

SOUTH AFRICA LOCALISATION GUIDE



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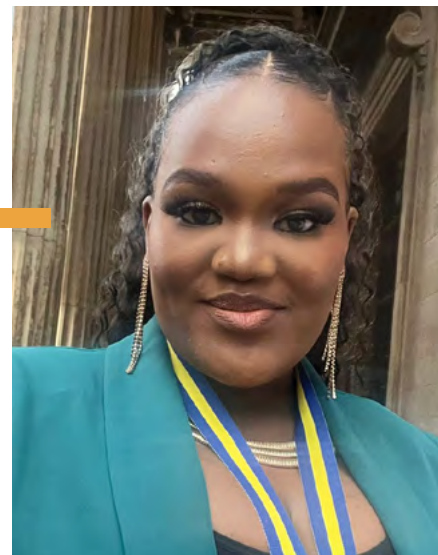


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Hello, welcome



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| BIO

Qhawekazi Phelakho is an experienced isiZulu language specialist and a localisation expert with a solid academic foundation. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in African Languages, a BA Honours in Translation Studies, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in English. Currently, she is completing her Master's in Translation Studies at Wits University, where

her research explores the issue of misogyny in the retranslated isiZulu Bibles. With a passion for promoting African languages, particularly isiZulu, Qhawekazi's work embodies a commitment to culturally and socially aware translation practices that foster inclusion and representation.

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Localisation Expert: Hi there! So, you want to understand what localisation is, right?

Ko & Kho corporation: Yes, please! Could you explain it to us like we're five year olds?

Localisation Expert: Of course! Let's start with a simple question. Where is your business partner from?

Ko: I'm from the Eastern Cape.

Localisation Expert: Great! And where are you from?

Kho: I'm from KwaZulu-Natal, KZN.

Localisation Expert: Perfect! Now, let's imagine something fun. Imagine there's a big grocery store called Spar. In KZN, Spar knows that people love a special food called "uphuthu", which is a type of crumbly maize porridge. So, they make sure to sell uphuthu in their fast food section because that's what people in KZN like to eat.

Ko & Kho corporation: Okay, we understand that.

Localisation Expert: Now, your business partner is from the Eastern Cape. In the Eastern Cape, people love to eat "umngqusho", which is a dish made from samp and beans. Spar wants to make sure that people in the Eastern Cape are also happy when they visit their store.

Ko & Kho corporation: That makes sense.

Localisation Expert: So, what Spar does is they offer "umngqusho" in their Eastern Cape stores. This way, people in the Eastern Cape can enjoy their favorite food, just like people in KZN enjoy "uphuthu".

Ko & Kho corporation: Oh, we get it now!

Localisation Expert: Great! So, localisation is all about making sure that people in different places get what they love and are familiar with. It means adjusting things like food, language, and other products to fit the local culture and preferences. Just like how Spar offers different foods in KZN and the Eastern Cape to make everyone happy.

“Sawubona, ke kgopela atchaar, di vetkoek necoldrink. Kea leboha.”
“Greetings, may I have atchaar, fatcakes and a coldrink. Thank you.”

Did You Know?

This sentence is in various South African languages:

Sawubona - This is a greeting in isiZulu, meaning
“Hello”

Ke kgopela atchaar - This is in Sepedi, meaning “May
I have atchaar (Atchar is commonly enjoyed as a
condiment alongside a variety of dishes)”

Di vetkoek necoldrink - This phrase mixes Afrikaans,
English and Sepedi. «Di vetkoek» is Afrikaans, meaning
«fatacakes» (a type of fried dough), and «necoldrink»
(which is a colloquial mixture of isiZulu and English,
referring to a «cold drink» or soda.

Kea leboha - This is «thank you» in Sesotho.



Did You Know?

Click to watch

Disney's The Lion King was dubbed into isiZulu. This historic release made The Lion King the first Disney film to be revoiced in an indigenous African language. The isiZulu version, released in 2019, was part of an effort to celebrate the film's 25th anniversary and to honor the cultural heritage of Africa. This Localisation initiative aimed to bring the beloved story closer to South African audiences by using one of the country's most widely spoken languages, thus making the film more accessible and culturally relevant.

Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|--------------------------------|--|
| a. Localisation | The process of adapting a product or content to meet the language, cultural, and other requirements of a specific target market. |
| b. Dubbing | The process of replacing the original dialogue in a film, TV show, or other video content with translated or localized dialogue in another language. |
| c. Subtiling | The process of displaying translated text on-screen to convey spoken dialogue or narration in a video or multimedia content, typically used for accessibility and multilingual audiences. |
| d. Products | Products refer to tangible goods that are manufactured, produced, or acquired for sale or use. They are physical items that customers can see, touch, and typically purchase. |
| e. Services | Services are intangible offerings that are provided to customers to fulfill a specific need or demand. Unlike products, services are actions or performances provided by one party to another. |
| f. User Interface Localisation | The process of translating and adapting software or app interfaces to ensure they are user-friendly and culturally appropriate for target users in different regions. |
| g. Localisation Insights | Data-driven analysis and cultural understanding used to optimize Localisation strategies, ensuring content resonates with local audiences and meets market expectations. |

h. Translation

The process of rendering text or content from one language into another while preserving its meaning, style, and context.

i. Culturalization

Adapting content not only linguistically but also culturally to ensure it is appropriate and resonant with the target audience's norms, values, and beliefs.

j. Quality Assurance

The process of systematically checking localized content and functionality to ensure accuracy, consistency, and usability in the target market.

k. Currency Formatting

The Localisation of currency symbols, decimal separators, and formatting conventions to align with the monetary norms of the target locale.

l. Time Zone Handling

The adjustment of dates, times, and scheduling functionalities to reflect local time zones, ensuring accuracy and usability for users in different regions.



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Introduction

Localisation, the process of adapting content to suit a specific locale's language, culture, and market needs, is crucial for businesses and organizations seeking to thrive in today's globalized world. This guide aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Localisation practices within the South African context, focusing specifically on the sectors of media and entertainment, e-commerce, healthcare and advocacy, and food and beverages. Each of these sectors presents unique challenges and opportunities for Localisation, driven by South Africa's rich linguistic diversity and complex socio-economic landscape.

Fun fact:
The country now boasts 12 official languages, since South African Sign Language (SASL) was granted official language status in May 2023.

South Africa is a nation characterized by its multicultural population and twelve official languages. As seen on the phrase on page 5, the phrase illustrates a typical South African exchange, especially in major cities like Johannesburg, where individuals from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds interact regularly. In a single conversation, it is common to hear a blend of isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho, Afrikaans, and English, reflecting the inclusivity and adaptability of South Africans in their communication practices.

For businesses and organizations operating in South Africa, acknowledging and embracing this diversity is crucial when localizing their products and services. To effectively engage with the local market, companies must consider the multilingual and multicultural dynamics. This means tailoring marketing strategies, customer service interactions, and product offerings as well as advocacy to resonate with the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their consumers and audience. By doing so, businesses and organisations can foster better connections with their audience, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Recognizing and integrating this diversity is not just a strategic advantage but also a respectful acknowledgment of the vibrant and varied identities that make up the South African society. As a result, a nuanced approach to Localisation, where one-size-fits-all strategies are often inadequate.

Importantly, Localisation is not solely about linguistic adaptation. It also encompasses cultural, social, and technological considerations. Effective Localisation strategies take into account the visual and auditory preferences of the target audience, the socio-economic context, local laws and regulations, and even the prevailing technological infrastructure.



Methodology

Research Design

The localisation guide for South Africa utilized a mixed-methods research design to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, with elements of action research. The qualitative approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the Localisation landscape in South Africa, across various sectors, namely media and entertainment, healthcare and mental health advocacy, food and beverages. Quantitative aspect provided measurable data to support findings while elements of action research involved a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, making it ideal for developing a practical guide.

Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this research was to:

- Identify the key cultural, linguistic, and technical factors influencing localisation in South Africa.
- To identify and analyse existing key challenges and best practices in the localisation of content, products and services faced by businesses within the media and entertainment industry, healthcare and mental health advocacy, and food and beverages sectors in South Africa.
- Develop practical guidelines and recommendations for effective localisation in the South African context.

Data Collection Methods

Quantitative Research

- **Survey:** A structured questionnaire was distributed to a representative sample of businesses operating in South Africa to gather data on their localisation experiences, challenges, and requirements. The survey covered aspects such as:
 - Demographic information (company size, industry, target market)
 - Localisation budget and resources
 - Challenges faced in localisation
 - Preferences for localisation tools and technologies
 - Evaluation of existing localisation strategies and resources
- **Literature Review:** A comprehensive review of existing literature on localisation, translation studies, cultural adaptation, and sector-specific localisation was conducted. For the media and entertainment industry, sources like Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2014) provided insights into subtitling and audiovisual translation. In healthcare, the work of Pym et al. (2020) on healthcare translation, and in mental health advocacy, literature from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) on competent



communication were reviewed. The food and beverages sector was explored through works like those by De Mooij (2019), focusing on cultural adaptation in advertising and branding.

- **Secondary Data Analysis:** Existing data from government sources, industry reports, and business and organisation were analysed to identify trends and patterns in the South African localisation market.

Quantitative Research

- **In-depth Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including localisation experts, language service providers, and representatives from various industries to gain insights into cultural nuances, linguistic complexities, and best practices.
- **Focus Groups:** Focus groups were conducted with consumers from different regions and cultural backgrounds to understand their preferences, perceptions, and expectations regarding localised products and services.
- **Case Studies:** In-depth case studies of successful localisation projects in South Africa were also conducted to identify best practices and lessons learned. For instance, in the media and entertainment industry, Netflix's global expansion strategy provided valuable insights. In healthcare, case studies from SADAG on the lack of physical centres were included. The food and beverage sector considered examples like Nando's strategy of incorporating humor in their advertisements.
- **Undercover Research:** To gain insights into user experience and organisational strategies for localisation, select organisations across the target industries were contacted undercover. This approach aimed to determine whether the organisations had

personnel who spoke vernacular languages to assist customers, as well as to find out if and when they were planning to translate their websites into local languages. This method provided a unique perspective on the real-world application and prioritisation of localisation strategies.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analysed using statistical methods to identify patterns, trends, and correlations. Qualitative data was also analysed through thematic analysis to identify key themes and insights. The findings from both quantitative and qualitative research were triangulated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives.

Validation

Triangulation was employed by cross-verifying data from multiple sources (literature, case studies, in-depth interviews, surveys, and undercover research) to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

- All research participants were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and benefits.
- Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection.
- Participant anonymity and confidentiality has been strictly maintained.
- Data has been stored securely and in compliance with relevant data protection regulations. Read more about Bolingo Consult's [Privacy Policy](#).

Expected Outcomes

- A well-researched, practical localisation guide that addressed localisation strategies in the media and entertainment, healthcare and mental health advocacy, and food and beverage sectors in South Africa.

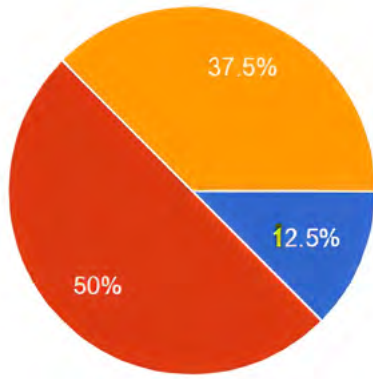


Media & Entertainment

Singhal and Rogers, in their seminal work (1999), define “entertainment-education” as the deliberate crafting and dissemination of media messages to both entertain and educate, with the aim of enhancing audience understanding of educational issues, fostering positive attitudes, and inducing behavioral change. The study conducted for the purposes of this localisation guide to determine which aspects of Localisation are deemed most important for entertainment and media content.

Based on the data collected and analysed, the findings revealed that 50% of respondents considered cultural references and context adaptation to be of paramount importance. Below we discuss the media productions that have effectively localised their content considering that the study highlights the critical role that nuanced understanding and incorporation of local cultural elements play in effectively engaging and resonating with diverse audiences in the global entertainment landscape.





- Dubbing/subtitling in local languages
- Cultural references and context adaptation
- Availability of content in local platforms/apps

Survey participants responses about the aspects of localisation deemed most important for entertainment and media content

Tsotsi

“Tsotsi,” a remarkable South African film directed by Gavin Hood, exemplifies the effectiveness of this strategy in reaching and engaging audiences. “Tsotsi” offers several valuable localisation insights, particularly relevant for businesses and organisations aiming to adapt content for diverse and multilingual South African audiences and these are discussed below.



Key Insights

Linguistic Diversity

One of the distinctive features of “Tsotsi” is its utilization of various South African languages, including isiZulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans, and English. This approach plays a major role in this production to ensure that the authenticity of the

characters and their interactions mirrors the linguistic diversity in the South African setting.

Cultural Context

As previously noted, linguistic diversity is not enough for localising products and services. “Tsotsi” mastered localisation by delving in the cultural nuances of South Africa, it delves into profound and multifaceted themes, including the enduring legacy of apartheid, the pervasive cycle of violence, and the potential for personal redemption. Through its gritty and realistic portrayal of life in Johannesburg’s townships, the film provides poignant insights into the struggles and aspirations of its characters. By addressing these complex issues with nuance and sensitivity, “Tsotsi” fosters meaningful dialogue and reflection among audiences.

Visual and Auditory Elements

However, it does not end on cultural nuances, beyond its cinematic achievements, the film’s resonance extends beyond the screen, influencing various artistic endeavors, such as music (see the “music” section), thereby contributing to the enrichment of South Africa’s cultural landscape.

Global and Local Appeal

It is to be noted that the film managed to strike a balance between local authenticity and universal themes which is a strategy to assist content resonate both locally and internationally. "Tsotsi" achieved this by addressing specific South African issues while also exploring universally relatable themes of redemption and human resilience.



Gaming

For many people, gaming often evokes different perceptions. For women, it is seen as a weekend distraction that keeps their partners engrossed and away from family activities. For men, it's the activity that keeps them glued to screens, perhaps watching virtual soccer matches or engaging in other gaming experiences. For parents, gaming might seem like the culprit turning their wards into couch potatoes, constantly absorbed in their consoles. Meanwhile, for organisations that create games, gaming is a significant sector driving innovation, revenue, and market expansion. On the other hand, for gaming content creators, gaming is not merely a pastime but a lucrative career path. This dual perception—where gaming is both a leisure activity and a professional opportunity—illustrates the importance of effective localisation strategies in the South African context.

Furthermore, Batchelor, J (2024) states in the year 2023, 26.5 million people in South Africa engaged in video gaming, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.4% since 2020 and representing 44% of the nation's population. Batchelor adds that of these gamers, 85% have played mobile games, compared to just 15% who have engaged with console titles. The gaming demographic is predominantly male

(53%) and female (46%), with the majority aged between 14 and 28 (47.6%). The next largest group is those aged 29 to 42 (30.8%), while children aged 10 and under make up 12.1% of the gaming population. It is evident that South Africa, in Batchelor's words, is "one of the most prominent gaming markets" throughout the African continent. Consequently, taking into consideration the diverse perceptions and audiences of gaming mentioned above, this highlights the need for tailored localisation strategies, especially in a culturally and linguistically diverse country like South Africa.

