

The Role Of Simple Language In Government Texts: The Initiative Of Innovation And Data Laboratory On Government Of The State Of Ceará

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Abstract:

Background: This article discusses the relevance of plain language in government texts and its benefits for society. The research presents a literature review on the role of clear communication in understanding a message between sender and receiver.

Materials and Methods: The general objective of this study was to analyze the advantages offered by the Innovation and Data Laboratory (Íris) of the Government of the State of Ceará in implementing the use of plain language techniques, favoring contact with the user. The specific objectives are to present the concept of this method and that of electronic government (E-Gov); to investigate literacy levels in Brazil, and show the ten steps to communicate clearly. The approach is qualitative. To achieve the aforementioned objectives, an open questionnaire was also applied in order to deepen knowledge with experts in the field.

Results: The results reveal the improvements obtained with the initiative of applying accessible language in public texts in Ceará.

Conclusion: Clear language facilitates understanding of texts, particularly those guiding Brazilian citizens in electronic government environments. The application of plain language techniques can significantly enhance communication between government institutions and the public, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.

Keywords: Plain Language; Clear Communication; Electronic Government; Government Texts.

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I. Introduction

The interpretation of texts is paramount from various perspectives, especially concerning governmental channels. It is evident that in-person interactions with citizens are increasingly being replaced by online methods. Therefore, there is an imperative need for clarity in texts that guide readers. Texts need to communicate effectively to everyone. Presentation format, positioning, colors, and layouts are also requisites that contribute to effective communication. The swift comprehension of texts reduces the need to seek answers to frequent doubts, thereby expediting other basic in-person services.

In this regard, this work is justified by the widespread utilization of digital channels as communication tools on government portals. In the state of Ceará, this practice is gaining traction due to the necessity of simplifying communication between sender and receiver, with the aim of reducing in-person inquiries and addressing service requests more rapidly and conveniently.

In Ceará, the Innovation and Data Laboratory (Íris) of the State Government, established in 2020, studies methods and compiles ideas among its departments for the creation of a Single Services Portal for citizens by the year 2022. The first project of Íris involves translating difficult-to-read texts into simple and accessible language.

The work is divided into eight sections. The first section succinctly presents the research, including its justification and relevance to academia, as well as outlining the document's structure as a whole. The second section, Understanding Plain Language, provides a brief introduction to the topic, defining the term in its first topic and discussing the benefits of clear language in the governmental sphere in its second topic. The third section, Methodological Approach, discusses the methodology employed, data collection instruments, and process stages. The fourth section conceptualizes Electronic Government (E-Gov) and the application of clear language within this realm. The fifth section deliberates on literacy rates in Brazil, based on INAF data. Meanwhile, the sixth section delves into the use of plain language in the government of Ceará, exploring its applicability across various categories, including public health. The seventh section presents the research results and their analysis. Finally, the section dedicated to concluding remarks provides the culmination of the discussions, highlighting the gains achieved through the utilization of this method.

II. Material And Methods

For the development of this scientific article, a qualitative approach was adopted, consisting of an analysis of factors resulting from the benefits of applying the plain language method. Applied in nature and with an explanatory objective, it is based on research on communication and electronic government, exemplifying the relevance of the usability of the resource when explored in its main field of action. The study took place at the state level in Ceará, encompassing all government secretariats, as Íris aims to accelerate Digital Government projects in the state and promote a culture of innovation and the use of data science in public administration.

The research procedure employed was the development of an action research, which was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved a literature review in the field of plain language. In the second stage, questions were posed to professionals in the field through semi-structured interviews.

According to Souza et al. (2021, p. 27),

Semi-structured interviews allow for a more flexible approach to data collection, enabling the interviewer to explore questions that may arise during the interview while keeping the research objectives in sight. This allows the interviewer to obtain deeper and richer information about the study object, which can be particularly useful in qualitative research. Additionally, semi-structured interviews allow the interviewee to provide more detailed and reflective answers, increasing the validity of the collected data¹.

