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## Audience Perception on the Contributions of Local Language Broadcasts to the Development of Indigenous Languages in Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract---Local language broadcasting in Nigeria is common and scholars have focused on how they enhance message delivery but not much on how it promotes indigenous languages. This study focused on audience' consumption of local language programmes, how much it learns about indigenous languages from such programmes and how the programmes contribute to mother-tongue development. The study explored cultural norm theory and adopted survey, while mean scores were used for data analysis. Findings show that local language programmes were significantly available but moderately consumed. The audience learnt enough simple words/expressions from the programmes to engage in simple conversations in local languages. The programmes thus contributed to indigenous language development by teaching people useful words, expression and pronunciations in mother tongues, and encouraged them to teach such languages to their children and friends. The findings support cultural norm theory that broadcasting can promote indigenous languages through selective presentations of programmes in mother tongues. Findings show that vernacular broadcasts are not sustainable because they hardly attract advertisements/sponsorships, and are sometimes poorly produced. The study recommends that government should formulate policies to promote local language broadcasting in Nigeria and join NGOs and pro-ethnic groups to initiate/sponsor vernacular programmes.

**Keywords**---cultural norm theory, cultural transmission, dialect, mother tongue, vernacular.

#### Introduction

The use of local languages in broadcasting in Nigeria is not strange. Many broadcast stations in Nigeria transmit in both the English Language and local languages, while some stations transmit entirely in vernacular (Akanbi & Aladesanmi, 2014). Widespread indigenous language broadcasting in Nigeria is linked with the need to communicate vital development-oriented information to the mostly illiterate people at the grassroots (who incidentally are in the majority in the country) since broadcasting and language meet communication needs (Okenwa, 1990; Adamu, 2007; Akanbi & Aladesanmi, 2014). While broadcasting provides the medium to convey vital information to a mass of recipients in high volume, language ensures that the message is understood. It is therefore imperative that Nigerian broadcasters adopt local languages which are most likely to be understood by the most significant number of their target audiences at the grassroots (Feldman & Albarracín, 2017; Van Riper & Kyle, 2014).

The selection of most appropriate languages of broadcast have always yielded benefits. Arising from the above, Aniebona (1990), postulates that broadcasting in local languages, alongside the national language, enables radio and television stations in Nigeria to convey their messages to both the literate and illiterate in the society. However, beyond ensuring that broadcast messages reach the largest proportion of target audience possible, can the use of indigenous languages in broadcasting help to promote the development of such languages? This paper is thus aimed at interrogating the preceding discourse. The rationale for this study is based on the observation that many indigenous languages in Nigeria are at the verge of extinction as a result of disuse and absence of development (Babalola et al., 2020). Language development, in the context of this study, is steady growth in the speaking of language. It is therefore intellectually rewarding to ascertain how much the use of local languages in broadcasting can help to promote the speaking of indigenous languages in Nigeria, and by extension, prevent such languages from extinction (Bisin & Verdier, 2011; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001).

#### Statement of the problem

The use of vernacular as language of broadcasting in Nigeria has received some measure of research attention. Aghadiegwu & Ogbonna (2015), notes that the use of local languages gives broadcasters opportunities to translate their messages into verbal codes that can accommodate the interests of illiterate and semi-literate members of the audience, who are usually in their large numbers, especially in rural areas. In a study on the use of Hausa Language in agricultural broadcasting in Zaria, Adamu (2007), reports that the broadcast programme studied recorded great success because it was delivered in the Hausa Language, which 100% of the study population could understand. Nwosu (1990), points out that the use of local languages and dialects in broadcasting in Nigeria is beneficial in teaching better farming techniques and food preservation practices. Also, it helps in modern crop harvesting, storage, and marketing methods for rural farmers who are in the majority in the country (Loidl, 2004; Sumner & Samuel, 2009).

All the studies cited above focused on how the use of local languages in broadcasting can enhance information delivery. However, not much appears to

have been said about how broadcasting in local languages can contribute to the development of indigenous languages in Nigeria, especially from the perspective of members of the audience in a multi-lingual society like Delta State. How much does the broadcast audience consume local language programmes in Delta State and how much do they learn about indigenous languages from local language programmes on radio and television? In what ways do these programmes contribute to the development of indigenous languages in Delta State, and what are the possible barriers? These questions represent apparent gaps in knowledge that this study on audience perception of the contributions of local language broadcasts to the development of indigenous languages in Delta State attempted to fill (Love & Ansaldo, 2010; Awopetu, 2016).

## Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

- Find out how much members of the broadcast audience in Delta State consume programmes transmitted in local languages.
- Ascertain how much members of the broadcast audience in Delta State learn about indigenous languages from local language programmes.
- Find out the ways that local language broadcast programmes can contribute to indigenous language development in Delta State.
- Examine possible barriers to the development of indigenous languages by local language broadcast programmes.

## Research questions

We used the following research questions to interrogate the study:

- How much does the broadcast audience in Delta State consume local language programmes?
- How much do members of the broadcast audience in Delta State learn about indigenous languages from local language programmes?
- In what ways do local language broadcast programmes contribute to indigenous language development?
- What are the barriers to the development of indigenous languages by local language broadcast programmes?

#### Delimitation of the study

This study is limited in scope to Delta State because of the presence of about seven major indigenous languages with a diversity of dialects. Several broadcast stations that regularly transmit in English Language and local languages cover Delta State is also covered by several (Zhai & Previtali, 2010; Hărmănescu & Enache, 2016).

## Use of local languages in broadcasting: an overview

The use of local languages in broadcasting is a phenomenon that requires no complex definition in Nigeria. Majority of radio listeners and television viewers in

the country is likely to have heard indigenous languages spoken on-air, because of the deliberate packaging of indigenous cultural programmes in local languages or the translation of contents originally packaged in English Language (like news, public service announcements and advertisements) into local languages. Accordingly, many broadcast stations in Nigeria, especially government-owned stations, transmit programmes specifically addressing different ethnic groups in their local languages and dialects (Owuamalam, 2005). However, a working definition here is that it is the deliberate sourcing and production of radio and television programmes from indigenous cultural background to be transmitted in indigenous languages or the translation of broadcast contents initially produced in English Language into local language versions.

Indigenous language broadcast programmes abound in Nigeria in different forms. There are local language newscasts; discussion programmes; request programmes; spot announcements; advertisements; religious programmes; and lots more. Almost any broadcast programme in Nigeria transmitted in the English Language can be transmitted in local languages. This became necessary because many radio and television stations in Nigeria transmit programmes in local languages, in addition to English Language programmes. There are many radio and television stations in the country that broadcast solely with indigenous languages (Peng, 2021; Smith et al., 2018).

The widespread use of local languages in broadcasting in Nigeria is to accommodate the interests of illiterate and semi-literate members of the audience, especially in rural areas (Aghadiegwu & Ogbonna, 2015). It has also been argued that the use of local languages in broadcasting, coupled with the high degree of audience penetration by radio and television, ensures that a single broadcast message reaches an entire population to achieve social mobilization goals (Aniebona, 1990). A typical example of where local language broadcasting for social mobilization recorded appreciable attitude change was the polio eradication campaign which was initially rejected in Kano State, but later accepted after Hausa Language broadcasts were used to educate the public on the importance of the polio eradication programme and the safety of the vaccines (Nwabueze, 2005).

## Local language broadcast and indigenous language development in Nigeria

Development is a deliberate and sustained process geared towards making something evolve through successive stages to become advanced, highly organized and acceptable. From this perspective, indigenous language development would entail a deliberate and systematic process that allows a local language (or dialect) to become more widely spoken over time (Onwukwe & Okugo, 2013). The need for indigenous language development is in response to the alarms being raised on the imminent demise of some languages, especially the ones indigenous to minority ethnic groups in Nigeria (Enemaku, 2004; Uwajeh, 2003). These minority local languages are said to be endangered as a result of pressures from dominant languages, lack of interest in speaking the language by educated natives, and failure to teach younger generations the languages.

Language is generally a collection of symbols, letters, or words with arbitrary meanings but when governed by rules, they could be used to share common

meanings and used to communicate (Pearson & Nelson, 2003). Languages are, however, specific to environments. According to Morreale et al. (2017), the meanings of a language, as a complex phenomenon, depends on where and when it is used. Accordingly, indigenous language refers to a language that is native to a particular territory. Sometimes, an indigenous language accommodates a variety of dialects. A dialect is defined as the variety of a language spoken in a geographical area in which words, phrases, structures, as well as their sounds and meanings, exhibit not much differences (Emenanjo, 2019). Places, where specific local languages or dialects are spoken, are usually identifiable to ethnic groups; hence a society with many ethnic groups would typically play host to the diversity of indigenous languages. Such is the case of Nigeria with over 400 languages (Onwukwe & Okugo, 2013; Ezekwesili-Ofili & Gwacham, 2015).

