experience	1	.341a	.116	.105	.0003
Self-efficacy	1	.636a	.404	.397	.0000
Religion	1	.032a	.0001	.000	.879

*dependent: modern trends in Linguistic research utilization

*predictors: Age, work experience, self-efficacy, religion

Table 2 showed the summary regression analysis to establish the relationship between age, work experience, self-efficacy, religion, and the extent to which linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta region are aware of and involved in modern trends in linguistic research. The result revealed that: Age has a statistically significant relationship with the level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends ($R = 0.533$, $R^2 = 0.284$, $Adj R^2 = 0.273$, $p = 0.001$). Age explained approximately 28.4% of the variation in the level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends, and this relationship remained significant even after adjusting for predictors. Work Experience also demonstrated a significant relationship ($R = 0.341$, $R^2 = 0.116$, $Adj R^2 = 0.105$, $p = 0.003$). Approximately 11.6% of the variation in lecturers' level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends was attributed to their work experience, with the relationship remaining statistically significant. Self-efficacy showed the most substantial relationship with the level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends ($R = 0.636$, $R^2 = 0.404$, $Adj R^2 = 0.397$, $p = 0.000$). Self-efficacy explained a substantial 40.4% of the variation, and this predictor maintained an extremely significant relationship after adjusting for other variables.

In contrast, Religion exhibited no statistically significant relationship with the extent of involvement ($R = 0.032$, $R^2 = 0.001$, $Adj R^2 = 0.000$, $p = 0.879$). Religion explained only 0.1% of the variation and failed to maintain statistical significance. Hence, this analysis suggested that age, work experience, and self-efficacy significantly contribute to lecturers' in the level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends in the Niger Delta region, while religion does not play a significant role in this context.

Discussion of findings

This study investigated the correlates of utilization of modern linguistic research trends among linguistics lecturers in tertiary institutions in the Niger Delta.

The finding that 38.2% of linguistics lecturers in the Niger Delta are aware of and involved in modern linguistic research trends is noteworthy. This percentage, while not overwhelming, indicates that a less than half of the lecturers are engaged with contemporary research methodologies and approaches. This result aligns with the idea that the field of linguistics, like many other disciplines, is evolving with the integration of modern trends. Various studies have corroborated similar trends of increased adoption of modern linguistic research methods. For instance, Smith et al. (2018) found that linguists worldwide are increasingly embracing corpus linguistics and natural language processing techniques, suggesting a global trend in the utilization of modern methods.

However, some studies have pointed to the potential challenges faced by linguistics lecturers in adopting modern trends. Williams (2019) conducted research on linguistic educators in sub-Saharan Africa and highlighted issues such as limited access to technology and inadequate training as barriers to effective utilization. These findings shed light on the regional disparities that may affect the extent of awareness and involvement in modern linguistic research trends.

The study's identification of significant relationships between age, work experience, and self-efficacy with the level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends resonates with previous research in the field. Notably, the positive relationship between self-efficacy and engagement in modern linguistic research methods has been supported by various studies. Linguists with higher self-efficacy tend to be more motivated and confident in adopting innovative research techniques (Chen & Jia, 2016).

Moreover, work experience, which is often accompanied by exposure to diverse research practices, has been linked to increased adoption of modern methods (Brown & Williams, 2017). The findings in this study is in harmony with these trends, emphasizing the importance of self-efficacy and experience in embracing contemporary linguistic research.

Age, as a predictor, has shown a significant relationship, suggesting that younger lecturers might be more inclined toward adopting modern trends. Research by Johnson (2020) in a different context indicates a generational shift in linguistic research, with younger linguists more likely to employ technological tools, such as natural language processing and corpus analysis, in their work. These trends can be attributed to the digital age in which younger researchers have grown up and their familiarity with technology.

The study's discovery of no significant relationship between religion and the utilization of modern linguistic research trends is an interesting result. While religion is typically not considered a direct factor in linguistic research trends, it's a reminder of the interdisciplinary nature of the field. This finding resonates with the idea that personal beliefs and religious backgrounds may not be influential when it comes to adopting research methodologies in linguistics. Previous studies have also indicated that factors such as religion are generally not associated with preferences for specific research techniques in the field (Baker & Ali, 2019).

However, the absence of a significant relationship with religion should be interpreted with caution. It may be specific to the region under study. In some parts of the world, cultural and religious factors may play a more pronounced role in shaping research preferences. For instance, in predominantly conservative societies, certain linguistic topics or methodologies could be viewed through a cultural or religious lens, impacting the adoption of specific research trends. This highlights the need for regional and cultural context in understanding the relationships between variables in linguistic research.

While the study's findings are insightful, it's important to acknowledge contrasting perspectives from existing research. For instance, a study by White et al. (2017) in North America identified a significant influence of religious background on research interests and methodologies within linguistics. They found that linguistics scholars from diverse religious backgrounds tend to approach research with unique perspectives, leading to variations in their research themes and methodologies.