The questionnaires administered included personal information of the participants such as name, academic background, and professional experience. Each questionnaire consisted of specific questions tailored to the expertise of the specialist.

For instance, Questionnaire 3, administered to Participant 3 (P3), a specialist in Language, comprised the following questions: 1. What are the main benefits of applying plain language in government texts? 2. What are the main methods for clear communication? 3. As a citizen, what is your interpretation of the importance of clearly interpreting a public text? 4. What is the proposal of Comunica Simples? 5. The State of Ceará is innovating by applying plain language to its citizens. How do you interpret this initiative of the Íris LabGov? 6. What is the importance/relevance of having a completely digital government that communicates clearly? 7. Finally, please provide your opinion on the initiative of the government of Ceará, through Íris LabGov, to introduce plain language in its texts.

The questionnaires were developed in Google Forms and sent to each specialist. Upon receipt, the responses were analyzed, and the data compiled to gain a deeper understanding of the researched topic.

III. Literature Review

Understanding Plain Language

Simple language is emerging as a social necessity. When dealing with public information, there is a responsibility to make it clear and accessible in the best possible way, ensuring that communication between sender and receiver is fully understood. This aligns with Fischer's (2018, p.17) assertion that "plain language is a matter of citizenship, a civil right²."

Definition of Plain Language

According to the New Dictionary of the Portuguese Language, language means "s. f. Use of the elements of a language as a means of communication among men, according to each one's preferences, without aesthetic concern; any means of expressing what is felt or thought; style³."

Plain language is the translation of the term in English plain language. The Plain Language Association International (PLAIN), a non-profit organization based on volunteer work located in Canada, reveals that "using

plain language means prioritizing the reader. It involves discovering what readers want to know, what information they need, and helping them achieve their goals. The goal is for the reader to understand a document written in plain language on the first read⁴."

According to the International Plain Language Federation, communication is in plain language when the text, structure, and design are so clear that the target audience can easily find what they are looking for, understand what they have found, and use the information. Plain language consists of clusters of techniques and methodologies that compile and/or reframe words into clear and easy-to-understand sentences. In this perspective, Barboza (2011) clarifies that it is designed to precisely communicate information needed by the intended audience and can be applied to information produced in any language⁵.

Clarity in language aims for ease of reading and interpretation by using simple forms of communication. Interaction and inclusion are also benefits that plain language provides. Thus, Fischer (2018, p.10) defines communication in plain language as follows:

Communication in plain language is visually inviting and easy to read because it was written with this goal in mind. It often has the tone of a friendly and respectful conversation. It recognizes the right that every person has to understand texts relevant to their everyday life. Its primary intention is to clarify².

According to the author, because its primary intention is to clarify and contribute to informed decision-making by citizens and consumers, plain language approaches discussions in the fields of Ethics and Politics.

Plain Language and Government

The governmental sphere can benefit from many aspects proposed by plain language, as the message conveyed can be quickly understood by the majority of its target audience: the population. Another benefit to mention is the better usability of time spent on problem resolutions associated with misunderstood messages. As Barboza (2011, p. 55) highlights:

Making writing clearer and easier to understand does not mean using a different grammar. It does not result in any loss of the message, even in legal or highly technical documents. Plain language is simply the most efficient method of written communication, bringing benefits of understanding, retention, reading speed, and persistence⁵.

The next section presents the main stages of conducting the literature and field research, as well as the data collection instruments, analysis, and compilation of information from the researched subjects.

Conceptualizing Electronic Government (e-GOV)

With the advancement of information and communication technologies in the 1990s, the concept of electronic government began to be discussed. According to the United Nations - UN (2014), the definition of electronic government consists of: "the use and application of information technologies in public administration to simplify and integrate workflows and processes, effectively manage data and information, improve the provision of public services, as well as expand communication channels for engagement and empowerment of people."

The opportunities offered by digital development in recent years, whether through online services, Big Data, social networks, mobile applications, or cloud computing, are expanding the way we perceive electronic government. While e-Gov still includes electronic interactions of three types - government to government (G2G); government to business (G2B); and government to consumer (G2C) - a more holistic approach with multiple actors is beginning to take shape². In Brazil, the Electronic Government Program began in 2000, with adaptations, innovations, and challenges to improve the quality of public service.