Some languages and dialects are dominant in specific regions in a multi-lingual society like Nigeria, and this dominance tends to push other indigenous languages to the brink of extinction. The extermination of any human language is a significant loss to humanity as it connotes the death of culture because language is the vehicle through which culture is expressed (Enemaku 2004; Owuamalam, 2005). Similarly, Pearson & Nelson (2003), submit that cultural transmission is through language and vice versa. This is because culture provides the lens through which humans make meanings out of things around them – verbal and non-verbal (which include language), while language provides the codes with which culture is shared.

Since cultural transmission is one of the cardinal functions of broadcasting, how possible is it for radio and television stations in Nigeria to promote the speaking of indigenous languages? Enemaku (2004) provides insight on this in his submission that sometimes, to communicate more effectively with the society, broadcasters are compelled to look into communities for resources (including local languages). This use of local languages in broadcasting, not only helps to preserve such languages, but also propagates them. This propagation of local languages contributes to the use of such languages for formal and informal purposes, and this, according to Onwukwe & Okugo (2013), is an indicator of indigenous language development.

Indigenous language development through the use of local languages in broadcasting is not automatic. Owuamalam (2005), highlights some fundamental attributes of broadcast programmes designed to promote local languages that are necessary to prevent them from becoming a "waste of valuable airtime". Among them is the need for broadcasters to target specific audience consistently over a while to have stations' loyalists in indigenous language development. Another is the scheduling of such programmes carefully to ensure that the largest possible audience size is reached with local language broadcasts. The content of these programmes must equally be rich, exciting, purposeful, aesthetically pleasurable and skillfully presented. Lastly, given the diversity of local languages/dialects in Nigeria, there is a need to accommodate as many of them as possible within stations' coverage areas, to avoid being accused of bias.

# Prospects and challenges of indigenous language development through local language broadcasts in Nigeria

The use of local languages in broadcasting in Nigeria has prospects to enhance communication flow in affected communities in several ways. One of these prospects is that it bridges the communication gap between literate and illiterate members of the audience (Aniebona, 1990; Aghadiegwu & Ogbonna, 2015). Broadcasting has high audience penetration and reaches widely dispersed audiences simultaneously wherever they are, whoever they are, and however they are. This penetration is immaterial of socio-economic status and individual activities at the time of the broadcast. The members of the audience can consume the broadcast contents while lying down, sitting, standing, walking, driving, working, relaxing, eating or doing anything. When this ability of broadcasting is mixed with the transmission in local languages, broadcast messages become more likely to reach the entire population, and this can be very useful for social mobilization and masses education (Aniebona, 1990; Nwosu, 1990).

Another prospect of the use of vernacular in broadcasting in Nigeria is the high level of interactivity in broadcast communication. This is made possible by the opportunities for greater audience participation, especially at the grassroots, where illiterate people who cannot speak acceptable English language are in the majority in the country. The opportunities to participate in broadcast programmes in local languages give voices to the usually silent majorities and consequently enable broadcasters to harvest a rich array of feedback, public opinion and societal sentiments, which are invaluable resources for development in any society. The fact that radio and television vocalize their messages also plays a vital role in local language development in Nigeria. This is because indigenous tribes get to hear the phonetics of their languages in terms of pronunciations, intonations, accents, and other auditory components of their languages/dialects. Indigenous people may therefore actually learn and reinforce their knowledge of the local languages through broadcast in such languages. No wonder Enemaku (2004), submits that broadcasters even preserve and propagate local languages by using them to transmit programmes.

On the other hand, indigenous language development through broadcasting has its challenges. Chief among these is the near absence of an enabling policy in this direction in Nigeria. A close study of the Nigeria Broadcasting Code National Broadcast Commission, reveals a lack of direct provision for the use of local languages in broadcasting in the country. The broadcast policy document broadly provides that broadcasting should pursue the cultural objective of seeking, identifying, preserving, and promoting Nigeria's diverse culture, without categorically providing for a comprehensive approach towards exploring the use of local language programmes to encourage developments in indigenous languages in the country although language is a vital component of culture.

