

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES ON COMMUNICATIONS IN ETHNIC MINORITY LANGUAGES IN VIETNAM*

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With a view to a sustainable development of not only ethnic minorities (EMs) but also the nation, the Party and State leaders of Vietnam have enacted numerous policies related to the use of ethnic minority languages. This article explores the implementation of those policies in Vietnam and proposes several solutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam in the current period.

Keywords: Policy; Ethnic minorities; Ethnic minority languages; Media; Vietnam.

1. Introduction

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual nation, with a high proportion of ethnic minorities (EMs). Ethnic minorities are mainly distributed in mountainous and midland areas - where upstream rivers are located, possessing great potential for natural resources and being an important position in national security. In order to improve the environment and the quality of life for ethnic minority people, at the same time, to sustainably develop the nation and country in the current period of renovation and integration, the Party and State leaders of Vietnam have enacted a large number of practical guidelines, policies and specific solutions for ethnic minorities. One of the solutions which is especially focused on is improving the quality of communications in ethnic minority languages.

Communications in ethnic minority languages can help ethnic minority people in general, ethnic minority ones who do not speak Vietnamese in particular have access to information so that they can develop awareness, change behaviors in a positive way; develop mother tongue and the common language; preserve cultural identity, contribute to protecting the diversity of Vietnamese culture. This activity also contributes to socio-economic development in mountainous and border areas;

create an important premise for national security and defense mission; contribute to the implementation of the Law on Access to Information (104/2016/QH13, April 6, 2016) and implement the Party's guidelines and the State's policies on sustainable development of ethnic minority areas and ethnic minority languages in Vietnam.

In Vietnam, communications in some of ethnic minority languages have been implemented in national and local media agencies for a long time, but many issues related to policy research, especially the situation of implementing the policy on ethnic minority languages in the media in Vietnam has not been studied systematically and comprehensively. The article aims to study those policies and point out the status of implementing EM language policies in communications in Vietnam. Thereby, the article proposes recommendations on policies and specific solutions to improve the quality of communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam.

2. Context

2.1. International situation

Ethnic minority communications in general and communications in ethnic minority languages in particular have been mentioned in numerous research projects around the world. This means that

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communications in ethnic minority languages has become an issue of interest to research in recent years. However, this activity develops in various ways in different countries around the world.

In 1923, the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) began broadcasting several programs in Welsh; In 1934, the Norwegian radio station NRK (Norsk Riksringkasting) broadcast a number of programs in ethnic minority languages for the Sami people, a group of ethnic minorities living in northern Norway. Similar radio programs for the Sami community were broadcast in Sweden and Finland in 1948.

In the late 1980s and 1990s, communications in ethnic minority languages in European countries such as England, France, Norway, Sweden, Belgium and Switzerland developed rapidly. In Germany, major cities such as Munich and Stuttgart had broadcast hours in EM languages. In 1998, there were about 265 hours broadcast in six ethnic languages in France. In Spain, after 1975, localities gained more autonomy, which created an opportunity for local radio stations to broadcast programs in ethnic minority languages. Programs for the Catalan and Basque communities appeared on the radio in 1977 and on the television in 1983.

Communications in EM languages has been growing rapidly in Australia in all forms such as print, radio, television, films, videos, multimedia and online media. Among those forms, radio in ethnic minority languages is the most successful one. The reason for this success is that ethnic minority communities often live in remote and isolated areas, which means that they often find it difficult to access to print media. This can be considered a good model lesson for Vietnam when choosing suitable forms of communications for each ethnic minority group in each specific region and locality.

Currently, in China, a communication system of many languages, levels, frequencies has been built. Programs in five ethnic languages - Mongolian, Tibetan, Uyghur, Kazakh and Korean – have been broadcast in nearly half of China. Some languages belonging to ethnic minority groups with only a small number of users have also been used in radio programs such as Zhuang, Di, Thai, and Kangba.

It can be seen that when studying languages of ethnic minorities in communications and policies on communications in languages of ethnic minorities, foreign authors have agreed at some points such as:

(1) The political context and policy views of the government have a great influence on communications in ethnic minority languages.

(2) In order that the communications in

ethnic minority languages achieve high level of effectiveness, preserving cultural identity and expanding “public spaces” for ethnic minorities need to be promoted.

(3) When recognizing and evaluating communications in EM languages, it is necessary to put them in the context of globalization with the strong development of Internet and digital technology.

