

Television in the Tay-Nung Language in Vietnam

Asian Linguistic Anthropology
2020, Vol. 1(4): 33-43
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DOI: 10.47298/jala.v1-i4-a4
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Abstract

Broadcasting and television are two popular types of media, with more audience than other types of media in Viet Nam today. Tay-Nung is a common language of two ethnic groups with the largest population of ethnic minorities in Viet Nam. Research on broadcasting and television in the Tay-Nung language is importance research, involving both journalism and the science of language. On the basis of surveys on the state of broadcasting in Tay-Nung language and the attitude, needs and aspirations of the Tay and Nung ethnicity on this activity, this article aims to describe and evaluate the current status of broadcasting in the Tay-Nung language, thereby proposing ways and means to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of broadcasting in Tay- Nung language. The main methods used in this study are a scientific observation method, a sociological survey method (interviews, discussions, investigation by questionnaires), method of description (analytical, statistical, classification, systematization) and a comparison method. Research data is collected from relevant documents and from the use of sociological survey methods. The subject of the article is the broadcast in Tay-Nung language activities in Viet Nam at present. This subject is considered in the following aspects; the places, the levels of broadcasting and television; the choice and use of language / dialect; attitude, needs and aspirations of the recipients, and some ways and solutions to be implemented. Research results of the project will help the Ministry of Information and Communication, in radio and television, to develop specific suggestions on the choice of type and level of communication. At the same time, the Viet Nam has also suggested the development of policies related to communication in ethnic

minority languages.

Raising the effectiveness of broadcasting in the Tay-Nung language will contribute to the preservation of language and culture; will improve quality of life for the Tay and Nung ethnicity and will contribute to sustainable development of nations in the renewal period. The work will inform work by the State, the Ministry of Information and Communication, should the State and the Ministry of Information and Communications pay attention to this timely guidance. Results will contribute to studies on communication in ethnic minority languages in Viet Nam or on communication in Tày Nùng in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: *Broadcasting, Tay- Nung language, Viet Nam*

Introduction

Television is an important and popular means of communication, with an outstanding audience compared to other forms of communication in Vietnam today. Tay is an ethnic minority with the largest population while Nung is the sixth largest ethnic group in Vietnam (based on the socio-economic survey of 53 ethnic groups). In 2015, the General Statistics Office indicated that in Vietnam there are 1.766.927 Tay people and 1.026.617 Nung people. These two ethnic groups share many similarities regarding languages, arts, and spiritual culture. In places where both the Tay and Nung live, the Tay language can mix with that of Nung and vice versa. The Tay - Nung alphabet used for both ethnic groups based on Latin script was created in 1960. Since then, the concept of 'Tay-Nung language' has been formed, used in general education, and used at the Viet Bac Autonomous Region radio station with a number of current radio-television stations. Research on television in Tay - Nung language is of particular importance, involving both fields of journalism and linguistics. Due to its significance, it is important to study the many issues regarding the phenomenon of language communication pertinent to these two large ethnic groups.

By reviewing the television program of Tay - Nung language at the Radio and Television Station of Lang Son, Cao Bang and Bac Kan provinces, surveying and interviewing 11 program workers of Lang Son and Cao Bang Radio and Television Station, surveying and interviewing 105 Tay and Nung people in Lang Son and Cao Bang about receiving Tay-Nung television, this article aims to describe and evaluate the current situation of the percentage of the information- based economy, thereby proposing ways and solutions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this activity in Vietnam.

Television Activities in the Tay - Nung language in Vietnam Today

Motivation and goals of television activities in the Tay - Nung language

There are three main motives for television program broadcast in ethnic minority languages. The first is the need to realize equal rights in receiving information of ethnic minorities, the second is to preserve

and develop cultural diversity, and lastly, to improve communication efficiency for and to people. People who do not speak the Kinh language are unable or find it hard to understand the media without communication in their native language. The fact that a minority language is frequently used in mainstream media will contribute to the preservation of that language, contributing to the conservation and the distribution of the language and culture development. Because language is a basic element of culture, it is also a means to form, reflect and impart cultural forms and experience and knowledge of a nation.