Other factors hindering indigenous language development in Nigeria, as identified by Uwajeh (2003) include the oppressive role of the English Language, the intrusive function of pidgin English, and the diversity of local languages and dialects. Consciously or unconsciously, the English language poses a significant threat to the development of local languages in Nigeria as it is the principal

language of broadcasting in the country. Though many radio and television stations transmit programmes in the surrounding indigenous language(s), the programmes are usually very few (Akanbi & Aladesanmi 2014). Outside broadcasting, the English Language has primacy over indigenous languages as Nigerians converse more in it than in their local languages even at homes. This means that educated natives shy away from speaking their indigenous languages in all settings - formal and informal (Enemaku, 2004; Des & Ugor, 2017). This is seen as a display of supposed intellectual sophistication which many uneducated natives also attempt to copy by mixing the speaking of local languages with the English Language. In some other instances, use of indigenous languages or mother-tongue-interference in the speaking of the English Language is scorned as lack of intellectual sophistication.

Closely related to the shunning of the speaking of local languages in a bid to demonstrate sophistication is the speaking of Pidgin English. Many illiterates in Nigeria tend to speak pidgin English instead of their indigenous languages, even in their homes. These realities push indigenous languages to the background in family and social interactions and prevent the passing on of local languages to the younger generation. The diversity of indigenous languages earlier identified as a factor militating against their development in Nigeria is perhaps responsible for the widespread use of the English Language and pidgin English as communication codes for social interactions. Even natives of the same ethnic group in Nigeria sometimes find it challenging to communicate in their indigenous language as a result of variations in dialects. Many Nigerian languages/dialects do not have written forms because of multiplicity thus making their learning or use in broadcasting and other formal settings difficult (Des & Ugor, 2017).

## Theoretical framework (the cultural norm theory)

This study draws theoretical perspectives from the cultural norm theory which postulates that "selective presentation" of and "tendentious emphasis" on specific issues by the mass media succeed in creating the impression in the audience that such matters are necessary part of the cultural norms of the society (Brown, 2012). What this suggests is that the broadcast media can promote the speaking of local languages among members of the audience through the selective presentations of local language programmes with the right degree of emphasis. The above perspective on cultural norm theory is upheld by Hasan (2010), who avers that all human practices inter-twined with culture can be reinforced on the society by broadcasting and other media mass. Language is a significant component of a people's culture, and it has been defined as the chief vehicle of culture (Samiksha & Dayanand, 2010). Broadcasters can promote language development by specially producing and transmitting programmes that draw attention to such language, building perceptions about such languages among the audience, maintaining such perceptions and reinforcing them from time to time.

This ability of the mass media (including broadcasting) to influence the general perception of any component of a society's culture as necessary, as postulated by the cultural norm theory, is described "Cultural Engineering" (Ibagere, 2009). This indicates that broadcasting can be perceived as a component of culture

whose primary function is to enrich the culture of the society where it operates and to do this, there is need to indigenize what is foreign and idealize what is indigenous. In the sphere of local language development in Nigeria, cultural engineering entails 'indigenizing what is foreign' by broadcasting in indigenous languages. On the other hand, we 'idealizing what is indigenous' when broadcasting encourages the audience to speak the local language.

#### **Materials and Method**

We adopted the survey method and engaged a sample of 400 respondents drawn purposively from 27 communities in Delta State, which we distributed among the three senatorial districts of the state. A total of 269 (67.25%) copies of the questionnaire were found usable in the study. The wastage rate of 32.75% was due to the rejection of copies of the questionnaire with inconsistent responses detected by the incorporated cheater detector items. We analyzed the data by comparison of simple percentages and mean scores. Computed mean scores for responses to opinions measured on a 4-point Likert scale item in the questionnaire were judged against a benchmark mean of 2.50 such that when computed mean  $\leq$  2.50, the assertion is rejected and when computed mean  $\geq$  2.50 the assertion is accepted (Pratama & Mandaasari, 2020; Peter, 2015).