(4) Appropriate policies and solutions are essential to promote the positive points that communications bring to ethnic minority communities; at the same time, the negative effects must be minimized, especially when ethnic languages are endangered.

These are valuable experiences and are the basis for researching and proposing policies to develop communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam.

2.2. Vietnamese situation

There have been many studies on communications in ethnic minority languages and policies on ethnic minorities in communications in Vietnam.

Former General Director of Vietnam Television Station – Mr. Ho Anh Dung, in the article “Development of television in ethnic minority areas” (printed in the book titled *Vietnamese Ethnic Minorities in the twentieth century*), showed the need and forecast the capacity to contribute and increase investment in information and communications of Vietnam Television Station to ethnic minority areas in the new situation.

The Conference of summarizing the work of preserving and promoting the ethnic minority people’s voices and scripts (2006) also mentioned a large number of issues related to communications in ethnic minority languages and the implementation of policies on communications in ethnic minority languages.

The author Nguyen Van Khang, in his article “Several issues related to the status of Cham language in Vietnam today”(2011), mentioned communications in Cham language in Vietnam today. According to the author, radio and television in ethnic minority languages are remarkably appreciated by the Party and State’s leaders of Vietnam and they are gladly welcomed by Cham people.

The author Nguyen Huu Hoanh, in the book titled *Languages and scripts of ethnic minorities in Vietnam (General issues)* (2013), also said that: “It is necessary to determine the priority order when ethnic minority languages and scripts are brought

into public media, as well as in teaching at schools”.

In the article *Broadcasting in the languages and scripts of ethnic minorities in Lai Chau Radio - Television Station today: the reality and recommendations* (2014), analyzing the situation of broadcasting in the languages and scripts of ethnic minorities in Lai Chau Radio – Television Station, the author Thuy Ngoan proposed some solutions to effectively use ethnic minority languages and scripts in radio and television programs.

In general, scientific research has shown the important role and effect of communications in ethnic minority languages on the socio-economic development of ethnic minority areas, ensuring national security and Vietnam’s cultural diversity in the context of globalization. Communications in ethnic minority languages help to enforce equality in all aspects of ethnic minority communities, including the rights to access information and to preserve languages and cultures of their ethnic groups. The articles also affirm the basic achievements that communications in ethnic minority languages have achieved in recent years. At the same time, they point out the shortcomings and drawbacks during the implementation of this activity on the selection of languages, the way of creating content, the selection and application of different types of communications. Many effective forms of communications such as oral propaganda, posters, panels, pictures, leaflets, seminars, training, etc. have not reached ethnic minority people in remote and isolated areas. Especially, in the current context of globalization, the forms of communications in ethnic minority languages need to be diversified; online and multimedia communications should be promoted; more achievements of the modern technology should be applied to communications.

3. Methodology and literature review

The main methods used in this article are the linguistic field method and the sociolinguistic method. The linguistic field method was used to collect documents on the current status of communications and the reception of communications in ethnic minority languages of ethnic minorities in Vietnam nowadays. The sociolinguistic method was used to collect documents and experts’ opinions on communications in ethnic minority languages, current policies on languages of ethnic minorities in communications in Vietnam.

The scope of the survey material for the paper focuses on three aspects:

1. Decisions, directives, resolutions, circulars, etc. related to the implementation and guidance on the implementation of policies on communications and communications in ethnic minority languages

in Vietnam.

2. The implementation and effectiveness of the policies on languages of ethnic minorities in communications in Vietnam.

3. Pilot survey of needs, aspirations and attitudes of ethnic minorities on receiving communications in ethnic languages in Kim Phuong commune, Dinh Hoa district, Thai Nguyen province. Kim Phuong Commune has a population of 3231 people¹; this is the place where the majority of the Tay ethnic people live (more than 90% of the Tay people) and also receives many radio and television channels in ethnic minority languages produced by central and local radio and television stations.

4. Findings

4.1. An overview of policies on EM languages in communications in Vietnam

In the early years of establishment, the Communist Party of Vietnam was well aware of the importance of using EM language for revolutionary propaganda, so it required officials learn to use the language of ethnic minorities where they worked, as well as publishing newspapers, printing handbills in ethnic languages to propagate to ethnic minority people.

