Research Article

The Impact of Community Radio in Promoting Multilanguage's

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Abstract

This study aims to unravel the impact that the community radio has in the promotion of languages. In their day to day communication to their listeners, appropriate and standard languages should be used in a way that will convey their messages properly to the listeners, which will eventually has an effect in the way languages are embraced and used in different contexts. This study used qualitative research method. The study found that community radio has a huge impact in shaping how the community uses languages, because the people who speak on the radios are within the communities. This is evident when listeners are requested to provide feedback on the talkshows of the community radios.The study recommends that language boards like PanSALB should work with the community radios to harmonise and promote languages.

Keywords: Promoting the language, language board, community radio, communication, listeners

Introduction

In this study, we looked at the impact of community radios in promoting multilanguage at two community radios, namely Moutse Community Radio Station and Eyethu FM. Bonin and Opoka-Mensak (1998) state that World Association of Community Radio Broadcasting (AWARC) as one of the basic characteristics that differentiate community radios to types of radios broadcasting is the ideas of ownership and the way are governed. Community radio is the type of radio broadcasting that serves a specified community. Teklemicael (2004) explains that many scholars define community radio as more relevant to the community because they can be utilized by the member in the way applicable to their daily lives. Teklemicael further indicates that this helps the individuals in a community not only to develop a sense of belonging to a particular group, but also to agree on certain venues sharing common behavior acceptable to the people who are living within the community. In South Africa, there are several community radio outlets that promote indigenous based program (Okorie & Bigala, 2016).

No radio without language, and language has policies to follow. A policy must be a legal document that sets out precise aims and objectives concerning provision regarding languages (Webb, 2000). The language policy of each community radio station is determined in cooperation with ICASA and includes the number of languages spoken according to the needs of the specific community served (Van Rooyen, 2018).

According to Mabiletja (2015), South Africa has developed several language policies before the adoption of the new PiEP in 1997. In 1652, after the early settlement of the white people in South Africa, Dutch was adopted as a language of education use to teach the Khoi and San Children in Cape area (Bekker, 1999). Between 1806 and 1848 the Cape became a British colony and policy of Anglicization was adopting with a view to replacing Dutch with English, (Hartshorne, 1992). During the Union government in 1910 both Dutch and English were used as official languages (Hartshome, 1989 & 1992). In 1925, Afrikaans replaced Dutch, where both English and Afrikaans became the

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official languages of the country (Hartshome, 1989). In 1948, the government of the National Party followed a mother tongue education policy of separate English and Afrikaans medium school. This was followed by the Bantu Education Act of 1953 which was implemented in 1955. Since the 1990, community radio has mushroomed throughout the developing world. In fact, it has grown faster than either state or commercial radio community radio grew, on everage, by a significant 1,386 percent between 2000 and 2006 (Myers, 2011).

Problem Of Study

UNESCO (2011) defines bilingual and multilingual education as the use of two or more languages as media of instration. We presently have numerous languages in the province with a conflict potential because of the unequal status of the languages and their speakers (Rammala, 2002). Most people undermine other people's languages. They think that their language is the only language that is perfect due to apartheid. Each and every community radio is expected to use the language that is used by that specific community. It is allowed for a community radio station to use more than two languages. Each and every hired presenter must be fluent with the language that he/she is hired to use. There are people that do not understand other languages, so community radios are useful for them as they can be informed about anything with their very own language.

Research Method

Qualitative research method was used in this research. Kobus (2013) says that qualitative research is based on a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context (or real-word settings) and, in general, the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest.

Samplıng

Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study. In this study, stratified purposive sampling will be used. Kobus (2013) says that this stratified purposive sampling means selecting participants according to preselected relevant to a particular research question. The researcher chose Moutse Community Radio which is found in Kgobokwane under Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality in Sekhukhune Limpopo Province, and Eyetu Community Radio which is in Siyabuswa under Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality in Nkangala Mpumalanga province because both community radios are using more than two languages per day. These two community radios are very relevant for this study.