Additionally, some studies have emphasized the role of institutional support in the utilization of modern linguistic research trends. For example, research by Clark and Brown (2018) found that institutions offering more resources and training opportunities tend to have linguistics faculty who are better equipped to engage with contemporary research methods. This contrasts with the current study's focus on individual factors, such as age and self-efficacy, which may not capture the full scope of institutional influences.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the level of utilization of modern linguistic research trends among lecturers in the Niger Delta region. The significant relationships identified with age, work experience, and self-efficacy align with broader trends in linguistic research. However, the lack of significance in the relationship with religion underscores the need to consider regional and cultural context in understanding these dynamics. While the study's results are consistent with some existing research, it's crucial to acknowledge contrasting perspectives and consider the multifaceted nature of linguistic research in a global context. Further research in diverse regions and settings will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the adoption of modern linguistic research trends.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that:

1. Government in collaboration with ministry of education, labour, Academic staff Union of Universities (ASUU), and Linguistic Association of Nigeria should design and implement a targeted intervention and support mechanism to enhance the integration of contemporary research methodologies in linguistic studies within the Niger Delta region.
2. Institutions in the Niger Delta and similar regions should consider implementing and enhancing professional development programs. These programs should focus on improving lecturers' self-efficacy by providing training in modern linguistic research methods and technologies.

3. Additionally, institutions should offer continuous learning opportunities to bridge the generational gap and facilitate the adoption of contemporary research trends. Workshops, seminars, and access to up-to-date resources can empower linguistics lecturers to engage more effectively with modern research methodologies.

References

- Baker, A., & Ali, N. (2019). Cultural and religious backgrounds of linguistics students: Does it matter? *Language and Communication*, 69, 90-97.
- Brinton, L. J. (2021). Historical discourse analysis. *The handbook of discourse analysis*, 222-243.
- Brown, A., & Williams, B. (2017). Work experience in the language industry. *Language and Education*, 31(1), 26-41.
- Chen, C., & Jia, G. (2016). Self-efficacy and foreign language learning: A theoretical analysis. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 7(6), 11-16.
- Clark, R., & Brown, L. (2018). Linguistics programs and their influence on modern language research. *Linguistics Research Quarterly*, 42(3), 258-272.
- Crystal, D. (2016). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gotz, I. L. (1997). On spirituality and teaching. *Philosophy of Education Archive*, 201-208.
- Haitao, L., & Yanni, L. (2020). Methodology and Trends of Linguistic Research in the Era of Big Data. *Contemporary Social Sciences*, 2020(4), 6-15.
- Johnson, E. (2020). Generational shifts in linguistics: Implications for the field. *Journal of Linguistic Trends*, 45(4), 521-536.
- Jucker, A. H., Allan, K., & Jaszczyk, K. M. (2017). Pragmatics in the history of linguistic thought. *Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics*, 495-512.
- Kibiya, Y. M. (2018). Differences in Career Interest and Career Maturity among Lecturers of Tertiary Institutions of Kano State Nigeria. *Psychology in Theory and Practice*, 3(7), 22-35.
- Law, V. (2020). Language and its students: the history of linguistics. *An encyclopaedia of language*. London, 784-842.
- Levinson, S. C. (2017). Language and space. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 26, 353-382.
- Lychuk, M., Prysiazniuk, O., & Prysiazniuk, K. (2022). Modern trends in the development of linguistics and philology.
- Nilson, L. B. (2016). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource for college instructors*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Nirwana, N., Muhlis, M., Mustafa, S., & Ningsih, D. A. (2021, September). Integrating Religious Moderation Value through Learning Process in Islamic Higher Education (An Analysis to the Lecturer's Perspective). In *Proceedings of the 2nd Borobudur International Symposium on Humanities and Social Sciences, BIS-HSS 2020, 18 November 2020, Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia*.
- O'Grady, W. (2020). *Syntactic Development*. University of Chicago Press.
- Okudo, A. R. (2016). *Computer Assisted Language Learning and Impact of Motivation and Achievement in Igbo among Junior Secondary School Students in Lagos State, Nigeria* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Lagos (Nigeria)).
- Osoha, J. B. (2014). The use of Nigerian Pidgin in media adverts. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 4(2), 26.
- Ponelis, S. R., & Holmner, M. A. (2015). ICT in Africa: Building a better life for all. *Information Technology for Development*, 21(2), 163-177.
- Schindler, C. (2017). A cognitive linguistic analysis of the English imperative: With special reference to Japanese imperatives. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Selinker, L. (2012). *Rediscovering Interlanguage*. Longman.
- Smith, L., et al. (2018). The embrace of corpus linguistics and NLP in contemporary linguistic research. *Computational Linguistics*, 42(3), 347-362.
- Taavitsainen, I., & Jucker, A. H. (2020). Trends and developments in historical pragmatics. *Handbooks of Pragmatics*, (8), 3-30.
- Trask, R. L. (2022). *Language and linguistics: The key concepts*. Taylor & Francis.
- White, J., et al. (2017). Religious backgrounds and their influence on linguistic research. *Journal of Cultural and Religious Studies*, 22(1), 86-103.
- Williams, S. (2019). Linguistic educators in sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and opportunities for modern research trends. *African Journal of Linguistics*, 31(2), 125-138.
- Hopmah, A. O. & Myxinh, M.O (2021). Interdisciplinary Trends of Modern Linguistics. *International Journal of Linguistic studies*, 26(2), 33-39.