In the 30 years from 1945 to 1975, in the context of a war-torn country, the State of Vietnam still focused on EM language issues in communications. Myriad Decrees, Circulars, Directives, Decisions approving the plan to use improved ethnic minority languages and words in localities; Decisions to build radio programs in ethnic languages, which were issued, facilitating communications in ethnic minority languages. Since 1975, in the context of peace, international integration, the Party and State leaders of Vietnam have focused on building policies to orient, direct and support communications in ethnic minority languages and words. Along with the policies on improving and developing the ethnic minority alphabets, policies on teaching and learning EM languages and policies on communications in ethnic minority languages were also issued. In general, the policies on EM languages in the media focus on the following issues:

First: Emphasize the role of communications in ethnic minority languages and require the use of EM languages in the media.

Decision No. 53-CP issued on February 22, 1980 of the Government Council on the policy of ethnic minority writing requires: “In the process of disseminating information, propaganda and cultural

¹ According to data in the Summary Report of People’s Committee of Kim Phuong commune, Dinh Hoa district, Thai Nguyen province in 2017

values of the State in ethnic minority areas, it is of importance to combine the use of ethnic languages and words to enable easy and quick acquisition”.

Second: Strengthen and expand the forms of communications in EM languages on the mass media.

Directive No. 23 CT/TW of November 15, 1977 of the Secretariat for Ethnic Minorities work in Southern provinces clearly states: *“Strengthening forms of cultural activities such as publishing books and newspaper, exhibitions, performance, cinema, lighting, etc.; attention should be paid to the use of ethnic languages and scripts and forms of mobile activities to go further into remote and isolated areas”*.

Documents of the 9th National Congress on ethnic minority languages and cultures work state: *“Developing and modernizing the mass communication network, improving the quality of broadcasting products and services, newspapers, publications. By 2010, the dissemination of radio and television facilities to each family should have been basically completed. Develop cultural places in combination with the post office system throughout the country. Using ethnic spoken words and written scripts on mass media in ethnic minority areas”*.

Third: Invest in building publications (books, newspapers, magazines) for ethnic minorities; promote cultural enjoyment for ethnic minorities.

A couple of documents have been issued relating to the construction of publications for ethnic minorities such as the Prime Minister’s Decision No. 1637/2001/QĐ-TTg of December 31, 2001 on the granting of a number of newspapers and magazines for ethnic minority and mountainous areas; Guidance No. 441/2002/BVHTT of January 28, 2002 of the Ministry of Culture - Information on the contents of newspapers and magazines for ethnic minority and mountainous areas; Decision No. 1637/QĐ-TTg of December 31, 2001 of the Prime Minister on the contents of newspapers and magazines for ethnic minority and mountainous areas; Decree No. 72 / ND-CP dated August 6, 2002 of the Government detailing the implementation of the Library Ordinance; Decision No. 42/2002/QĐ-UBND of April 3, 2002 of the Committee for Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas on the promulgation of the Order Regulation on contents, methods and measures to organize the implementation of a number of newspapers, magazines for ethnic minorities and mountainous areas; Decision No. 170/2003/QĐ-TTg of August 14, 2003 of the Prime Minister on preferential policies for cultural enjoyment; Circular No.

166/2012/TT-BTC dated December 1, 2012 of the Ministry of Finance on regulations on management and use of funds for implementation of policies to issue a number of newspapers and magazines for ethnic minority and mountainous areas, especially difficult areas in the period of 2012-2015.

Fourth: Improve the quality of radio and television broadcasting activities in ethnic minority languages.

Issues of modernization of forms, expansion of content, enhancement of infrastructure and funding for radio and television activities are mentioned or guided in specific documents such as: Instruction No.525-TTg of November 2, 1993 of the Prime Minister on a number of undertakings and measures to continue the socio-economic development in mountainous areas; Decision No. 201/2001/QĐ-DFT of June 12, 2001 of The Voice of Vietnam on the rearrangement of the ethnic language programs of The Voice of Vietnam; The Prime Minister’s Decision No.32/2006/QĐ-TTg of February 7, 2006, approving the Planning on Vietnam’s telecommunications and Internet development till 2010; Decision No.06/2007/QĐ-UBND of January 12, 2007, of the Committee for Ethnic Minorities, approving the communication strategy for Program 135- Phase 2; Decree No.05/2011/ND - CP dated January 14, 2011 of the Government on ethnic affairs; Decision No.1212/QĐ-TTg dated September 5, 2012 of the Prime Minister approving the National Target Program to provide information to mountainous, remote, border and island areas in the 2012-2015 period.