Boet Fighter

"Boet Fighter," crafted by Cali4ways Games (De Lange, 2019), masterfully utilizes language and cultural references to deeply resonate with its target market. Set in a fictionalised rendition of South Africa, the game successfully weaves elements of local culture and identity into its gameplay and narrative, creating an experience that feels uniquely South African. Gord Laws, in his article titled "Boet Fighter Finally Launches on iStore, Takes Number One Mobile Game Spot, Sets New African Record", confirms that Boet Fighter was not just a success in South Africa but across Africa, setting a new African record due to its carefully implemented Localisation strategies. He added, "[t]his week (Nov 28, 2019), we successfully launched the first mobile port of the original PC version of Boet Fighter for iOS on the iStore. And it went brilliantly! We quickly shot to number one on the SA downloads chart, and would remain there for some weeks to come." This success is seen in the image below, courtesy of Gord Laws, showing that more than a year after its initial launch, the iOS mobile version remained the second biggest selling African mobile game of all time as of January 2021.



Source: <https://gordlaws.co.za/boet-fighter-finally-launches-on-istore-takes-number-one-mobile-game-spot-sets-new-african-record/>

Let's delve into the key localisation insights, below.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajphfx-1Y8Y>

Key Insights

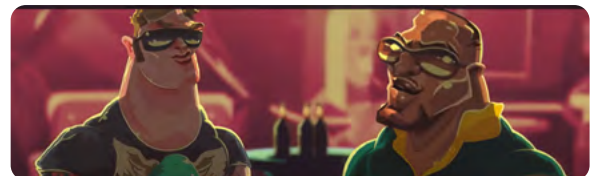
Cultural Authenticity

As already mentioned above, "Boet Fighter" is set in Fourways. This choice of setting as the primary location is a deliberate nod to the familiarity of South African gaming players. The game further incorporates well-known streets like William Nicol Drive, and by doing so, the game evokes a sense of nostalgia and recognition among local gamers, immersing them in a virtual landscape that mirrors the urban sprawl of Johannesburg.

Agreeably, this attention to detail not only adds authenticity to the game but also reinforces its connection to the South African experience.



Additionally, "Boet Fighter" cleverly integrates iconic symbols of South African identity, such as the Springboks jersey, into its character designs and aesthetics. The inclusion of these symbols not only pays homage to the country's sporting heritage but also reinforces the game's cultural authenticity. For South African players or gamers, seeing familiar emblems like the Springboks jersey adds an extra layer of resonance and pride to their gaming experience.



Linguistic Familiarity

Furthermore, the use of colloquial South African terms like "boet" further enhances the game's authenticity and appeal. "Boet," meaning "brother" or "mate" in South African slang, is a term of endearment commonly used among friends. By incorporating this term into the dialogue and character interactions, "Boet Fighter" creates a sense of friendship and familiarity that resonates with its target audience.

Humor and Wordplay

Additionally, "Boet Fighter" employs clever wordplay and humor to add depth and charm to its narrative. The pun in the statement in its trailer, "maybe even 3 or 4 ways more," which sounds like the city "Fourways," showcases the game's playful approach to language and humor. By infusing the dialogue with witty remarks and puns, "Boet Fighter" invites players to appreciate the subtle nuances of South African humor and wordplay.

Cultural Commentary

You are not South African if you do not know what "load shedding" is. Interestingly, the game cleverly also incorporates references to significant national events, such as the catastrophic load-shedding and South Africa's unexpected loss to Japan in the 2015 Rugby World Cup. These references add a layer of cultural commentary to the game's narrative. By acknowledging these events within the game world, "Boet Fighter" not only reflects the social consciousness of its target market but also creates a sense of shared experience and collective memory among players.

Music

The richness of South African music genres, particularly Gqom and Amapiano, is deeply intertwined with the nation's language and culture. To understand the impact and reach of these genres, one must appreciate their roots and evolution. Amapiano, a contemporary soundscape dominating the airwaves today, cannot be discussed without acknowledging Gqom, and similarly, Gqom owes much of its foundation to the Kwaito movement.

In light of this, Selisho Kaunda of News24

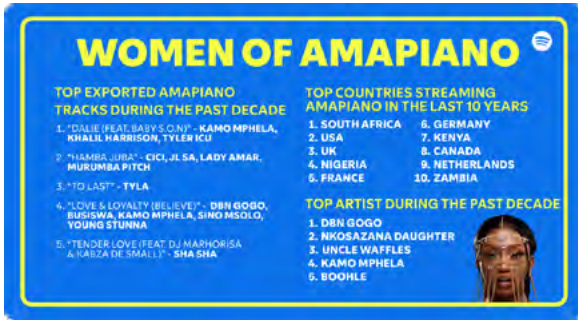
writes that Spotify's most recent streaming revenue figures indicate notable expansion in the Amapiano genre. The platform's playlist curation initiatives have resulted in Amapiano tracks being featured in more than 14 million user-created playlists. Additionally, South African artists have experienced a significant increase in streaming revenues on Spotify, with royalties approaching nearly R256 million in 2023.

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Source: <https://newsroom.spotify.com/2024-06-13/amapianos-origins-taking-root-at-home-then-spreading-seeds-globally/>



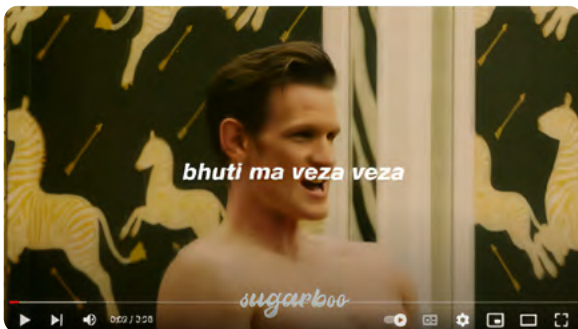
Source: <https://gordlaws.co.za/boet-fighter-finally-launches-on-istore-takes-number-one-mobile-game-spot-sets-new-african-record/>

Key Insights

Linguistic Authenticity

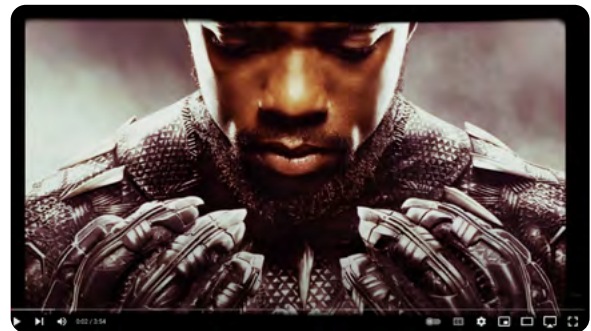
The success of gqom and amapiano in South Africa is deeply rooted in their ability to resonate with local audiences through the use of language and cultural references. These genres frequently incorporate local jargon, and idiomatic expressions that are instantly relatable to South African listeners.

Although the genre is neither gqom nor amapiano, the producers of "Morbius" successfully engaged South African audiences by including the song "Ekse" by Off The Meds, which features South African language and cultural references. The use of the slang term "Ekse," a common slang term equivalent to "hey" or "listen" in local language immediately resonated with South African viewers, creating a sense of recognition and pride.



Global Cultural Milestones

In addition, the inclusion of Babes Wodumo's gqom hit "Wololo" and Busiswa's "Gobisiqolo" in the blockbuster film "Black Panther" is a prime example of global cultural milestones. These songs not only showcased South African talent to an international audience but also drew South African viewers to the film. The use of these tracks in such a high-profile movie provided a sense of pride and representation, as local sounds were recognized on a global stage.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIFMQRcp450>

Cultural References

As mentioned under "Tsotsi's" discussion, this film's localisation strategies did not just stay with cinematic phenomenon. For instance, the amapiano track "John Vuli Gate" exemplifies how music can transcend mere entertainment to become a cultural phenomenon. The song's title is derived from a memorable scene in the film "Tsotsi," where the actress pleads with her husband, "John," to open the gate, striking a chord with South Africans. Despite "Tsotsi" being released in 2005, the phrase "John Vuli Gate" remains iconic and instantly recognizable, demonstrating the long-lasting impact of cultural elements in media.