In the case of the Tay - Nung ethnic groups, the second and third objectives are of paramount importance. According to our survey results, up to 97.2% of Tay and Nung people can understand Vietnamese (Kinh language) and can exercise their right to receive information by listening and watching Vietnamese programs. Meanwhile, their mother tongue is facing the risk of erosion. According to a survey on the socio-economic situation of 53 ethnic minorities in 2015, the proportion of Tay people who do not know their mother tongue is 4.2%; the rate of Nung people who do not know their mother tongue is 6.9%. Most of the third generation of Tay and Nung families living in urban areas no longer uses their own language. In villages, many people in this generation do not know the language and culture of their people.

Mr. Duong Van Di, head of the Mandarin Department of National Radio and Television of Cao Bang province, informed us that recruiting a young person with both knowledge and journalistic competence to master the Tay - Nung language so as to become a translator and radio broadcaster is not easy, even in areas with a high concentration of native speakers like Cao Bang. As such, for others who work on television programs of the Tay-Nung language, such as Mr. Nong Van Hoan (Thai Nguyen Radio and Television Station), Ms. Dinh Thi Phuong (Lang Son Radio and Television Station), and Mr. Hoang Huan (Cao Bang Radio and Television Station), they agree that the main goal of the construction of the Tay - Nung television program is to preserve and develop the language and culture of the Tay and Nung people and to enhance the effectiveness of communication. Through our survey results, we discovered those objectives for television program producers of Tay - Nung language.

Reason Language used	Ease of understanding		Language preservation		Interesting content	
	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage
T a y - N u n g language	80	76.2%	65	61.9%	54	51.4%

Table 1. Survey results of people about the favorite reasons for TV programs Tay -Nung language.

Thus, through the survey of the favorite reasons for Tay - Nung television programs, the recipients

stated that the goal of enhancing communication effectiveness is the most important, followed by the conservation of language and culture; meanwhile, exercising equal rights in receiving the information of Tay and Nung people is the least important factor.

Levels and Localities with Television Programs in Tay-Nung Language

In Vietnam today, Tay - Nung television is only implemented at 2 levels: The central and provincial. Due to the regulations of the Ministry of Culture and Information, the district level stations (now called the “Propaganda Department of the Party and City, District and City”) in the North of Vietnam only have radio programs.

At the provincial level, television programs called Tay - Nung Program are available in Cao Bang and Bac Kan provinces. This program is called the Tay language Program on Lang Son, Tuyen Quang and Ha Giang Television Stations. According to Ms. Dinh Thi Phuong, a reporter cum translator and presenter for the Tay Language Program of Lang Son Radio and Television Station, the program is named Tay language Program but uses both Tay and Nung languages. When the program is on any issues related to a specific ethnic group, the language of that group is mainly used. In Lang Son, there are more Nung people than Tay. She is Tay but also speaks the Nung language, and the Radio Tay Program now has Nung broadcasters. The television program Tay Nung of Cao Bang Radio and Television Station only plays once a week on Sundays, between 13:35-14:05 (while the radio program is broadcast daily, the ethnic language programs Mong and Dao are broadcast 3 days a week). The television program of Lang Son Radio and Television Station is on between 16:40 – 17:10 on the 4th, 5th and 7th days and is replayed at 9:24 the next morning. In addition, there is a Tay language art culture program broadcast on Monday morning. The television program in the Tay – Nung language of Bac Kan Radio and Television Station plays at 15:00 - 15:30 every Friday (next to the Dao program on Monday, where the Mong language program is broadcast on Wednesday). The above programs are 30 minutes long. In terms of human resources, very few Tay and Nung ethnic people participate in these programs: Lang Son TV has 3, Cao Bang TV has 2, Bac Kan TV has 3. Some stations do not have local editors and collaborators.