Thus, it can be seen that, since the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Party and State leaders of Vietnam have imposed good views on ethnic issues, so they have set out many objective policies in harmony with ethnic minority languages in Vietnam. Policies on Vietnamese ethnic minority languages in the media of Vietnam have been supplemented and revised as needed to facilitate the implementation of the organization.

4.2. Situation of implementation of policies on EM languages in communications in Vietnam

4.2.1. The situation of communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam

Communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam is carried out mainly in three types of communications: printed, audio and visual media. Along with studying materials and surveying the actual situation, within the framework of an article, we perform statistics, giving specific data on the situation of communications in the languages of ethnic minorities on radio and television of central and local (provincial) stations of Vietnam.

a. Central stations

Currently, in Vietnam, radio and television broadcasting activities in EM languages are officially implemented through the channel VOV4 - Department of Ethnic Minorities – The Voice of Vietnam and channel VTV5 – Vietnam Television Station.

The Department of Ethnic Minorities VOV4 is a unit under the management of The Voice of Vietnam, acting as the focal point for organizing, managing and producing radio programs of the Party, in order to systematically propagate the guidelines and directions of the Party's policies and State's laws on ethnic issues reflecting the whole life, economy and society of ethnic minorities, contributing to preserving and promoting the cultural identity of the people.

Radio programs managed and produced by the Department of Ethnic Minorities consist of 12 radio programs in 12 EM languages such as Mong, Dao, Thai, Ba Na, E-de, Gia-rai, Co-ho, Mong, Xo Dang, Gie Trieng, Co Tu, Cham and Khmer. VOV4 consists of 5 permanent agencies: (1). The one in Northwest region (located in Son La) broadcasts in 3 languages (Mong, Dao and Thai). Each language has a program that summarizes news with 30 minutes/session and 3 times/day; (2). The one in Central Highlands region (located in Dak Lak) broadcasts in 6 languages (Ba Na, E De, Gia Rai, Co Ho, Mong and Xo Dang) with the broadcast duration of 45 minutes/session and 2 sessions/day; (3). The one in Central Region (located in Da Nang) broadcasts in Co Tu language with a duration of 45 minutes/session and 3 sessions/day; (4). The one in Ho Chi Minh City (located in Ho Chi Minh City) broadcasts in Cham language with a duration of 30 minutes/session and 4 sessions/day; (5). The one in Southern region (located in Can Tho) broadcasts in Khmer with 4 programs: The news program with a duration of 10 minutes/session and 2 sessions/day, the Local Khmer program with the duration of 40 minutes/session and 2 sessions/day, another news program with 30 minutes/session and 2 times/day, a music program with 30 minutes/session and 2 sessions/day.

The Ethnic Television Department - Vietnam Television Station (VTV5) is a national-level ethnic minority television channel (with Vietnamese subtitles) of Vietnam Television, mainly serving ethnic minorities in remote areas. The channel has been broadcast 24/24 hours a day (since 2012). The mission of VTV5 Ethnic Television Department is to provide information and policies of the Party and State of Vietnam, major and important events of ethnic minorities. The content of VTV5 is largely for news programs, concerts, documentaries and a part

of the broadcasting time is spent on entertainment programs. VTV5 includes 3 permanent agencies: (1). The one in Hanoi (Vietnam Television) broadcasts 9 languages (Mong, Dao, Thai, Muong, Hoa, Tay, Cao Lan, San Chi and Pa Ko). The programs in ethnic minority languages have been broadcast for 30 minutes each session, in which: The program of Mong and Dao languages are broadcast twice daily, Thai language program is broadcast 3 times a week, Muong language program is broadcast twice a week, Chinese language program is broadcast twice a month, Pa Ko language program is broadcast twice a month; (2). The one in Tay Nguyen broadcasts 14 languages, namely Ba Na, E de, Gia rai, Co ho, M'ngong, Xe Dang, Gie trieng, Chu Ru, Co Tu, Cham, Ca Dong, Chau Ro, Ma , H're; etc. (3). The one in Can Tho broadcasts Khmer language. Khmer language program is broadcast for 125-300 minutes/session and 2 sessions/day, broadcasting Khmer language program for 6.5 hours per day on channel VTV Can Tho 2. Broadcasting content includes: news, topics, arts shows, movies.

b. Local (provincial) stations

Vietnam has 63 provinces and 35 of them have broadcast in ethnic minority languages. They are Yen Bai, Dien Bien, Hoa Binh, Lai Chau, Son La, Lao Cai, Ha Giang, Cao Bang, Bac Kan, Lang Son, Tuyen Quang, Thai Nguyen, Binh Thuan, Khanh Hoa, Ninh Thuan, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai , Quang Tri, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Thua Thien Hue, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Dak Lak, Dak Nong, Lam Dong, Binh Phuoc, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, Binh Dinh, An Giang, Tra Vinh, Hau Giang, Soc Trang and Kien Giang.