John Vuli Gate Original Scene from Award Winning South African Movie 'TsoTsi'

Source: <https://newsroom.spotify.com/2024-06-13/amapianos-origins-taking-root-at-home-then-spreading-seeds-globally/>

Interconnected Media

The popularity of “John Vuli Gate” went beyond just the music; it spurred a viral dance challenge that swept across social media. The young women who popularized the dance wore distinctive skirts, which soon became known as “John Vuli Gate” skirts. This cultural phenomenon highlights the successful localisation of the “TsoTsi” film’s memorable line into the realm of amapiano music, reinforcing the interconnectedness of media, language, and culture in reaching and resonating with the target audience.



Netflix – Bridgerton

Netflix, a leading global streaming service, offers a vast library of TV shows, movies, documentaries, and more, catering to diverse audiences worldwide. Known for its commitment to providing localised content, Netflix employs various strategies to resonate with regional audiences,

including using local languages and cultural references.

The promotion of “Bridgerton” Season 3 by Netflix featured a unique and culturally significant gesture by incorporating TshiVenda, one of South Africa’s official languages.

Lady Danbury’s greeting in TshiVenda not only highlighted the importance of using local languages to foster a connection with regional audiences but also highlighted the show’s inclusivity and respect for South African culture.

This approach made the promotion feel personal and relatable to South African viewers, contributing to its widespread appreciation, as evidenced by over 234,000 views on TikTok alone.

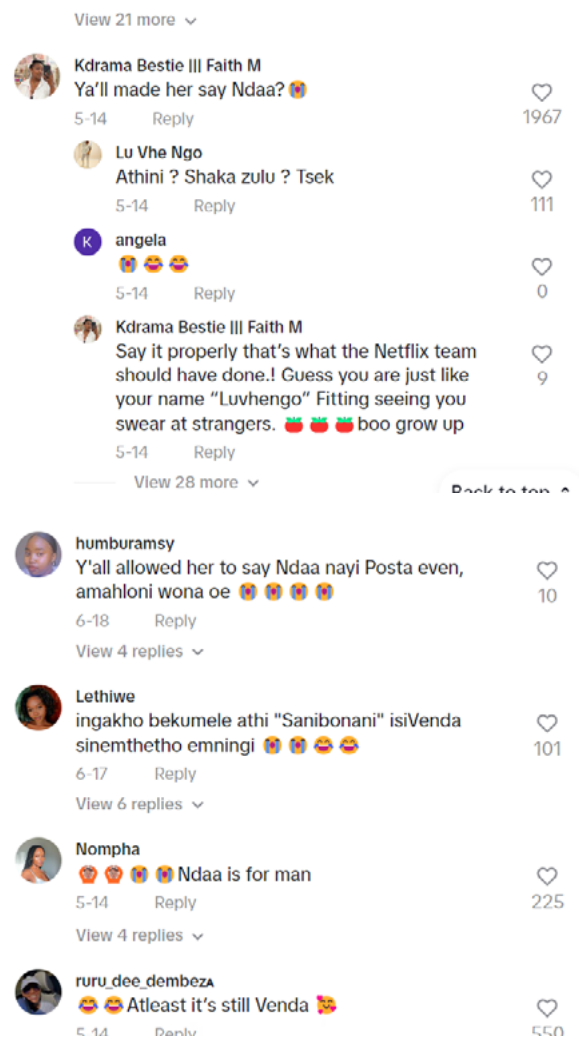
However, the promotion also sparked a division among native TshiVenda speakers due to a cultural misstep: Lady Danbury used the greeting “Ndaa,” traditionally reserved for men, instead of “Aa,” which is used by women.

While some viewers criticized this error, arguing that Netflix South Africa should have provided better cultural guidance, others defended the actress, acknowledging her lack of familiarity with the language.

Despite the controversy, many viewers were simply grateful to see their often-overlooked language represented in a global promotion, illustrating the complex dynamics of cultural representation in media.



Source: <https://x.com/NetflixSA/status/1790306056020566314>



Source: <https://www.tiktok.com/@netflixsa/video/7366945757607349521>

Key Insights

Use of a local language/Cultural Inclusivity and Representation

Netflix employed TshiVenda, one of South Africa's official languages, in the promotion of "Bridgerton" Season 3. The greeting in TshiVenda by Lady Danbury demonstrates the significance of using local languages to create a connection with regional audiences. This further highlights the show's inclusivity and respect for South African culture, making the promotion feel personal and relatable to South African viewers.

Marketing and Promotion

The inclusion of local language in marketing campaigns is a powerful tool for reaching and resonating with regional audiences. Such strategies foster a sense of cultural pride and representation, enhancing the overall effectiveness of marketing efforts and strengthening the connection between the audience and the content.



Gaps in Localisation in South Africa's media and entertainment Sector

As an isiZulu saying goes, “[a]kukho soka elingenasici” which loosely translates to, “[n]o one is without flaws or imperfections”. Same is true for the media and entertainment sector. Despite the industry’s advancements and effective, successful strategies as discussed above, several loopholes and challenges persist that can impact the effectiveness of localisation efforts.

Let’s look at some of them below.



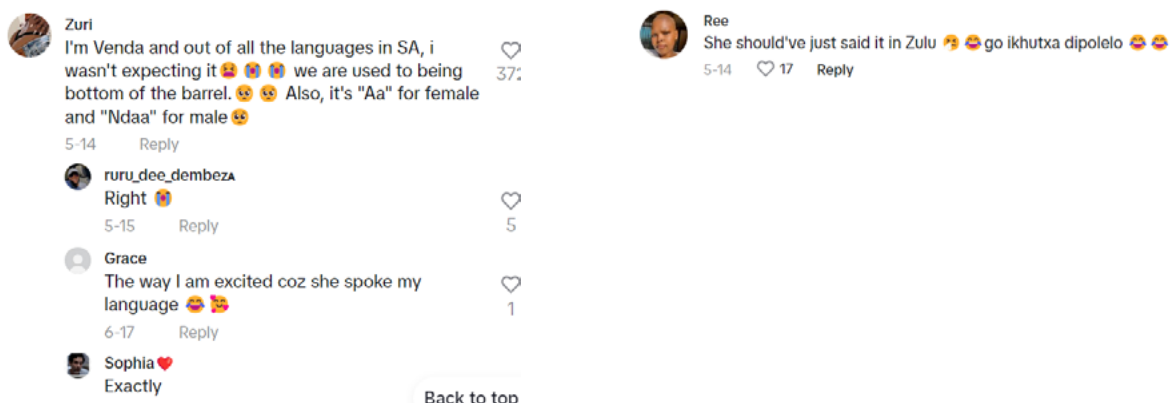
Lack of Cultural Research

The promotion of “Bridgerton” Season 3 by Netflix, featuring TshiVenda, brings to light significant gaps in localisation practices within the media and entertainment sectors. While the inclusion of TshiVenda in a global promotion was a commendable effort toward cultural representation and inclusivity, the incorrect usage of the greeting “Ndaa” by Lady Danbury—traditionally reserved for men rather than women—revealed the shortcomings in how languages are sometimes superficially integrated without a deep understanding of their cultural and linguistic nuances. This error not only sparked debate among native speakers but also highlighted broader issues of linguistic sensitivity and accuracy.

Netflix South Africa should have undertaken more rigorous research to ensure that such a mistake did not occur. The responsibility lies with the production team to ensure that languages are represented correctly, not just superficially. The speakers of the language should not be left with the option to accept the bare minimum of representation, especially when that representation is incorrect. It is not enough for a language to be included simply because it is rarely represented; it must be included with accuracy and respect.

The mistake further exacerbated divisions among speakers of different languages in South Africa. For instance, some users humorously suggested that isiZulu should have been used instead, as the greeting “Sanibona” is gender-neutral and can be used at any time of the day, regardless of the speaker’s gender. Although these comments were made in jest, they expose underlying cracks in how languages are perceived and treated. Each language has its own unique rules and cultural significance, which must be respected and accurately represented in media. The incident highlights the necessity for film production houses and media entities to conduct thorough due diligence in their localisation efforts to avoid unintentionally marginalizing or mocking a language for being “difficult” or having “too many” rules. Such oversights can reinforce negative stereotypes, leading to a language being further overlooked or undervalued.