## Data presentation and analyses

Demographic data generated by this study show that majority of the respondents fell within 21-30 Years age bracket with 125 (47.2%). This is followed by 31-40 Years (53 [19.7%]); Less than 20 Years (46 [17.1%); 41-50 Years (26 [9.7%); 51-60 Years (13 [4.8%]); and above 60 Years (4 [1.5%). The above indicates that respondents in this study were mostly 40 years and below. This age range is good for this study as it accommodates the active population in the society. Distribution of respondents by academic background shows that majority (193 [71.8%]) had post-secondary education, while 41 (15.2%) had secondary education. Another 17 (6.3%) had primary education, while 18 (6.7%) had no formal education. This is reflective of the classification of Delta State as one of the educationally developed states in Nigeria. The first research question in this study enquired into how much respondents consumed local language programmes transmitted by radio and television stations. Emanating data reveal that majority of the respondents (95 [35.3%]) reported that local language programmes were transmitted daily [i.e. 35 of them (13%) claiming the programmes were aired more than once a day, and 60 (22.3%) indicating once a day transmission]. This is followed by 61 respondents (22.7%) who said programmes in native languages were broadcast in intervals of days within the week, while 58 (21.6%) claimed that the transmission of such programmes were rare. Another 38 respondents (14.1%) reported weekly broadcasts, 10 (3.7%) reported monthly transmissions, while 7 of them (2.6%) said the programmes were broadcast once in every 2-3 weeks. The above indicates that the level of availability of local language programmes in Delta State is high since 194 (72.1%) had the opportunity to listen to or watch them more than once a week or weekly (See Figure 1).

With this high level of availability of indigenous language programmes in Delta State established, the study examined respondents' level of consumption.

Available data indicate that majority of the respondents (97 = 36.1%) rarely tunein to radio and television stations for local language programmes in Delta State. This is followed by two sets of 38 respondents (14.1%) who claimed that they consumed vernacular programmes on radio and television once a day and once a week respectively. 49 (18.2%) of respondents tuned-in to the programmes more than one day in a week. 16 of them (6%) tuned-in more than once daily, while 14 (5.2%) did the same once a month. Another 17 respondents (6.3%) reported tuning-in once within intervals of two-three weeks. The two sets of data are set out in the composite bar chart below:

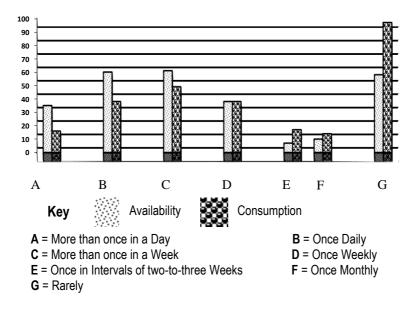


Figure 1. Composite bar chart showing frequencies of availability and consumption of local language broadcasts among respondents Source: Field Work, 2020

In summary, 141 (52.4%) consumed the programmes once a week or few times within the week while 125 (47.6%) tuned-in less frequently or rarely. The observation buttresses this reality that only 59 respondents (21.9%) could recall titles of programmes in indigenous languages available to them in Delta State. This compels us to conclude that the consumption of local language programmes in Delta State is moderate even though they are significantly available. Research question 2 sought to find out how much the respondents learnt about indigenous languages from local language programmes on radio and television. On the whole, 179 respondents (66.5%) claimed that they learnt something about native languages from the local language programmes they consumed. This suggests that even some of those who consumed the programmes rarely equally learnt from them. Available data on particular knowledge acquired was analyzed via mean score as presented in Table 1:

Table 1										
Possible things learnt from local language programmes										

S/N	Response Response Values Categories											
	Possible	SA=	=4=X	A=3=X		D=2=X		SD=1=X		$\sum f$	∑fX	$\overline{X}$
Α	Things	f	fX	f	fX	f	fX	f	fX	_	_	
	Learnt from LLPs											
1	Exchanging greetings	97	388	78	234	49	98	27	27	251	747	2.98
2	Introducing oneself	54	216	88	264	63	126	32	32	237	638	2.69
3	Buying and selling Simple	30	120	60	180	84	168	61	61	235	529	2.25
4	words and expressions	61	24	101	303	45	90	24	24	231	661	2.86
5	Conversing freely	34	136	56	168	78	156	82	82	250	542	2.17
6	Complex words and expressions	43	172	59	177	73	146	65	65	240	560	2.33

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 1 shows that the exchange of greetings in indigenous languages was the thing learnt the most from local language programmes with a mean score of 2.98. This is followed by 'simple words and expressions in vernacular' (2.86) and 'introducing oneself in vernacular' (2.69). Other possible things that could have been learnt about mother tongues from radio and television programmes in local languages which were explored in the study did not record acceptable levels of significance, haven fallen short of the 2.50 benchmark mean. They include 'complex words and expression in vernacular' (2.33); 'buying and selling in indigenous languages' (2.25); and how to converse freely in native languages (2.17). We, therefore, conclude that respondents learnt how to exchange greetings in indigenous languages, how to use simple words and expressions in vernacular and how to introduce themselves in vernacular significantly. The knowledge acquired from local language broadcasts in the use of tricky words and expressions, buying and selling and how to converse freely in native languages was not significant.