Most provincial stations have radio and television stations. There are 6 provinces in the North West region mainly broadcasting in Mong, Dao and Thai languages. In the North East region, there are 6 provinces broadcasting in ethnic minority languages, and the main languages are Mong, Dao and Tay - Nung. There are 14 provinces in the Central and Highlands regions with radio and television broadcasting in ethnic minority languages. EM languages selected for radio and television broadcasting in this area are: Cham, Raglai, Co Tu, Ca Dong, Hre, Co, Bru - Van Kieu, Mong, Thai, Dao, Pa ko, Xe Dang , Ba Na, Gie Trieng, Gia Rai, Ee, Mo Nong, K Ho. There are 11 provinces in the Southern and Mekong River Delta regions with radio and television broadcast in ethnic minority languages. Khmer and Cham are the major EM languages used on radio or television in this area.

The average broadcast time for each EM language program is from 15 to 30 minutes. For example, 3 languages, namely Mong, Dao, and

Thai are broadcast on YTV channel and on FM channel (frequency 92.1 MHz) in Yen Bai. There is news in Muong language at HBT channel and on FM channel (frequency 96.3 MHz) in Hoa Binh. Hmong, Dao and Thai are three languages used on LTV channel; there are 3 TV programs (news programs, music shows and variety) shown in Dao language, each of which is broadcast with a duration of 15 minutes/session; those in Mong and Thai languages are broadcast for 15 minutes per session in Lai Chau. In Son La, Mong and Thai languages are used on STV channel; there are 3 programs in each language (the 15-minute news, the 30-minute variety, the 10-minute new rural program). In addition, Son La province also has a radio channel broadcast in Mong and Thai languages on FM 96 MHz, there are two 30-minute programs, which are the general news program and music program. In Lao Cai province, Mong and Dao languages are used in THLC channel; there are 4 programs using those languages, including news programs, music programs, and the current status and development of ethnic minorities with 15 minutes / session. In Ha Giang province, Mong, Dao and Tay languages are broadcast on HGTV channel, there are 2 programs for each language, namely the news and the ethnic cultural program with 30 minutes/session. In addition, Ha Giang also has radio channel broadcast in Mong, Dao and Tay languages with

the programs of general news and music, with a duration of 30 minutes/session on FM frequency of 100 MHz. Mong and Dao languages are broadcast on CBT channel with a duration of 30 minutes/session in Cao Bang. In addition, Cao Bang also has a radio channel broadcast in Mong, Dao and Tay-Nung languages. Each language is used within 2 programs, the news program, and the general music program. Broadcast duration is 30 minutes/session on FM 99 MHz frequency. In Bac Kan province, Mong and Thai are broadcast on TBK channel, with news and music programs. Broadcast duration is 30 minutes/session. Mong, Dao and Thai languages are broadcast on radio in Cao Bang. Each language is used in 2 programs: news and folk music program; each of them is broadcast with 30 minutes/session on FM 99.3 MHz frequency.

4.2.2. Pilot research on the situation of accessing communications in ethnic minority languages of in Vietnam

At the beginning of August 2018, we conducted a pilot survey on some issues related to EM languages used in radio and television activities on 193 Tay people (randomly selected) in Kim Phuong commune, Dinh Hoa district, Thai Nguyen province. These are the people who approached the radio and television programs in Tay - Nung language through VTV5 channel and they live in Thai Nguyen, Bac

Table 1. Linguistic competence of subjects surveyed

Language	Competence		Ability to both listen and speak		Ability to listen only		Ability to neither listen nor speak		Literacy		Illiteracy	
	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)
Mother-tongue	193	100	0	0	0	0	47	24	146	76		
Kinh language (Vietnamese)	193	100	0	0	0	0	193	100	0	0		

Table 2. Frequency of using different types of media of surveyed subjects

Media	Frequency	Usually		Often		Never	
		Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)	Number (persons)	Ratio (%)
Radio		38	20	117	60	38	20
Television		129	67	15	7	49	26
Printed newspaper, magazine		0	0	0	0	0	0
Direct communications (via communicators)		0	0	23	12	170	88
Social networks (Facebook, Zalo,...)		0	0	36	19	157	81
Call		96	50	42	22	55	28
Text messages		9	5	24	12	160	83

Kan, Cao Bang and other provinces.