Clear Language and e-Gov

The digital sphere is characterized as an important economic and social factor currently. The practice of digital activities in social routines and the implementation of basic and essential services in people's lives are evident. And, to be successful, governments must communicate clearly to all types of audiences, using terms and expressions understandable at any level of education.

According to Barboza (2011), there is no doubt that e-Gov systems can improve their services and enhance citizens' quality of life. However, e-Gov projects cannot be successful if they do not adapt to the social needs of users. Government institutions disseminate information, create content, and disseminate data at all times. With the aim of self-service applicability, helping society to serve itself directly. However, often considered bureaucratic, government texts on websites are difficult to read and understand, with a high load of information and laborious to navigate. The main proposal for making governments primarily digital is to promote easy access to services that were previously difficult to obtain⁵.

According to Barboza (2010, p. 25), "the key to making online government work is clear communication because there are no 'humans' on the other side of the line in an online interaction⁵." The next section compiles data from the latest research on literacy rates in the country.

Considerations on Literacy in Brazil

Literacy levels in Brazil are measured by a survey devised by the Functional Literacy Indicator (INAF), in partnership with the Paulo Montenegro Institute and the NGO Ação Educativa, conducted with the support of IBOPE Intelligence. This survey aims to estimate the literacy level of the Brazilian population aged 15 to 64, analyzing their reading, writing, and mathematics skills employed in daily life. According to the Paulo Montenegro Institute (2018, p. 27), literacy means:

The ability to understand and use written information and reflect on it, a continuum that ranges from simple recognition of elements of written language and numbers to more complex cognitive operations, which involve integrating textual information with the knowledge and worldviews provided by the reader. Within this field, two domains are distinguished: the abilities of verbal information processing, which involve a series of logical and narrative connections, called literacy, and the abilities of quantitative information processing, which involve mathematical concepts and operations, called numeracy⁶.

The degree of mastery of reading, writing, and mathematics skills manifested by the respondents allows the identification of two groups, namely: Functional Illiterates: - Illiterate: corresponds to the condition of those who cannot perform simple tasks involving reading words and phrases, although some of them can read familiar numbers (telephone numbers, prices, etc.); - Rudimentary: corresponds to the ability to locate explicit information in short and familiar texts (such as an advertisement or a note), read and write common numbers, and perform simple operations, such as handling money for small payments or taking length measurements using a tape measure;

Functionally Literate: - Elementary: people classified at this level can be considered functionally literate, as they already read and understand texts of medium length, locate information even if small inferences are required, solve problems involving operations in the thousands range, solve problems involving a simple sequence of operations, and understand simple graphics or tables in usual contexts. However, they show limitations when the required operations involve a larger number of elements, steps, or relationships; - Intermediate: they locate information in various types of texts, solve problems involving percentages or proportions or requiring criteria for selecting information, develop and control successive steps to solve them. People classified at this level interpret and synthesize various texts and recognize figures of speech; however, they have difficulty perceiving and expressing opinions on the author's stance in a text; - Proficient: people classified at this level have skills that no longer impose restrictions on understanding and interpreting texts in usual situations; they read more complex texts, analyze and relate their parts, compare and evaluate information, and distinguish fact from opinion. Regarding mathematics, they interpret tables and graphs with more than two variables, understanding elements such as scale, trends, and projections. (Paulo Montenegro Institute, 2018, p. 37).

The latest survey conducted by INAF in 2018 indicates the results obtained over more than a decade, affirming the new increase in the number of Illiterates (8%), which has varied between 2001 and 2015. It also confirms the number of Rudimentary individuals (22%), which has remained consistent with the average of the last editions of the study; the Elementary data accounting for 34% of Brazilians; Intermediates, 25%; and Proficient individuals, 12%⁶.

