

COMMERCIAL MUSIC (POP CULTURE) STYLES AS THE MAIN MUSICAL SOURCE OF PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED LANGUAGES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT.

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Abstract

Nowadays, the acknowledge of the big amount of endangered languages around the globe is still increasing while the preservation of them still in question due to the lack or the harm of linguistic policies as well, the hegemony of national languages that, in order to establish a more standardised national linguistic paradigm pushes the minority/native language into a state of emergency in its preservation. In the age of information and globalisation, different media has been utilised in order to promote the preservation of endangered languages, among them, publications in different areas like science, humanities and literature. Besides that, music has been also playing an important part in this terms due to its popularity and its social impact. In this paper will be focused in the commercial/pop culture music and its musical, linguistic and social implications since most of this musical expression are evidently considered as alien to the musical tradition in each case and paradoxically at the same time promoting the preservation of an endangered native language since this last one is considered a fundamental part of the traditional identity of each society.

Keywords: Endangered Languages, Native languages, Languages national policies, Language preservation; Rap/Hip-hop Music; Globalization, Americas, Asia, Europe, Africa

Introduction

In the early decades of the 21st century, it is reported that, among the sum of the languages in the world 6.909, the number of endangered languages almost 3000 of them are considered endangered. Due to many factors such as discrimination, lack of support from governmental and non-governmental organizations and even educational and/or political conflicts, these endangered languages pass through a very complicated situation. Many programs have been applied to the luckiest communities, some of these programs with a low impact in the decreasing graphics that forecast a fast extinction of languages. But one thing has been observed as an efficient and "natural" media for the preservation of languages: music.

Music as Media of Preservation of Languages

Music has been accompanying human societies for ages, and within the mere production of notes, rhythms and harmonies, it's been also used to complement the rhymes of the poetry and literary works. And, until today, these musical pieces around the world have been the recipient of a big amount of texts, preserving them in the form of musical pieces, whether in classical, folk and also pop/commercial forms.

In the second decade of the 21st century, an extraordinary phenomena is happening towards music and language. It's actually one of the faces of globalisation; this means that not only the main languages such as English and lately, Spanish as the language of predilection but

also a huge number of other languages have been on the race into popular music, but also endangered minority languages from all around the globe.

Among all the musical styles spreaded worldwide, rap and hip-hop have been surprisingly the best option for many vocalists at the moment they find a musical expression to perform in their native languages.

Rap and hip hop are musical styles developed by Afro-Americans in the USA and later followed by Chicano communities. Since the 1980's in the whole USA, Afroamerican communities started this movement post R&B, Soul and Disco styles in order to explore a new musical expression based mainly on rhymes over a musical looped pattern.

This is how rap and hip-hop gained popularity, first, within its communities and later in the musical industry; what finally ended up in spreading it, to non Afro Americans, within USA and abroad.

The [characteristic of its] simplicity of their loop basis, makes these styles tend to be more focused on the lyrics rather than in the melodic, harmonic or rhythmic patterns. This simplicity is taken as an advantage in order to make more lyrics about protests, and/or issues that concerns the community.

This fact (the rhyme prioritised over the musical structure and motives) has been a crucial factor for the expression of rappers and hip hoppers around the globe as well. Making this musical style, one of the most popular music to rescue endangered languages around the globe. Some of the unlike cases are enlisted below:

1. Welsh (Wales, United Kingdom) - Mr Phormula, Genod Droog, Lluwybr Llaethog, y diwygiad
2. Catalá (Cataluña, Spain) - Cac Blac, Porta
3. Diidxazá (Oaxaca, Mexico) - Juchirap, Many Rap
4. Mixteco (Oaxaca, Mexico) - Una Isu
5. Bahasa Karo (North Sumatra, Indonesia) - Wira QeTa, Wisnu Bangun
6. Bahasa Jawa (Central Java & Yogyakarta Provinces, Indonesia) - Jogja Hip Hop Foundation
7. Bahasa Sasak (Lombok Island, Indonesia) - Big Noeng
8. Tsonga (Limpopo, South Africa) - TEam Yati Boss

These are just few examples of rap and hip hop music around the world, that, surprisingly chose the same musical style to express their concerns towards cultural, social and politic issues in their native languages. It's a well known reality that Rap and Hip Hop went worldwide long before it appeared in minority languages, this brief paper aims to point out how, for example, in the British paradigm coexist other languages besides English, yet unfortunately it has being put aside while monolingustic politics have been ruled in the British region. Same case can be found in other paradigmas like in Spain, Mexico and in other Spanish majority speaking countries; while Spanish language has been in top of all languages in those countries through centuries, most of minority language communities still struggling with discrimination in many ways. Seems like Spanish language would be the only one working in those countries. In the case of indonesia, the standardization of education through

Indonesian language, has made the population little less aware of the importance of their native language, in the recent years, a new motto has been popularised that reads “Utamakan Bahasa Indonesia, Pelajari Bahasa Asing, Lestarkan Bahasa Daerah” (“prioritise Indonesian Language, Learn a Foreign Language, Preserve the Local language”); despite the good intentions, it seems that many native languages in Indonesia have seen a decay in their usage, while native speakers -like in many other regions around the globe- can barely use the whole richness of their native language.