Through the survey, we initially commented on some of the following aspects (Table 1)

a. The competence of using mother-tongue

The table shows that 100% of the respondents were able to verbally communicate in their mother tongue, but 76% of the respondents did not know the Tay - Nung scripts (146/193 people). Those are mostly middle-aged people or teenagers, who have dropped out to work, or are still in high school.

The number of people who could listen, speak and write in the Tay - Nung language is relatively small, accounting for 24% (47/193 people). Most of them belong to the middle and senior age class (above 40). Some people could even communicate fluently in their mother tongue and know other ethnic languages such as San Chi and Dao.

This ethnic minority literacy and illiteracy ratio will be one of the most important factors influencing the respondents' ability to access information in their mother tongue in different media types.

b. The frequency of using different types of media by the surveyed subjects (Table 2)

The results show that radio and television are among the two types of media in which the ethnic minorities are most interested, though the frequency is different. Radio in ethnic minority languages ranked No. 1 in viewership with 20% of the people listening regularly, 60% of the people listening occasionally and 20% of the people never listening to it and the figures for TV are 67%, 7 % and 26% respectively, which means that television has the second largest number of viewers. The third one is calls with the respective rates of 50%, 22% and 28%. Social networks (Facebook, Zalo, etc.) are ranked the fourth with the ratio of 0%, 19% and 81% respectively. Text messages with the rates of 5%, 12% and 83% is the fifth-ranked medium. Direct communications (through communicators) has the ratio: 0%, 12%, and 88%. No one had ever read printed newspapers and magazines in ethnic minority languages.

The number of users and non-users using each type of EM communications can be explained in different ways. In terms of radio, the reason for not listening is mainly because there is a lack of time, radio, or a local broadcasting loudspeaker, or it is impossible to understand the language used by the radio. For television, the primary reason for not watching is the shortage of time; locally, it is really difficult to receive signals from television and telephone in ethnic minority and many inhabitants are unable to understand the language used by radio.

Thus, it can be concluded that lack of time is

the main reason why radio and television, two most common types of the media, are not usually listened and watched. This suggests that if people still have difficulty in making both ends meet, it is impossible for them to care about other issues. Therefore, the aim of developing communications in ethnic minority languages for a sustainable development of not only ethnic minority areas but also the whole country seems to be impractical.

Making phone calls in mother tongue is a common activity for ethnic minority people. It is simply because they are able to hold conversations in their mother tongue, albeit at different levels. However, they rarely send text messages in their mother tongue due to the fact that they are not literate in the mother tongue, be more familiar with Vietnamese alphabet or possess no mobile phones. Hence, the habit of using Vietnamese in the daily life is a significant factor affecting the efficiency of communicating via mobile phones.

Accessing to communications through communicators is an effective form, but it is occasionally used in the ethnic minority areas we surveyed. In this digital era, when the life of ethnic minority people has been enhanced, the social network (Facebook, Zalo, ...) is also a medium favored by young ethnic minority people. However, for many reasons, this medium has not been used with high frequency. The number of people who have not used EM languages to read newspapers and magazines is very large. This is also worth being put into consideration about promulgating policies on teaching and learning EM languages.

c. Aspiration

Of the 193 surveyed people, up to 153 people (80%) enjoyed listening to the radio in their own language and 100% wanted to listen to it via radio, but, in fact, only 18% had a radio. This issue that has been concerned by the State of Vietnam and currently, there is a policy to allocate radios to ethnic minority people in remote areas. The number of people who loved watching television in EM languages is very enormous, accounting for 94%. This shows that television with the advantage of both audio and visual aspects is the preferred type of communications. So 100% of the respondents said that their family had a television to use. On further discussion, we found out that although a lot of people had not listened or watched a program in their own language, they wanted to preserve the culture and language of their people. In order to do so, the Party and State leaders of Vietnam in general and people working in the media in particular must pay attention to areas where ethnic minorities live and relevant issues such as the availability of

loudspeakers in local communities, the provincial channel's signal, and the time of broadcasting, the content and the language of the broadcast. The content of the program is also a remarkable issue and is directly related to the language used for broadcasting. In general, ethnic minorities can follow a program in Vietnamese (Kinh language), which means that it is unnecessary to broadcast another program in ethnic languages with the main content translated from Vietnamese. Meanwhile, there are a modest number of programs in ethnic minority languages with totally different content. This is also what affects the attractiveness of communications in ethnic minority languages.