Television in Tay - Nung language at the central level is called the Tay language program. This program is broadcast on VTV5 Hanoi, along with programs using other ethnic languages (Mong, Dao, Thai, Muong, Hoa, San Chi, Pa Ko, Cao Lan, Hoa, ..). This is a program with 5 sessions a week, usually between 7:00 – 7:30 or 14:30 – 16:00, lasting 30 minutes. Currently, the program is broadcast with high frequency during the week (same as the Thai Program, ranked after the number of sessions of the Mong Language Program and the Dao Program). Tay - Nung human resources for television are mainly strengthened via local stations, often with about 5-7 people working alternately. Each person dispatched to VTV5 usually works 1-3 years. VTV5 programs are also commissioned from local stations that have Tay - Nung television programs or Tay language programs such as radio and TV

stations of Lang Son, Cao Bang, Bac Kan and Ha Giang provinces. Each program of the local station is censored before being broadcast in a Tay Language Program in VTV5. The form and content of these programs differ from those used in the province in that there is no news, only reports, and are somewhat more elaborate. For example, the Tay - Nung television program is broadcast in Bac Kan radio station without subtitles, but when that program is broadcast on VTV5, it has Kinh subtitles.

In summary, in Vietnam, the number of Tay Nung television programs is low (without a district level). The places with a large population of Tay - Nung people do not all have this type of communication (such as Yen Bai, Thai Nguyen, Lao Cai, Bac Giang, Dak Lak etc.). Tuyen Quang and Ha Giang radio and television stations only have television programs in the Tay language. The Thai Nguyen Broadcasting Station only uses Tay language in radio programs. The provincial television stations broadcast television in Tay Nung with low frequency, and the time frame is not convenient. The programs of central television are all created by provincial stations, but are broadcast at a higher frequency within a more reasonable time frame. The program writers of Tay Nung are few and far between, resulting in poor investment in program quality.

The Type and Structure of Television Programs in Tay - Nung

Because the Tay - Nung language programs are not broadcast daily, the information given cannot be up-to-date, so the most popular category is short reports, while news programs are less popular. Specifically, the Tay - Nung program of the Lang Son Radio and Television Station only broadcast reports. Each program consists of 6 to 7 reports. These reports serve specific purposes. Particularly, Radio Lang Son has a 30-minute music show. The Tay- Nung program of Cao Bang and Bac Kan Radio and Television has both news and reports. For Radio Cao Bang, each program has about 3 to 4 sub-reports. The reports are often longer than the Lang Son reports and are not categorized into contents. The program of Tay - Nung of Bac Kan Radio and Television (called Ethnic Minority and Development Magazine) also includes about 3 to 4 reports, and there is a section of Arts at the end of the program.

In terms of structure, in addition to the program introduction (30 seconds) and the broadcaster's ending (15 seconds), the rest of the programs are different. The Lang Son radio station uses 30 seconds to introduce the main contents of the program, followed by the table of contents. These contents are distributed in the following number of sessions:

Numerical order	Content name (Kinh language)	Content name (Tay- Nung language)	Distribution
1	The Party in today life	Tảng có Đảng chang sli tối máu	Saturday
2	Upland market information	Pi noọng chang bản khai dự cửa cái	Saturday
3	Homeland origin	Cốc co bản còn	Saturday

4	Law and the people	Pi noọng xa chắc mùa pháp luật	Saturday
5	Voice from the village	Slim chầu của cần kha bản	Saturday
6	Working in agriculture	Xây căn đăm chay, khun chượng	Saturday
7	Village beauty	Bản còn đây mjàc	Saturday
8	Folk medicines	Ký co nhà chòi pỉnh	Saturday
9	Rural innovation	Bản còn lâu tối mầu	Saturday
10	Border security	Ngòi chượng đin tỉ piên chái	Saturday
11	Lang Son cuisine	Ký tình của kín Xứ Lạng	Saturday
12	Notable figure of the village	Đuồng bjoóc đây của bản (Boóng cương của bản)	Saturday

Table 2. Table of content distribution and categorization

Each content has several reports. Each report begins with the appearance of the announcer's image. For the Bac Kan station, after the general introduction is the table of contents, at the end of the program is the Arts section (about 5-8 minutes), without the content categorization. The Cao Bang station neither has the main content introduction nor the content categorization.