Languages should be embraced for their differences, as they collectively represent the rich diversity of South African culture. The unique characteristics of each language should be celebrated, not only to foster inclusivity but also to ensure that no language is misrepresented or trivialized. The “Bridgerton” promotion serves as a reminder that effective localisation is not just about translation; it is about understanding and respecting the cultural contexts that give each language its identity.



Linguistic Inaccuracy

Translating content accurately while retaining its original meaning and tone is crucial. However, poor translation quality, often due to reliance on automated tools or underqualified translators, can lead to misunderstandings and loss of context. Idiomatic expressions, humor, and slang are particularly challenging to translate effectively, often resulting in awkward or incorrect translations.

For example, there was an uproar after the release of Shaka Ilembe after a word-for-word translation of the isiZulu phrase “[a]kukho zinyane lemvubu lanyamalala kwathula iziziba” in the subtitles was spotted. This literal translation fails to capture the idiomatic and cultural nuances embedded in the original language. The phrase, which was translated literally along the lines of “[n]o baby hippo ever disappeared without the rivers becoming silent,” is an idiom that signifies that significant events do not occur without noticeable consequences. However, this direct translation into English loses the metaphorical richness and contextual meaning that would be readily understood by audiences who are not native isiZulu speakers.

Zulu-ENGLISH

A, a

abantu human (n)
singabantu we are humans
abantu humankind (n)
singabantu we are humankind
abasebenzi staff (n)
abasebenzi benkosi the king's staff
abazali parents (n)
abazali bakhe his parents

Afrika Africa (n)
vakasha i-Afrika visit Africa
Agasti August (n)
uAgasti unezinsuku ezingu 31 August has 31 days

ishumi nesishiyagalombili argon (Ar) has 18 protons
akuthandeki ugly (adj)
akuthandeki lokhu it is ugly
aluminium aluminium (science)
i-aluminium (Al)
inamaphrothoni ayishumi nantathu aluminium (Al) has 13 protons
amabele millet (n)
umdoko wamabele millet porridge
amabele breast (n)
ubisi oluphuma emabeleni breast milk
amabhuleki brake (n)
amabhuleki emoto brake



Non-prioritisation of Localisation Budget & Timeliness

“A properly localized product/service also communicates respect for the target language and culture, and respect is one of those precious things that are hard to earn and easy to lose” - Ciklopea.com

There is a common misconception that localisation is expensive, but when Return on Investment and long-term benefits are considered, this misconception remains just that, a misconception. Localisation is not expensive but rather an asset. In film production, significant investments are made in equipments, locations, talent, and other resources to ensure high-quality output. These elements are meticulously planned and executed without compromise, reflecting the industry's commitment to achieving the best possible result. However, when it comes to localisation and translation, production houses sometimes fail to prioritize these processes, leading to subpar quality.

Consequently, this lack of prioritising localisation and the drive for rapid content release can result in insufficient localisation efforts, impacting the effectiveness of the content. The same meticulous attention applied to other production aspects should be extended to localisation. Insufficient translation and adaptation processes, often due to rushed timelines or reduced budgets, can negatively affect how well the content resonates with audiences. An article by Ciklopea titled "Localisation and ROI: A Very Happy Marriage" highlights that research consistently shows that more than 50% of customers value proximity over price. Consumers are more likely to choose a product that is presented in their native language and tailored to their culture, even if it is more expensive, over a cheaper alternative presented in a language they do not understand. Prioritizing localisation with the same level of importance as other production elements can not only enhance the viewer experience and maximize the global reach and impact of content but also, as per the opening quote above, "communicate respect for the target language and culture".

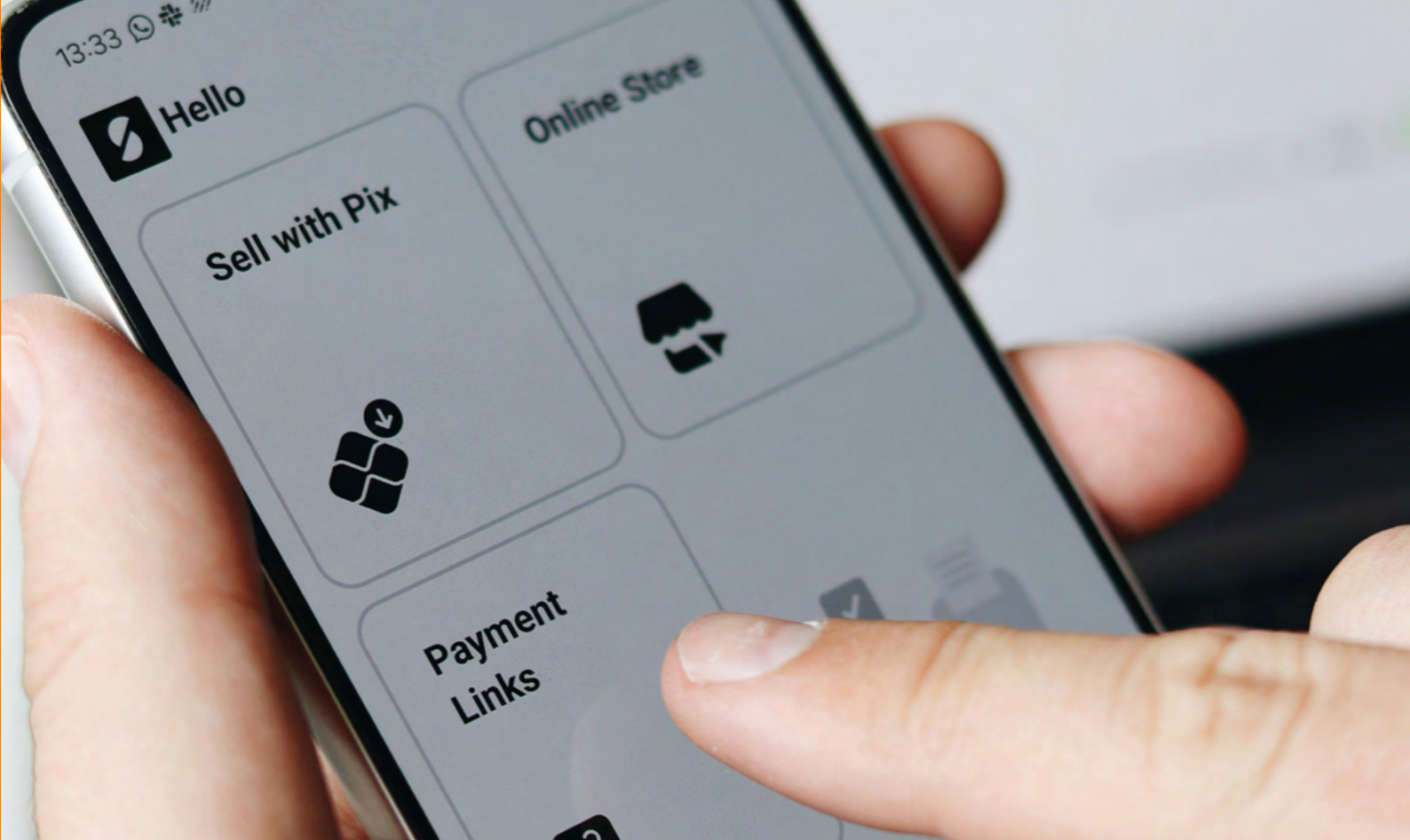


Am I the only one who saw the subtitle when Shaka asked for the numbers of Olerato?
Subtitle was like " can I have your mother..."
#TheQueenMzansi



Source: https://x.com/MrDee_deza/status/1403068614647943171

For production companies to be able to address these loopholes, production companies should invest in professional localisation services, fostering cultural awareness among translators and content creators, and leveraging technology to streamline the process. Continuous feedback from local audiences and regular updates to localisation strategies can also help in overcoming these challenges.