4.3. Several proposed solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam

The guidelines and policies of the Party and State of Vietnam on the ethnic minority language in the communications in the context of unification, opening and integration have created favorable conditions for the preservation and promotion of the languages of ethnic minorities in Vietnam in general and promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam in particular. However, there are still problems that need to be considered. Below are some suggested solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communications in ethnic minority languages in Vietnam.

4.3.1. Solutions for the content

The content of news articles and programs needs to be shorter, simpler, easier to understand and modern to attract viewers and listeners. There should be on-field reporters who are ethnic minority people to motivate the interaction for the program.

In the selection of content, exploitation of news and articles, in addition to updating the current news, attention should be paid to selecting news and articles reflecting on economic, political, social and cultural life, which makes communications in ethnic minority languages more interactive. More specifically, the emphasis should be put on finding scientific and technological information related to work and daily life of ethnic minorities; Editing the content presented in the article/news/categories in accordance with the illustrations; Enhancing the understanding of specific and trustworthy pieces of information and related to ethnic minorities; Distributing content in all aspects to communicate to people, helping them access information with ease and be able to apply to develop their lives.

4.3.2. Solutions for format modernization

Journalists and communicators must have modern professional skills and qualifications

including knowledge of communications, writing skills, editing skills, film shooting skills, photo taking skills, etc. There are numerous limitations to the translation and interpretation. The content is redundant. The lexical resource is hard to understand for ethnic minorities. In order to overcome this situation, it is necessary to contact and survey the public. There is much of a need to invest, complete the inspecting system, remote monitoring, strengthen the management and quality control of programs and articles to ensure the quality and improve the ability and efficiency of communications. Also, it is essential to arrange program frameworks suitable for listening and watching habits of ethnic minority people. Furthermore, it is significant to develop state-run or enterprise-budget projects provide newspapers, magazines and receivers to suit the habits of the community and accompanying services. Promoting the broadcasting of radio and television by OTT application on the Internet, and producing specialized radio and television receivers that can receive 3G and 4G to distribute to ethnic minority people in areas without radio and television signals seem to be practical.

4.3.3. Other potential solutions

a. Solutions for administrative and personnel organization related to communications in ethnic minority languages: training journalists, broadcasters, translators and ethnic minority experts

In order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of communications, it is important to build a high-quality communication team, especially for communications in ethnic minority languages because this is a special form of communications with special audience. The team of translators, broadcasters, editors who are EM people and those who do these related activities need to take part in courses by experienced and enthusiastic specialists. It is necessary to attach importance to professional training for communication staff in ethnic minority languages. It is also necessary to use a team of collaborators in the local community to meet the provision and update of information promptly and quickly. In addition, there is a need for expert advice on ethnic issues. This team of experts can be managers, policymakers, journalists or those who can communicate in ethnic minority languages. They are the ones who have a good understanding of ethnic minorities so they can advise on habits and preferences of the people, from which the media agencies can build programs in accordance with the characteristics of ethnic minorities.

b. Solutions for educational propaganda related to communications in ethnic minority languages

People should be propagated and educated to

understand the value, pride and respect of their mother tongue. Consequently, there is a sense of voluntary preservation, promotion and development of ethnic languages. In order to improve the quality and efficiency in increasing interaction, closeness, and liveliness for communication programs and articles, communication workers in ethnic minority languages should pay attention to contact, visit and consult with people at the local level to improve and renew the programs; contributing to enriching media programs and columns. The Party and State leaders of Vietnam also need to have strategies in language training and educating for ethnic minority children, prioritizing the recruitment of EM people directly involved in managing and administrating and implementing communications in ethnic minority languages.

c. Solutions for management of quality and communication content in ethnic minority languages

It is of great significance to renovate the content and method of leadership of the communication work in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of the leadership, management and implementation of communications in ethnic minority languages. With a view to ensuring the quality and content of communications in ethnic minority languages, the media implementers need to be knowledgeable about EM languages and grasp the dynamic of programs; collecting and assessing information to attract the cooperation and participation of the public.