Thus, the programs in Tay - Nung television are not very rich, evident in the lack of programs with complex content available in the national or Kinh language television (these programs have contents such as editorial, commentary, investigation, critique) or vivid, profound, attractive contents such as press skits or press. The program structure of the Lang Son radio station is fairly diverse. In other stations, however, the program is quite difficult to follow.

The Content of Tay - Nung Television Programs

As elaborated, the content of the Tay - Nung television program of Lang Son radio station is quite comprehensive. In the Tay - Nung television program of provincial stations in general, the main content is on various aspects of local life. Lang Son radio and Bac Kan radio, however, have more programs / art programs. In other stations, the dissemination of knowledge and information on policies and laws is not of high focus. Such information and knowledge on the current state of affairs, working experience and life skills, are scattered throughout the various reports. Viewers' interest in the content of television programs is presented in the following summary table:

Interest Content	Like a lot		Like		Dislike	
	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage
National news	58	27.6	44	21.0	0	
Local news	60	28.6	39	18.6	1	0.1
Agriculture	42	20.0	40	19.0	5	0.6

Working experience	44	21.0	40	19.0	5	0.6
Legal policy	51	24.3	43	20.5	1	0.1
Health	61	29.0	54	25.7	0	0.0
Living skill	41	19.5	38	18.1	4	0.5
Cultural, art	60	28.6	33	15.7	0	0.0
Total	417/840	49.6%	331/840	39.4%	16/840	1.9%

Table 3: Viewers' interest in the content of Tay - Nung television programs\

The overall result gives us an optimistic view of the future of Tay - Nung television as 89% of respondents still like the content of the program, more than half of them very much like this program. Knowledge of how to maintain health, art/culture, local news, and national news are the most favorite categories. Agriculture, working experience, life skills are the only content related or only suitable for a part of the people (agricultural workers, people with labor capacity, or young people) so the number of people who like this is smaller. However, according to those who perform on Tay - Nung TV programs, the content of the program is not yet of the highest quality.

Requirements	Good	Average	Not good
a- Aiming at local life, focusing on events, current information and information about people's life	6	5	0
b- Propagating the guidelines and policies of ethnic minorities and the implementation of ethnic policies, with regards to the national objectives of economic and social development, ensuring defense and security	8	3	0
c- Information on science, agriculture, forestry and fishery, and health associated with local culture and people	6	5	0
d- Recognizing, evaluating and solving problems in accordance with the psychological characteristics, beliefs and religions of each ethnic group	3	6	2
e- Paying attention typical examples and positive factors in different areas of life in ethnic areas	9	2	0
f- Paying attention to quality music and entertainment programs, suitable to the needs of people	5	4	2
Number of respondents	37/66	25/66	4/66
Percentage	56.1%	37.9%	6.0%

Table 4: Self-assessment table of Tay - Nung television program creators on the quality of programs
Among the elements that the media content needs to be able to the life of the people towards the

sustainable development of the Tay and Nung people: praising and multiplying a range of positive examples and factors is ranked the most important. Second is the propaganda of national guidelines and policies and the implementation of ethnic policies, in line with the objectives of economic and social development to ensure national defense and security. The recognition, evaluation and resolution of issues in line with the psychological and traditional characteristics of the nation, beliefs and religions of each ethnic group are still not very good. The orientation towards local life, focusing on events, current information and information on the people's life and the information on agricultural, forestry, fishery and health promotion, local health, cultural characteristics of the people are only partially achieved. Meanwhile, the criteria for building quality music and entertainment programs, which are suitable for the needs of the people, are only of limited quality.

Effectiveness of TV Programs in Tay - Nung

On questions regarding television access and other types of Tay - Nung language communication, 57/105 respondents noted that they have heard radio but have never seen Tay-Nung television.

As for the 105 people surveyed about receiving Tay - Nung television, not everyone views both central and local television. Survey results show that 26.7% have never seen the Tay - Nung program on VTV5; and 12.4% have never seen the Tay - Nung program on their provincial radio or television stations. In terms of frequency, the central station's occasional audience is nearly twice as many its regular viewers. Provincial radio stations have a higher number of regular viewers than the central station, but still fewer than the number of occasional audiences.