The third research question examined ways that local language broadcast programmes contribute to the development of indigenous languages. Available data (Table 2) indicate that the most significant way that local language programmes can contribute to the development of indigenous languages is by teaching people to use words and expressions in vernacular. This got a mean score of 3.58. Other significant ways of developing indigenous languages through radio and television local language programmes include teaching people correct pronunciations of vernacular words (3.55); encouraging parents and guardians to teach mother tongues to their families (3.48); and encouraging people to converse

freely in native languages (3.41). Local language broadcast programmes have also been identified as capable of developing indigenous languages by promoting a sense of belonging among people whose mother tongues are used in local language programmes and encouraging people to teach their native languages to their friends with mean scores of 3.39 and 3.18 respectively.

Table 2 Ways local language programmes promote indigenous language development

S/N	Response											
	Categories Ways LLPs	ςΔ-	=4=X	Δ —	3=X	D=2=X		SD=1=X		$\sum \mathbf{f}$	∑fX	X
В	Promote	F	fX	F	5-A fX	F	fX	SD.	fX	<u>Z</u> 1	Σιχ	Λ
_	Indigenous	•	121	•	12.1	•	121	•	12.1			
	Language											
	Development											
1	Teaching	132	528	81	243	2	4	2	2	217	777	3.58
1	useful words											
	and expressions											
	Teaching	127	508	75	225	8	16	1	1	211	750	3.55
2	correct							_	_			
	pronunciatio											
	ns _								_			
	Encouraging	102	408	82	246	16	32	2	2	202	688	3.41
3	conversation s in											
3	indigenous											
	languages											
	Promoting	106	424	76	228	16	32	5	5	203	689	3.39
	sense of											
4	belonging											
4	among speakers of											
	indigenous											
	languages											
	Encouraging	115	460	78	234	8	16	4	4	205	714	3.48
	teaching of											
5	indigenous											
	languages to											
	family members											
	Encouraging	83	332	79	237	36	72	5	5	203	646	3.18
	teaching of			-	-	-					-	-
6	indigenous											
	languages to											
	friends											

Source: Field Work, 2021

We, therefore, conclude that local language broadcast programmes significantly contribute to indigenous language development because they teach people useful words, expressions and correct pronunciations in vernacular. The programmes also encourage parents and guardians to teach family members their mother tongues so that they can converse in them freely, promote a sense of belonging and teach their friends the languages. Research Question 4 focused on possible barriers to the development of indigenous languages by local language broadcast programmes. Data on Table 4 indicate that the most significant barrier to indigenous language development by local language broadcast programmes is their non-sustainability. They hardly attract advertisements or sponsorships and are moderately consumed since many respondents did not tune-in to them significantly with mean scores of 3.35 and 3.27, respectively. Other barriers are that local language programmes are in the minority in the overall volume of radio and television programmes (3.13); poor production of indigenous language programmes (3.06); perception of vernacular programmes as disturbance to enjoyment of broadcasting (3.11) and misrepresentation of indigenous languages by some broadcast messages (2.65). On this last issue, respondents referred to the "Good Morning" jingle on Quest FM containing "Good morning" greetings in different languages some of which are wrong.

Table 3
Barriers to indigenous language development by local language programmes

S/N	Response Response Values											
	Categories											_
	Barriers to		4=X	A=	3=X	D=	2=X	SD	=1=X	$\sum \! {f f}$	∑fX	X
C	Indigenous	f	fX	f	fX	f	fX	f	fX			
	Language											
	Development by LLPs											
	LLPs are not	13	52	16	48	3	6	2	2	34	108	3.18
1	common in	10	02	10	.0	Ü	Ü	_	-	0.	100	0.10
	Nigeria											
2	People do not	16	64	17	51	2	4	2	2	37	121	3.27
	tune-in to LLPs											
3	LLPs are poorly	11	44	16	48	5	10	2	2	34	104	3.06
4	produced	1 -	60	10	26	5	10	3	3	25	100	2 1 1
4	LLPs are seen as disturbance	15	60	12	36	5	10	3	3	35	109	3.11
	LLPs	7	28	15	45	5	10	7	7	34	90	2.65
5	misrepresent	•	40	10	10	O	10	,	•	0 1	50	2.00
	indigenous											
	languages											
	LLPs are not	18	72	12	36	2	4	2	2	34	114	3.35
	sustainable											
6	because of weak											
	advertisement											
	and sponsorship											