Data Collectıon

The study was conducted at Kgobokwane under Elias Motswaledi Local Municipality in Sekhukhune District Limpopo province and Siyabuswa, which is under Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality in Nkangala Mpumalanga province. Data were collected from two community radios, namely Moutse Community Radio and Eyethu community radio.

Fındıngs

In this study, we looked at the following questions for two different Community Radios, namely Moutse Community Radio Station, Eyethu FM, specifically looking at the impact that the community radio can make in promoting languages. These community radios, are situated at the places where different languages are used in different percentages, given the geographic representation that the radio has been grounded on. The questions are;

1. What do you understand about the topic?
2. How best can your radio intensify the language promotion?
3. How do you gauge the impact that you are making in this area?

Community radio is at the grassroots level of radio communication and has the real access to the actual community members. In terms of languages, community radio becomes licensed by ICASA to broadcast using the languages that they choose. Upon choosing them, it is expected of them to ensure that those languages are given exposure according to the license conditions. The languages are expected to be pure and easy to learn, to allow the community radio to be educative also with the language usage.

5.1   Its staff are always within the community they broadcast to
The staff of other forms of radio are looked as stars and less of real people that they are, but the community radio sector has made the community members to take radio as something that is doable. The staff thereof is always within the community, thus making it easier to do what they do because one would always remember that the person doing it is real like them. If clean sepedi is spoken by someone that we grew with and are living with, makes it doable for all of us to start to think positively about using the language in a clean way. The appropriate language of Sepedi can easily be afforded because the language starts to be fashionable even in the eyes of the youth, who will then think positive about the usage thereof in the entire community.

5.2   The community radios are situated within the community
The relationship between the community and the community radios is bound to be strong because they are placed within the community. It is in that way were the impact will be more deep because the language will be spoken by the people that are visible and are regarded as celebrities that are accessible. Having people from the locality speaking the languages with integrity brings encouragement to the community to start taking those languages serious and using them because those who pride themselves in the usage thereof are living with them and are part of them.

5.3   Ownership lies with the community
Because of being owned by the community, the community has a tendency of owning up even the usage of languages that are used in the community radios, because they relate with the radio, then the languages used. Even the youth can easily like to speak fluent languages because they are automatically owners of the community radio and are eligible to speak in it provided they meet the criteria that is set in the license conditions. The ownership encourages the listeners to speak all the languages that are spoken in the community radio station fluently because what you own should represent the owner. In the event of adapting to the usage of the languages that the community radio uses, the person becomes easily adaptable in other languages because speaking other languages other than his/hers is not a problem.

5.4   Promotion through actual speaking is helpful
One other aspect is the fact that the languages are spoken as fluently as possible and that makes others who are listening to wish to speak those languages like the community radio personnel. This easily removes the notion of learning languages for writing only, disregarding the speaking thereof, because the community radio will then make it look simple to speak the languages that are termed difficult.
Community radio station brings together the community through recognition of languages spoken in the community and encouraging that they become the spoken languages. It is in this way where many listeners will adapt easily with other languages because speaking them has been proven possible through the community radios. When Community Radio speak languages, they lead by example and the community that take them as celebrities follow suit.

5.5   The Research
In light of the above aspects, we also managed to speak to community radios that we indicated above, and the outcomes are as follows:

5.6 Moutse Community Radio

5.6.1 The understanding of the topic

At Moutse Community Radio, we managed to find first that they are using 4 languages in their broadcasting, which are *Sepedi, Setswana, IsiNdebele, IsiZulu and English*, with every presenter expected to excel in the language they use. Their language policy is very clear in that aspect because it does not allow any kind of distortion and abuse of languages. It strictly focuses on actual promotion of languages that are used in the community as prescribed in the license conditions.

According to a presenter, they gave us, the understanding of the topic brings the light that, community radio are making a huge work in making communities to like themselves and appreciate who they are. In actual fact, the impact is huge and has no end because before social media caused things to trend, the community radio was making languages and other things to trend and be spoken. The modern day trending that is brought about by social media used to be done by the community radio, making aspects like being proud of your language to be in fashion and liked by everyone.