Frequency	Regularly		Sometimes		Never	
	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage
Central station	27	25.7	50	47.6	28	26.7
Provincial station	44	41.9	48	45.7	13	12.4

Table 5: Frequency of watching Tay - Nung television programs

Understanding the content of programs is of prime importance to be able to talk about other effects of media reception. Our survey results on this issue are as follows:

Good understanding	Understand a little	Do not understand
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Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage	Number of respondents	Percentage
79	75.2%	22	21.0%	4	3.8%

Table 6: The level of understand the Tay - Nung television programs

Thus, when watching television in their native language, most people understand. However, the number of those who understand a little is quite significant. Particularly, there are still people who barely understand anything. The cause of this situation is at the level of the mother tongue of the approaching person, and also at the level of expression of the people presenting the television program. Meanwhile, the interest for programs in native languages is very positive:

Level	Really like		Like		Unlike	
	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
Central station	40	38,1%	27	25,7%	1	0,9%
Provincial station	58	55,2%	34	32,4%	0	0,0%

Table 7: Interest among recipients with Tay - Nung television program

It can be seen that most ethnic minorities enjoy television programs in their own language. The good thing is that the rate of likes is high. The provincial station has a much higher rate of interest and likes than the central station.

Solutions for Improving the Quality and Expanding the Television scale in Tay - Nung Language in Vietnam

a / For leaders at all levels

In order to improve the quality and effectiveness of the national language television program, the Central Government and the central and provincial leaders need to have a clear awareness of the importance of the program to exercise appropriate policies:

- At the central level, it is possible to develop a program in Tay and one in Nung but at the provincial level or lower levels, there should be a policy of maintaining and expanding Tay Nung dual language programs to all provinces with large numbers of these ethnic groups. The use of one common language not only helps save manpower and resources but it can also cater to a large number of people of the Tay and Nung ethnic groups and many other ethnic groups living alternately and know Tay- Nung language.

- Investing more in technical equipment, working facilities for stations, especially for ethnic minority departments; enhancing broadcast quality, coverage area to remote areas for stations.
- Having a remuneration standard suitable to the nature of the work of the ethnic minority language program; paying more attention to the training and professional training for them.
- Giving language teaching and retraining for ethnic minority people, including young people of Tay and Nung, especially those who work in communication work in the Tay - Nung language.

b / For provincial radio and television stations

In order to innovate and improve the quality of Tay - Nung television, radio and television leaders should pay more attention to the program and efforts of each staff of the Tay – Nung television program.

For radio and television station leaders:

Priority of tenure should be given to the reporters, translators, Tay and Nung radio and television staff for the Department of Ethnic Minorities; more interest in building a network of editors and collaborators for the program.

Prioritizing the broadcasting time frame so that people can monitor and increase the frequency and duration for Tay - Nung television programs.

For those who directly work on the program:

More investment for the implementation of the program in different types and forms; enhancing interactive forms; enhancing the standard and use of phonetics, words, of sentence expression and presenting to make the programs engaging

Enhancing the specificity of the content, supplementing and renewing the content by reducing unnecessary information, giving space for really meaningful information to ethnic groups, in accordance with the psychological characteristics of the people; strengthening issues of public interest; reflecting the difficult and pressing issues in the social life of the Tay - Nung people, making suggestions and recommendations to solve and contribute to ensuring security, social welfare, material and spiritual life for people.

Conclusion

Television activities in Tay - Nung language are a basic means of communication that can serve many ethnic minority groups. However, it is not an issue receiving adequate attention in Vietnam. Our article points out the shortcomings and difficulties of this activity in Vietnam today, and on that basis, suggests relevant solutions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of this activity, contributing to the sustainable development of ethnic minority areas of Vietnam. The issues mentioned here also represent

the basic issues with regards to general communication activities in ethnic minority languages in northern Vietnam today.

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Endnotes

¹The article is part of the research results of the state-level scientific research project, code ĐTDLXH-02/18