Source: Field Work, 2021

### **Discussion of Findings**

Findings in this study indicate that the broadcast audience in Delta State, Nigeria, consume local language programmes moderately despite their significant availability. To buttress this, many members of the broadcast audience in Delta State cannot recall titles of mother tongue programmes that are transmitted to them via radio and television. This reality is captured by Enemaku (2004), who avers that some people tend to shy away from their native languages (including not tuning-in to indigenous language programmes) (Suryasa et al., 2019; Alsharif, 2020).

However, despite the moderate consumption of local language programmes, the respondents learnt how to exchange greetings, use simple words and expressions, and introduce themselves in vernacular significantly from them. This suggests that local language broadcasts are potent avenues to promote the development of indigenous languages in a multi-ethnic society like Delta State since people still learnt from them despite their moderate consumption. This finding, therefore, upholds the tenet of the cultural norm theory that television and radio can promote the speaking of indigenous languages among members of the audience through selective presentations of broadcast contents in mother tongues. The theory also postulates that all human practices connected to culture (chief among them the speaking of mother tongues) can be reinforced on the society by the radio and television, among other media of mass communication (Hasan, 2010).

We also found that local language broadcasts contribute to the development of indigenous languages in societies with multiple mother tongues as they teach the audience useful words, expressions and correct pronunciations. Local language programmes also promote the speaking of mother tongues in multi-ethnic societies by encouraging families to teach them to their children and converse freely in them. The transmission of local language programmes also attach a degree of importance to the indigenous languages used in the broadcasts and encourage people to teach such languages to their friends as fall-outs of the transmissions. This finding agrees with the view that the use of indigenous languages in broadcasting preserves and propagates local dialects since the audience gets to hear proper phonetics of mother tongues in terms of pronunciations, intonations, accents, and other auditory components of the native languages.

However, the study reveals certain factors that can militate against the promotion of native languages by local language broadcasts. These include the low revenue generation profiles of local language programmes. They hardly attract sponsorships/advertisements, which makes it difficult to sustain them. The study shows that many people do not tune-in to indigenous language programmes with the same enthusiasm with which they consume other English Language broadcast contents. In some instances, local language programmes have been described as being poorly produced and therefore not interesting enough. A typical example here is the "Good Morning" jingle on Quest FM. The idea of jingle was to say "Good morning" in different local languages, but some of them are wrong to the disappointment of the affected tribes. This finding is in line with,

which holds that the development of indigenous languages through vernacular broadcasts is not automatic.

#### Conclusion

This study establishes that local language programmes are significantly available on radio and television stations in Delta State, but this did not translate to significant consumption. The audience moderately consumes native language programmes and cannot recall substantially the titles of vernacular programmes transmitted to it. This notwithstanding, the broadcast audience in Delta State learnt simple words and expressions from local language broadcasts enough for them to exchange greetings and introduce themselves in the indigenous languages covered by the radio and television programmes.

This study confirms that local language programmes are useful in indigenous language development in multi-lingual societies because they can teach people valuable words and expression as well as their correct pronunciations in mother tongues. The use of native languages in broadcast programmes in Delta State can also encourage people to teach such languages to their children and friends. However, the use of indigenous languages in broadcasting is not sustainable because local language programmes hardly attract advertisements/sponsorships. Also, some local language programmes are poorly produced and therefore not appealing to the audience.

#### Recommendations

Arising from the conclusions of this study, we make the following recommendations:

- Governments at all levels should formulate policies to promote the production and transmission of local language programmes by radio and television stations in Nigeria.
- Government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), pro-ethnic groups and cultural associations should initiate and sponsor a wide variety of local language programmes to sustain the availability of such programmes in broadcasting in the country.
- Radio and television programme producers should design, produce, and present local language programmes with a high level of professionalism to make them attractive and gratifying to the audience.

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