The information contained in INAF's databases confirms the need to communicate clearly, providing detailed messages, offering essential explanations and clarifications, using words characterized by simple syllabic or even regional specificities. Since government texts are essentially of public interest and domain. Exercises like these combat the lack of interpretation and understanding by specific groups. The article "Plain Language, Public Health, and Citizenship", published by the Innovation and Data Laboratory - Íris, in 2020, states that "in the case of the public sector, the text must be designed and elaborated, from the beginning, for the citizen. For this, it is important to consider, among other factors, the social profile and different levels of digital inclusion and literacy⁶."

The Government of Ceará and Plain Language

In 2020, the Government of the State of Ceará envisioned the creation of a platform that would integrate various services offered to the population of Ceará, known as the Unified Services Portal. To achieve positive outcomes, the Government established the Innovation and Data Laboratory of the State of Ceará, belonging to the state's Digital Transformation Platform. Through fostering a culture of innovation, citizen participation, and the utilization of data science and artificial intelligence, this laboratory aimed to accelerate ideas and solutions to deliver more efficient public services to the people of Ceará. It served as a point of connection between government secretariats within the context of the Government's Digital Transformation movement⁷.

During the conclusion of the Integration and Planning Forum of the Government of Ceará, Governor Camilo Santana expressed the desire to leave a legacy for the people of Ceará, affirming: "Our mission is to leave a legacy for the state we love and for all Ceará citizens, especially those in greatest need. We must have data and know how to use it to set goals, objectives, and improve the quality of services provided to the population. We must have integrated and efficient work. By 2022, for example, we will have a Digital Government in Ceará⁷."

In addition to being directly linked to the structuring and development of projects related to Digital Government, the Iris laboratory's proposal is guided by two other axes of action: Culture of Innovation and Data Science. All of these are aimed at providing services to the people of Ceará. Herculano (2020, p. 15) maintains that "this is where the relationship and plain language take on a new dimension and also assume the responsibility for disseminating content and training multipliers¹⁰."

Application of Plain Language in The Government of Ceará

To apply plain language techniques and achieve the desired objectives, the Government of Ceará, through the Iris laboratory, understands ten steps for clear communication. It is emphasized that these steps are the result of lectures and workshops conducted by a group of civil servants from various government secretariats, focusing on the field of communication⁷.

The steps are as follows: 1. Plan, write, and deliver texts to citizens with clear and understandable information. 2. Always use a courteous and respectful tone. 3. Divide texts into short paragraphs using topic markers to separate information when necessary. 4. Preferably write short sentences in direct order (subject > verb > complement) and in the active voice. 5. Use words known to citizens and avoid technical terms, legal jargon, foreign words, and acronyms without explaining their meanings. 6. Avoid sequences of abstract nouns in the sentence. 7. Prefer verbs instead of nouns formed from verbs. 8. Use visual elements (icons, infographics, photographs, etc.) to complement and reinforce the message of the text. 9. Whenever possible, test the readability of the text with citizens. 10. Understand government written communication as a dialogue for exercising citizenship⁷.

Plain Language and Public Health in Ceará

During the COVID-19 pandemic, declared on March 11, 2020, by the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Public Health Emergency, declared on March 16, 2020, by the Government of the State of Ceará (later evolving into a State of Public Calamity until December 31, 2020), the Iris laboratory classifies six guidelines for clear writing during a pandemic: 1. Hierarchy: The most important information stands out and appears first in the text, followed by details. This is called the inverted pyramid style. Today, we scan screens of cell phones and computers quickly to find information. There is little time or patience for excessive clicks and scrolls. 2. Vocabulary: Compose the text with more common words from citizens' daily lives, facilitating reading. This also happens when minimizing, as much as possible, the use of technical terms and abbreviations unless accompanied by explanations. 3. Clarity: The easiest sentence to read is short, objective, and direct (subject > verb > predicate). International Plain Language guidelines suggest sentences written with up to 20 words. However, in Portuguese, there are no studies indicating the same number. But a shorter sentence without various intercalated information is more likely to avoid ambiguities and be understood upon the first reading. 4. Objectivity: Cut unnecessary words from the sentence. This is a difficult linguistic skill but necessary to make the text concise and not abuse the time of citizens who need to inform themselves. Reviewing the text is the best way to make this trimming. 5. Design: A text communicates (and invites) more efficiently if writing is combined with design. Spacing, fonts, and appropriate sizes, arrangement in topics with markers, highlighted titles, icons, and images, all reinforce the written message. Organizing the text considering the medium through which it will be conveyed (whether printed or digital) and to whom it is addressed, contributes to clarity. 6. Empathy and Accessibility: In times of extreme^{7,8}.