5.6.2 How best can Community Radios intensify language promotion?

According to our contact, the promotion of languages has been done by literally giving them a platform to be used. But there is a gab that needs to be closed to intensify the promotion. The community radio should collaborate with language boards, PanSALB and the Department of Arts and Culture to run competitions and campaigns that will focus on instilling the language usages into the communities.

Competitions could be done in the radio to encourage the listeners to research about certain deep aspects of language to answer the competition questions and both gain sustainable knowledge about the language and the prices that will be offered. That will work wonders in the way because the radio can design it to be fun and educative, and that will clearly intensify the language promotion because everyone would like to be seen as knowledgeable about the languages.

Campaigns that are seen done during the heritage month are not adequate, we still need to gradually have campaigns in partnership with role players in the language promotion sector, to make people not to remember their languages only during September month and return to the abuse thereof afterwards. Campaigns should be done as regular as possible to remind the community that the languages need to be promoted. This should be done in partnership with the traditional leadership as the cultural custodians.

As much as this radio has been there for some time, Moutse community radio has spearheaded campaigns and competitions aimed at promoting the languages used. This has been fuelled by the presenters who are proud of who they are and willing to share that with the community.

5.6.3 Measuring the impact of community radio in language promotion

This radio station has had a number of researches looking at many aspects that the radio is focusing on, ranging from listenership and quality programming which includes the language promotions. According to our contact, the impact has proven to be huge because we are gradually seeing the community members using one language for a long time without unnecessary mixing. That can be found when listening to the radio, with people responding to questions. The impact is also seen in the listenership response to competitions that involves language. Their participation and realization of the goals that are set is evident and can assure everyone that the impact is immeasurable.

5.7 Eyethu FM

Although percentage representation of languages is different, the encouragement of the usage of languages that can easily heard is done. Our contact on this radio spoke that their radio is best placed as language promotion platform, because it's focus is empowering the youth in whatever way possible. They said that presenters are using three languages which are *IsiNdebele, Sepedi and English*. According to our contact, this radio promotes multilingualism in a sense of trying to make

everyone to be comfortable in using any language of choice at any given time. Provided the language will portray the objective of the radio in the way that will be understandable and educative to all that listens.

5.7.1 The understanding of the topic

According to our contact, the radio is a powerful tool that can easily lead the community to anything that is done on it. It has a huge impact because some people's lifestyles are created by the listening of the radio. People like drivers, shopkeepers, and many people who cannot afford television due to many life related aspects, rely on radio for information that will eventually shape their lives. Now, with the radio that promotes all locally used languages without limiting anyone to use any, is gradually shaping the community that listens to the community that can preserve and promote the languages.

5.7.2 How best can Community Radios intensify language promotion?

When hiring presenters, language usage is key because radio communicates with it and there is no other way that radio and language can be divorced. Through language, radio can easily paint a picture that is intended. As of the other community radios, the impact is done through the programming that encourages the communication between the presenters and the listeners. Competitions and campaigns that should not only focus on certain timeframes should be employed to ensure the growth the language promotion.

5.7.3 Measuring the impact of community radio in language promotion

The present day radio introduced the voice notes that challenge the listeners to clearly work on their language before expressing themselves on radio, and the fact that the voice notes are working in the community radio tells impact that community radio is doing is huge. Community radio listeners were not expected to be clear and articulatelanguage usage, but now, because they form almost 80% of the actual programming, such is expected.

Conclusion

We conclude that the community radio plays a very vital role in the promotion of languages. They shape the way people use the languages because they are the grassroots media that can relate to the people they serve. Their work is visible in the way the communities that are in their broadcast area respond. However, much of the partnerships between those that work with languages like PanSALB, language boards and traditional leadership still need to be strengthened to be solid, the impact has proved to be huge.

The Recommendations

in terms of intensifying the impact that is already evident, we have come to issues that, language boards like PanSALB should be engaged to work with the community radios in the beautiful work that they are doing. Another partnership that has been identified as vital to strengthen is the one with traditional leadership as the custodians of culture to jointly work with the community radios in promoting the languages.

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