E-commerce

The E-commerce sector plays a pivotal role in today's dynamic marketplace, employing innovative strategies to cater to diverse consumer preferences and demands. This section explores the localisation strategies utilised within these industries, highlighting how businesses adapt their offerings to resonate with local cultures and preferences.



Temu : An ecommerce company

Under Temu as an ecommerce platform, Localisation is paramount across various facets. Language and communication are tailored to resonate with South African consumers, ensuring that interactions and service offerings are accessible and engaging in local languages. Payment methods are carefully selected to align with preferences prevalent in the region, promoting seamless transactions and bolstering trust among customers. Moreover, Temu emphasizes a customer-centric approach by enhancing the overall experience through personalized services that cater specifically to local preferences and expectations. These strategic localisations highlights Temu's commitment to effectively meeting the diverse needs of the South African market, fostering strong customer relationships and sustainable growth in the competitive ecommerce arena.

Ina Opperman, a South African business journalist for the Citizen, poses the critical question: “[w]ho will win in the end, the South African consumer or the South African companies?” Many consumers argue that their limited budgets drive them to choose Temu, where they feel they get more value for their money. This highlights how Temu's strategic localisation has made it a formidable competitor to businesses like Takealot, as evidenced by the public outcry. Opperman adds, “[t]hey feel so strongly about it that there are petitions doing the rounds to ask SARS to stop its plans to make Temu pay the same customs tax as any other company bringing products in from overseas.” Patrick Donovan, a brand advisor and Amazon strategist, supports this view in his LinkedIn article titled “Temu's Ecommerce Evolution:

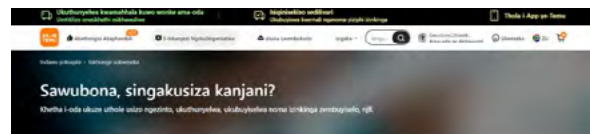
Gamification, Localisation, and Marketplace Expansion,” asserting that “[b]y continuing to disrupt the status quo and offering consumers an addictive blend of entertainment and affordability, Temu is going to be a force to be reckoned with.”

Let's see how Temu strategically does this below.

Key Insights

Language and Communication

Borrowing from Mandela's words “[W]f you talk to someone in a language they understand, that goes to his head. If you talk to them in their own language, that goes to their heart.” Similarly, effective communication in a consumer's preferred language can greatly enhance customer engagement and loyalty. In South Africa, this means acknowledging and incorporating the diverse linguistic landscape. Temu, a newcomer to the South African market, has made a strategic move by translating its website into isiZulu. This not only demonstrates respect for the local culture but also makes their platform more accessible to a broader audience.



Source: www.temu.co.za

Interestingly, market giants like Amazon have not yet translated their websites into any other South African language. This presents an opportunity for companies like Temu to capture market share by addressing a critical gap in the customer experience.

An illustrative example of this gap is evident in Amazon's customer support experience. When using the “please

call me” option on their website, a customer received a prompt callback. During the conversation in isiZulu, the consultant offered to assist in the same language, but after holding for about five minutes, the customer was informed that the relevant department was “offline.” This lack of clarity and the unavailability of South African language support highlight a significant area where Amazon could improve its localisation efforts.

Payment Methods

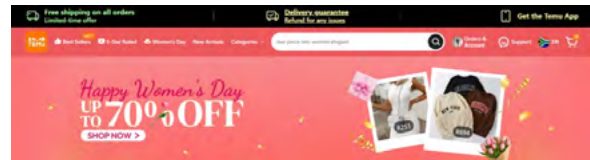
South African consumers are familiar with various payment methods, and businesses that accommodate these preferences can streamline the checkout process and reduce cart abandonment. Temu, recognizing this, offers payment options such as credit and debit cards, Apple Pay, Google Pay, Visa, and MasterCard. These methods align with the payment habits of South African consumers, ensuring a smooth and uncomplicated checkout experience.

Customer Experience

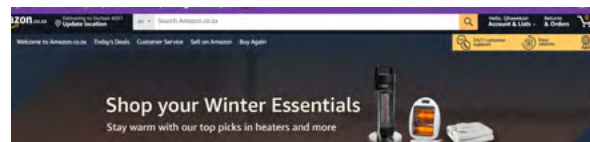
Providing a seamless and culturally relevant customer experience is essential for success in the South African market. Temu’s approach to localisation by translating their website into isiZulu is a strong example of how businesses can surpass competitors. In contrast, despite Amazon’s presence in South Africa, they have yet to fully localise their services. This is evident in their partial language support and the pending launch of their physical stores in 2024, despite their extensive online operations.

Temu has made notable efforts to localise its website by acknowledging specific South African holidays, such as Women’s Day, which is celebrated on August 9th. Despite its recent entry into the market, Temu began promoting substantial discounts with

the message “Happy Women’s Day” as early as July. This early pro promotion, while a commendable effort to engage with local cultural events, reflects a misalignment with the actual timing of the holiday. Temu’s approach indicates a proactive yet imperfect adaptation to South African cultural practices.



However, although Amazon has not translated its website into South African languages, Amazon demonstrates an understanding of regional seasonal changes by adapting its promotional content to align with local weather conditions. For instance, Amazon’s South African website prominently features messages such as “Shop Your Winter Essentials” to cater to the Southern Hemisphere’s winter season.



Source: www.amazon.co.za



Gaps in Localisation in the E-commerce Sector

Lack of Linguistic Localisation

Amazon's lack of translation into South African languages shows a significant gap in their Localisation strategy. Despite their AWS presence in the South African market since 2004, their commitment to linguistic inclusivity appears insufficient, particularly in a country with 12 official languages. During market research, Amazon's representative stated that the absence of language support is due to the "soft launching" of their physical stores, this explanation fails to address the digital and customer service aspects of their operations. Given their robust online presence, a more inclusive approach is warranted. Effective customer service, a critical touchpoint influencing user experience and brand loyalty, is undermined when communication occurs in non-preferred languages, leading to misunderstandings and frustration.



Research indicates that consumers engage more with brands that cater to their linguistic preferences (DePalma, 2006). While focusing on physical store launches is understandable, it should not preclude enhancing online and customer support services through linguistic inclusivity. Embracing South African languages could improve customer satisfaction and demonstrate a genuine commitment to the local market, fostering greater brand loyalty and market share.

Lack of Standardised Sizing - What I Ordered VS What I got

The issue of receiving items in incorrect sizes from e-commerce platforms like Temu is a prevalent problem that frustrates many consumers. Despite the availability of size charts on these websites, discrepancies persist, often leading to the delivery of items that are significantly smaller than expected. You are probably familiar with the statement “what I ordered vs what I got,” which has become a common refrain among online shoppers highlighting the frequent mismatch between their expectations and the actual products received. This problem can be attributed to several factors, including inconsistent sizing standards and communication gaps between sellers and buyers.

The lack of standardized sizing across different regions and manufacturers causes confusion for customers who rely on their usual size labels without cross-referencing the provided size charts. Research in e-commerce and consumer behavior suggests that clear and consistent size information is crucial for online shopping satisfaction (Fung, 2016). Agreeably, if this satisfaction is not met, customers tend to lose trust and look for alternatives.



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Epizone

LPC 400ml

R 88.99 each

Delivered in 2 - 4 working days.

- 1 +

REMOVE

R 88⁹⁹



Bioderma

Photoderm M Clarifying Gel
Cream SPF50+ Light 40ml

R 380.00 each

Delivered in 2 - 4 working days.

- 2 +

REMOVE

R 380⁰⁰



Comfort

Perfume Deluxe Laundry
Fabric Softener Divine Petals
800ml

R 78.99 each

Delivered in 2 - 4 working days.