Research reinforces the relevance of predominantly simple language use that leads the recipient to an efficient understanding of the message. In light of this, Ceará – Iris (2020) emphasizes that "communication will be in Plain Language if the text, combined with design, is clear enough for citizens to easily find what they are looking for, understand what they find, and use that information." We align with Fischer (2020) in acknowledging Ceará's initiative in establishing a Plain Language program, especially in this time of pandemic, where the need for clarity in information is a matter of life or death. It presents an opportunity and a chance for societal transformation⁹.

IV. Deepening Knowledge

When analyzing the communication between sender and receiver, it is essential that it occurs in a manner that ensures the understanding of what is intended to be transmitted. Thus, the perceptions of the specialists consulted regarding the questions presented to them are presented. The study involved the participation of three professionals, all female, working in roles related to social communication. Due to the normative conditions determined by the DoCentes Journal, only the data collected from one of the participants will be shared here^{11,12}.

Participant 3 (P3) was chosen. She is a master's student in Design in the Graduate Program at Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC – Rio (2019)) in the research line of Ergonomics and Usability and Human-Computer Interaction. Member of LEUI – Laboratory of Ergodesign and Usability of Interfaces. (Research Theme: The Understandability of Texts on Digital Public Services); Specialist in Consumer Culture in

the Department of Social Sciences at PUC – Rio (2016 - 2018) and graduated in journalism from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (1988). Founder of the consultancy Comunica Simples and author of the book "Clarity in e-Gov Texts a matter of citizenship" (2018).

In response to question 1, she stated:

"Difficult to answer because the benefits are many. It depends on the perspective. From the perspective of citizenship, the main benefit is the citizen finally feeling like a participant in the public administration process. Simple language, when applied according to the principles of writing, information structure, and usability, brings the government closer to citizens. And it stimulates citizen participation, stimulates social control. From the civic perspective of democracy, simple language is a tool, a means to reach that place. But we can also think about the issue of administrative costs. If we analyze, this analysis is not based on data, there is little data, but there is a study by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on the impact of simple language in Colombia and how it impacts the cost for both citizens and the government. Because when we see the understandability of information increase, it means that the person (the citizen) has fewer doubts, so that process, that transaction occurs more quickly. If you have to pay something, a tax, a fee, you have to collect some public service, the money comes in faster, because you take less time to clarify doubts, to understand if it's correct. So, from an economic point of view, there is an immense gain that is poorly measured. And there is also a gain in time, in rework. We also do not estimate the time that the public service takes to process information that is poorly understood. There is a great waste of time in this process. Another possibility when we talk about information of public interest (health, social assistance, social security). When simple language is used in this type of text, we are talking about quality of life. The relationship of a citizen with the place where he lives can be better or worse. Because language mediates governmental texts, access to public services. My life can improve or worsen. My health can improve or worsen if I understand or do not understand the information. And there is something very important, which is to talk about trust, do you trust or do you not trust that information? Does the way it is presented to you bring confidence in the relationship you have with the government or not? Or does it bring distrust? So the more direct, objective, and less doubtful a text raises, the more the relationship of trusting that information does not need to be asked to anyone, I do not need to pay a broker, I do not need to pay a lawyer and not even ask someone who has more habit of relating to that process than I do. I can solve it. This impacts trust. When we see the defense of the use of simple language in governmental texts in other countries, we see trust. Simple language helps trust in the government."