d. Solutions for diversifying communication types related to communications in ethnic minority languages

Attention should be paid to developing a communication strategy for multimedia communication model. It is necessary to develop many types of communications in ethnic minority languages such as printed newspapers, audio newspapers, visual newspapers, electronic newspapers. Radio and television programs of EM language stations can be listened to and viewed through the media or viewed online via electronic websites. Also, it is important to step by step digitize the production system of radio and television programs in the form of direct, transmission via satellites or on the Internet. A model of organizing and managing communications in EM languages should be built in the form of content autonomy, workforce autonomy, and financial autonomy.

e. Solutions for linguistic studies: basic research; defining “standard” dialect areas; building or improve scripts, compiling reference books (dictionaries, grammar, conversation, etc.) for

translation and composition

One of the linguistic bases of communications in ethnic minority languages is the scripts of these languages. In fact, many ethnic minority languages do not have scripts, which is the main problem of print media for ethnic minorities, thus, radio and television are two dominant types of communications. Therefore, building a set of linguistic characters for ethnic minority languages serves as a basis for developing many types of communications such as: print, radio, television and newspapers.

Communications in ethnic minority languages also faces bilingual and multilingual situations in a community. Therefore, the choice of language/dialect as the main language used in EM communications is also not simple. When selecting an ethnic minority language/dialect, script for communications, it is necessary to select a language that has the ability of becoming a common means of communications for the whole community, which can be used in a wide range of different ethnic groups in one location or in a certain ethnic group area. Some criteria can be used to prioritize choices such as: the number of speakers of the language, the universality of the language, the prestige of the language, the factors related to politics, economy, culture, and defense.

5. Conclusion

The main content of the article refers to the study of the implementation of policies on EM languages in communications in Vietnam. On the basis of the policy situation on ethnic minority languages of the Party and State of Vietnam, the article delves deeply into the implementation of policies on EM languages in communications in Vietnam.

By studying documents and surveying the actual situation, we have given specific data and statistics on the implementation of communications in ethnic minority languages on the radio and television of Vietnam’s central and local (provincial) stations. On that basis, the article has initially studied, commented and evaluated the situation of access to communications in ethnic minority languages through the pilot study of the situation of access to communications in ethnic minority languages of 193 Tay people in Kim Phuong commune, Dinh Hoa district, Thai Nguyen province.

The survey results show that radio and television are the most interesting types of communications among ethnic minorities. Although many people had not listened to or watched the program in their own language for many reasons, they wanted to preserve the culture and language of their own people. This is an issue that the Party and State

leaders of Vietnam should take into account when issuing policies to encourage ethnic minority people to actively receive communications in ethnic minority languages in the current period.

Stemming from the study of the actual situation of the implementation of policies on communications in EM languages in Vietnam, the article has proposed a number of solutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of communications in EM languages. Specific solutions include: (1) Solutions for the

content; (2). Solutions for format modernization; (3). Solutions for administrative and personnel organization (training reporters, broadcasters, translators, etc.); (4). Solutions for educational propaganda; (5). Solutions for management of quality and communication content in ethnic minority languages (6). Solution for diversifying communication types; (7). Solution for linguistic studies (basic research, identify areas of standard dialects, build up scripts, compile reference books for translation and composition).

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VIỆC TRIỂN KHAI THỰC HIỆN CHÍNH SÁCH NGÔN NGỮ DÂN TỘC THIỂU SỐ TRONG TRUYỀN THÔNG Ở VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt

Để phát triển bền vững vùng dân tộc thiểu số và cũng để phát triển bền vững đất nước, Đảng và Nhà nước Việt Nam đã ban hành nhiều chính sách liên quan đến vấn đề ngôn ngữ các dân tộc thiểu số. Nội dung bài viết đi sâu tìm hiểu tình hình triển khai thực hiện chính sách về ngôn ngữ dân tộc thiểu số trong truyền thông ở Việt Nam, từ đó đề xuất một số giải pháp nhằm nâng cao hiệu quả, hiệu lực truyền thông bằng ngôn ngữ dân tộc thiểu số tại Việt Nam trong giai đoạn hiện nay.

Từ khóa

Chính sách; Dân tộc thiểu số; Ngôn ngữ dân tộc thiểu số; Truyền thông; Việt Nam.