- 1 +

REMOVE

R 78⁹⁹

Food and Beverages

The food and beverage sector holds significant importance in the South African localisation guide. South Africans have a profound love for entertainment, as reflected in their vibrant music culture, but this entertainment is often accompanied by the enjoyment of food and beverages. As a result, understanding the intersection of language, culture, and commerce is crucial for businesses looking to thrive in this market. This sector provides exemplary cases of how businesses can effectively use language and culture to engage their target market. Brands like Nando's, Chicken Licken, Savanna, and Switch Energy Drink have successfully leveraged local cultural nuances, humor, and sociopolitical commentary to create compelling and relatable marketing campaigns.



Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola exemplifies how Localisation and understanding one's target audience can generate remarkable success in the beverage sector. By translating its name into various languages and even customizing cans with people's names, Coca-Cola has demonstrated a profound commitment to connecting with consumers on a personal level across diverse cultures. This approach was vividly manifested through the "Share a Coke" campaign, which creatively engaged consumers and revitalized the brand's presence. The campaign's localized twist involved Coca-Cola taking to its social media platforms with the engaging query, "How many Coke cans would your name need?" This interactive strategy aimed to place names on billboards nationwide and encouraged people to purchase more cans to see their names featured. As illustrated in the screenshot below, @pridiemakoya, for instance, bought three cans to spell out their full name.



This initiative not only personalized the consumer experience but also effectively boosted sales.

Coca-Cola's strategy in South Africa mirrored the global success of the campaign, which originated in Sydney in 2011. According to [History Oasis](#), the "Share a Coke" campaign was initially conceived in response to a troubling trend of declining sales. The innovative and universally appealing approach led to a significant upswing in sales, successfully halting the decline and reaffirming Coca-Cola's position as a market leader.

However, borrowing from History Oasis words, "not every note in this symphony was harmonious".

"But what if you couldn't find your name on a can? To solve this dilemma, [Offlimit Communications](#) created a world first – a voice-activated vending machine, which consumers could use to print their names on 200ml cans. We got people talking to our vending machines and touched large parts of South Africa, by achieving a standard-smashing turnover of over 250 000 cans at a rate of around 6 cans per minute, exceeding the international vending standards of 3 cans per minute."

For instance, as the campaign expanded to more countries, a murmur of dissatisfaction began to emerge. Some customers, unable to locate their names on any bottles, felt left out. The issue of inclusivity became a topic of debate, adding a sour note to an otherwise successful campaign. History Oasis states that in the United States, where the campaign launched in the summer of 2014, individuals with unique or less common names publicly expressed their disappointment. Social media buzzed with discussions about this unintended exclusion, somewhat overshadowing the campaign’s achievements. In South Africa, having learned from the experiences of other countries where the campaign had already been launched, Coca-Cola collaborated with [Offlimit Communications](#) to preemptively address this issue. Together, they introduced a voice-activated vending machine that allowed consumers to print their names on 200ml cans, ensuring inclusivity and preventing the dissatisfaction seen elsewhere. This groundbreaking approach not only addressed the campaign’s limitations but also further amplified its success. The South African adaptation of this campaign proves the power of personal connection and cultural relevance in marketing, contributing to its widespread acclaim and commercial success.

Key Insights

Language Translation

Coca-Cola ensures its brand name, slogans, and marketing materials are translated accurately into the local languages of the countries it operates in.



Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/cool-like-coke-daniel-baum/>

Personalisation

Coca-Cola’s “Share a Coke” campaign, which involved printing popular names on cans and bottles, is a prime example of personalisation. Coca-Cola utilised this strategy to foster a personal connection with consumers, making the brand more engaging and memorable.



Source: <https://www.ccbc.co.za/business-directory-2/rosslyn-improvement-district/coca-cola-beverages-south-africa>



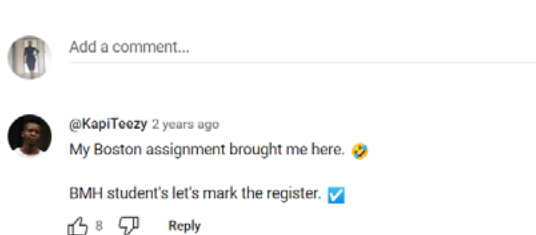
Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/mkrhrLfybmnDLPqR9>

Nando's

Nando's, an international casual dining restaurant chain, was founded in 1987 in Rosettenville, Johannesburg, South Africa, by Robert Brozin and Fernando Duarte (<https://www.nandos.co.za/>). Renowned for its flame-grilled peri-peri style chicken, the chain's signature dish involves marinating the chicken for 24 hours before cooking it. The unique peri-peri flavor, which has its origins in Mozambique, is a core element of Nando's identity and appeal.

From its modest beginnings, Nando's has grown into a global brand with a presence in over 30 countries. Despite its international reach, Nando's maintains a strong connection to its South African roots, which is evident in its marketing strategies and brand communication. According to Business Development Director Trudi van Niekerk, as featured in an article in *Food & Beverage Outlook*, the global Nando's empire now encompasses more than 1,000 restaurants, with over 300 of these located in South Africa alone.

Furthermore, consumers not only enjoy Nando's as a food outlet but also appreciate the brand for its relatable advertisements. Their social media platforms are filled with comments from a diverse array of people. Some hail Nando's as the "king of ads, king of sauces," while others mention that their initial exposure to specific ads was through school assignments. Teaching instructors are also found on the comment section, they utilize these ads to illustrate the "dangers of perception in marketing". Additionally, many appreciate how these advertisements succinctly encapsulate South Africa's political climate. This blend of humor, cultural relevance, and educational value in Nando's advertising contributes significantly to its widespread appeal and consumer engagement.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWEZLHYNAXg>



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNOUY4ZYKys&t=3s>

- ncnyy
-  @operatormook1623 9 months ago
Nandos are ad kings and Amakhosi masosi
Translate to English
3 1 Reply
-  @phillswashereenmkhatshwa6833 1 year ago
You people is my fav
7 1 Reply
-  @sharimatters5218 3 months ago
Tank you Dewald...i lecture on the dangers of perception i marketing using this video!!!
1 1 Reply

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNOUY4ZYKys&t=3s>

Key Insights

Humor and Relatability

Nando's adverts often poke fun at human behavior, making them highly relatable and entertaining. By addressing common human experiences and societal quirks with humor, Nando's creates content that resonates on a personal level with a broad audience.

Example: Nando's Advert About Minibus Taxis



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNpkMSvNKLY>

In this iconic advert, the brand humorously captures the audacious and relentless nature of South African minibus taxis. The advert portrays a scenario where the entire traffic is at a standstill, including situations of national security and ministerial convoys that typically bring all other vehicles to a halt. However, the minibus taxi is seen on a pavement, undeterred by the circumstances. The commercial depicts how minibus taxis, in their characteristic bold style, maneuver through traffic jams and even use pavements if necessary to keep going. This humorous take on the everyday experiences of South Africans with minibus taxis highlights their unstoppable nature and the drivers' resourcefulness.

Sociopolitical Commentary

Nando's doesn't shy away from addressing sociopolitical issues in its advertisements. By incorporating current events and social issues into their campaigns, Nando's demonstrates awareness and engagement with societal conversations. This strategy helps the brand appear socially conscious and relevant, aligning with the values and concerns of its audience. The brand's willingness to tackle controversial or sensitive topics with wit and insight sets it apart and generates significant buzz and discussion.

Cultural References

The use of local slang, idioms, and cultural references is a hallmark of Nando's marketing. By weaving elements of South African culture into their adverts, Nando's ensures that their messages resonate deeply with local consumers. This approach creates a sense of familiarity and community, enhancing customer loyalty. By speaking the language of their audience and reflecting their cultural experiences, Nando's strengthens its connection with the South African market.