After this response, six more questions were offered to the interviewee and are related below: 1. What are the main benefits of the applicability of simple language in governmental texts? 2. What are the main methods for clear communication? 3. As a citizen, what is your interpretation of the importance of clearly interpreting a public text? 4. What is the proposal of Comunica Simples? 5. The State of Ceará has been innovating by applying simple language to its citizens. How do you interpret this initiative of the Íris LabGov? 6. What is the importance/relevance of having a fully digital government that communicates clearly? and 7. Finally, please give your opinion on the initiative of the government of Ceará, through Íris LabGov, in introducing simple language in its texts.

These are the collected answers:

1) "There are approaches to approaching information, communication. And there are a series of other paths that authors have been developing, like William Zinsser, from the book "On Writing Well." This simple language method seems very opportune to me, even though it is not based on scientific evidence, it is a method that is built by the practice of various social actors (lawyers, civil servants, teachers, language scholars, doctors), who have been facing the difficulty of dealing with these unnecessarily complicated texts, which generate a cost of mental processing. Reading is a cognitive process, where you receive information and store it in your mind, in your brain. A very long sentence incurs a high cost of mental processing. So, for example, a sixty-word sentence, and this is not uncommon in governmental communication, you keep everything in your working memory, it incurs a very high cognitive cost. What is interesting about the simple language methodology, even though it has little scientific evidence, did not have the participation of many linguists, not only contributing to bringing aspects to discussion but also conducting tests. There are few studies with original text in technical administrative language and the version in simple language for you to analyze what works and what does not. Even though it does not have this and is largely based on practice, this set of guidelines is very objective. It is to avoid certain linguistic elements. You have to know a little bit, not much, from Portuguese classes, syntax, to remember what active voice is. And it's very easy for those who have forgotten or never learned this to access this knowledge. Once you understand the sentence, it's over. You are already solving this problem, even though there are some issues of subjectivity. For example, when requesting the use of a known word, some know it and others do not. There is a small terrain of subjectivities, but it is very objective, being somewhat systematized. In my work, I have been trying to take this approach: to collaborate with a systematization, as I have already systematized in twenty

guidelines. Each author defines their set of guidelines. When put into practice, you realize that the result is very quick but difficult to implement. Research shows improvement in access time to information”.

2) “I think this is a question of citizenship, a civil right. I like this phrase: "Simple language is a civil right", said by Al Gore, Vice President of the United States, in the late 1990s, during Bill Clinton's administration. So, when you can interpret a public text clearly, you establish a benefit for yourself. And this creates public value. And public value is when the citizen perceives that the government's action brings a benefit to him. Therefore, he sees value in the action of the public power. And we know that language is a major barrier to citizens' relationship with the government. At the moment this, in a certain way, is improved as an inspiration or desire, it is effectively possible. At the moment you see that very difficult information and that seems to expel you from the citizenship relationship because you are not understanding anything, you think the problem is yours, for not having education and instruction and this is very bad for a country's self-esteem. When the individual has the chance to interpret alone and explain to those who did not understand information that was provided in a way designed for that person to understand, this is a gain in citizenship, empowerment, achievement, independence, and democracy building. This is a very old problem that we normalized and began to accept. I like simple language because it takes a critical stance on this and stops normalizing it. It is not so difficult to implement change, and this changes the citizenship relationship”.

3) “Comunica Simples is a simple language learning advisory. But there's no use in wanting to teach it, as it's a new topic and it addresses a very delicate issue in society: the use of language as a factor of social exclusion. And it's very difficult to approach this. When it is approached, it is seen as possible to write in another way, but before that, it is necessary to talk about the problem very delicately. This is a very entrenched cultural issue not only here in Brazil but also constitutive of the human psyche, which is to complicate what can be simple when expressing what is written. Comunica Simples has the proposal of learning, of teaching how to write, but before that, of sensitizing. Learning only comes through sensitization, through the dissemination of the international simple language movement”.

4) “I see Ceará's initiative to set up a simple language program, precisely at this moment of the pandemic, when the need for clarity in information is a matter of life or death, as an opportunity, a chance for transformation for society. This initiative is being conducted very recently because Iris has only been created for a few months, but the fact that an innovation laboratory is already constituted with this simple language thinking is a fantastic opportunity because government innovation laboratories are instances of public power to experiment with new solutions and paths to old problems. Iris already has the concern to set up a methodology not only for discussing problems but also for how to train public writers who have this vision, it is a commendable and enviable initiative. I can assure you that all of Brazil is watching this result. We are following this process at the Innovation Laboratory in the Government of São Paulo, the (011) lab, and it is more advanced, but in the process of Ceará, a very large power is born very quickly, a happiness to have simple language in its conception. The rest of Brazil is anxious for the results and methods of Ceará. It is a long process to be effectively embraced by all spheres of public administration, but it is a fascinating dynamic because it encompasses not only the scope of state policy but also serves as an example for the municipalities of the state. It is a huge challenge, and I am very excited. Ceará already has these incredible numbers of results in education, and I think it is a place in Brazil that values reading comprehension”.

5) “This answer deserves two reflections. First, the question of a fully digital government, which I analyze with reservations and apprehension because it means that those who are not digitally literate are out of the situation, and we cannot do this with public administration. We have several sectors and segments of the population, and this government will never be digital. The digitalization directive is inevitable, but it, by itself, is exclusionary. It requires you to have certain equipment, connection, and digital literacy. And many people do not learn or do not want to learn. Even in the new generations, who are already born with this digital possibility, there are many people without cognitive ability or with visual and auditory problems. We cannot accept a fully digital government without the non-digital dimension. A recent survey on the use of information and communication technologies in Brazilian households, conducted by TIC Domicílios in 2018, reveals that 30% of the population does not use the internet. So, fully digital is important, but we have to be very careful. The second reflection is that of a primarily digital government that communicates clearly. Digital transformation means and requires adaptability. Digital transformation means making digital countless processes that occurred in physical interactions. And then we take to the digital also the old way of writing texts and that does not work for the web. The reading pattern is different, it is not linear and it is not 100%. There are studies that say people read on average 18% of what they search on the internet, and there are recommendations that a page should not have more than one hundred words. There is this lack of adaptability. We cannot have a digital government without communicating clearly”.

6) “This extremely important initiative and a huge challenge, and it's even a little scary because there is a lot to be done. It is very relevant that this is being done and important that the result, the positive impact, the change in the citizen's life, how the government saves money, the procedures, be publicized. But we talk little

about the quarry that is to do, it takes a long time. It is a cultural and mindset change. When you have highly specialized public sectors in their areas, it is wonderful, it is the great strength of the public machine, but this extreme technical and sectoral knowledge can also be a great weakness in communication. Because it is possible to look only from such a perspective, and it speaks in a technical way. So this great strength that is the technical field cannot become a great weakness. That's the challenge. It is no use delivering a new set of rules for writing if you do not want to give up the old set; that requires hundreds or thousands of civil servants to realize and feel that it is relevant. Changing the way you write has to do with the way you think. There is also something that is to exercise self-criticism. To make a fraternal critique. There is a whole issue of sensitization that I consider very important that Ceará, which is starting the program, pay attention to. And Íris is very connected. It is important that this introduction of simple language in the texts of the government of Ceará also comes as a discussion, as a perception that this is a transformation that takes time”.

V. Conclusion

The bibliographic investigation associated with the action research provided comprehensive fulfillment of all the objectives of this study. For each objective, sections were elaborated to discuss them, fostering substantial knowledge sharing between the researched authors and the authors of this present article.

The research underscores the importance of employing a simple and clear language to ensure easy comprehension of the message by the receiver. The Iris Innovation and Data Laboratory (2020) exemplifies this approach, utilizing communication characterized by a simple language when both text and design are clear enough for individuals to easily locate, comprehend, and efficiently utilize the information they seek.

This study has afforded us the opportunity to explore research in the national landscape regarding simple language usage and its associated benefits. However, one of the challenges encountered was the limited number of publications on the subject, particularly in the Portuguese language. Additionally, another limiting factor stemmed from the online-only contact during the period of social isolation. Consequently, we hope that the outcomes of this current work will prove beneficial in stimulating further research in the field.

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