Example: Nando's Advert Poking Fun at Absa's Africanacity Branding

In a witty and cheeky advertising campaign, Nando's poked fun at Absa's "Africanacity" branding. Absa's campaign aimed to celebrate the ingenuity and resilience of Africans, coining the term "Africanacity" to describe this unique blend of creativity and tenacity.

Nando's, created a spoof by slightly altering the term to "Africanasti." The playful twist humorously suggested a different kind of tenacity and resilience, one that could be seen as stubborn or cheeky, reflecting the unyielding spirit often portrayed in Nando's own branding and advertising.



Source: <https://wondermerk.com/portfolio/absa-africanacity/>



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNOUY4ZYKys&t=2s>

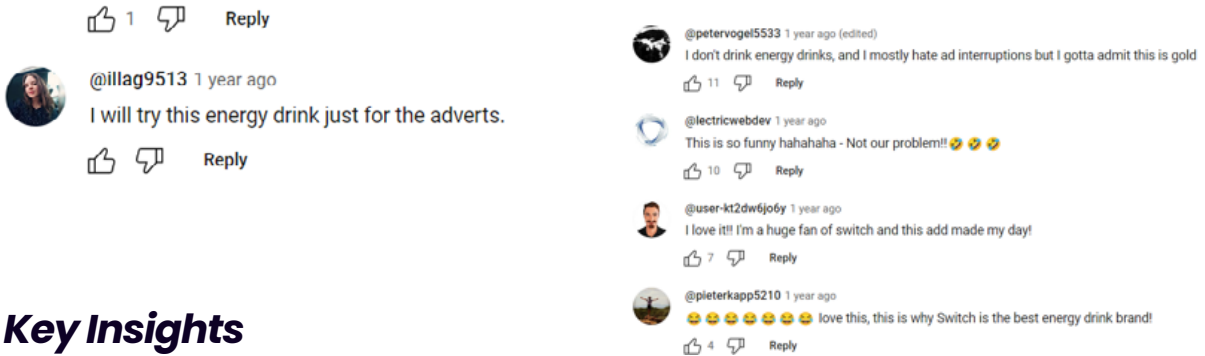
Switch Energy Drink

Switch Energy Drink is a dynamic and rapidly growing player in the South African energy drink market. Established in 2014, this proudly South African company has swiftly gained a substantial foothold in the competitive energy beverage industry. With operations spanning 9 countries and an impressive portfolio of 28 product lines, Switch has achieved remarkable success, having sold 1,078,013,664 products to date. These significant sales figures and the brand's rapid expansion highlights its widespread popularity and the effectiveness of its strategic localisation.

Launched to offer a refreshing and invigorating beverage option, Switch has quickly become a favorite among consumers. This success is attributed to the brand's effective marketing strategies, which have been instrumental in attracting new customers. Notably, Switch's advertisements have resonated strongly with the audience, as evidenced by the feedback in the screenshots provided below. Many consumers have expressed their intention to start

purchasing Switch products specifically due to the relatable and engaging nature of these advertisements.

Switch Energy Drink not only aims to provide an energy boost but also strives to connect with the unique experiences and challenges faced by South Africans. By tailoring its marketing to address local consumer needs and preferences, Switch ensures that its product remains both relevant and appealing.



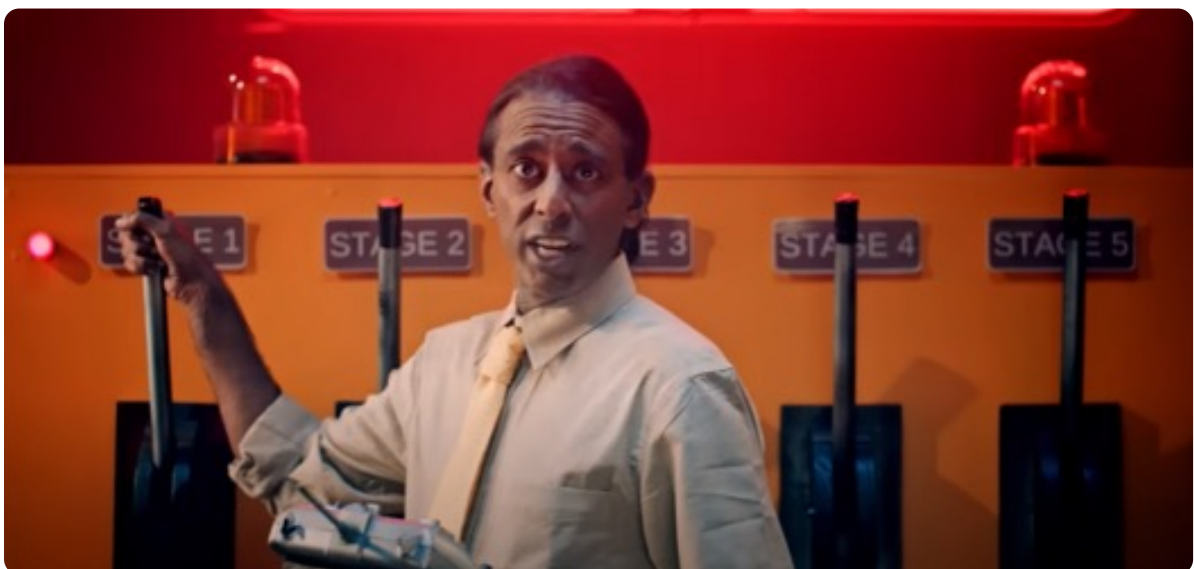
Key Insights

Contextual Marketing

One of the standout strategies of Switch Energy Drink is its creative use of contextual marketing. The brand cleverly ties its product to the experience of loadshedding—a common and often frustrating reality for many South Africans. Loadshedding refers to scheduled power outages implemented to manage and conserve electricity supply. Switch Energy Drink capitalizes on this by suggesting that, just as people need power to avoid loadshedding, they need Switch to avoid energy “loadshedding” in their bodies.

Problem–Solution Framework

Switch Energy Drink effectively employs a problem–solution framework in its marketing. The brand identifies the common problem of energy slumps that people experience throughout the day. By positioning Switch as the solution to this problem, the brand makes its product appear not only desirable but also necessary.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9iMw5xo5F7k&t=1s>



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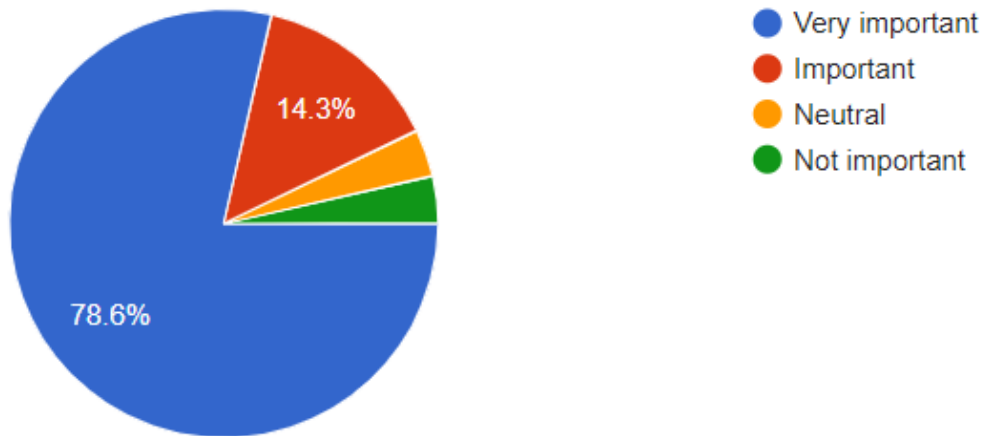
Healthcare and wellbeing Advocacy

In the realm of healthcare and well-being, the effective use of language and cultural sensitivity is paramount for organizations aiming to reach and support diverse communities. This section explores the general localisation of healthcare applications and other key aspects of healthcare products and services. As highlighted by a respondent in a study conducted as part of this localisation guide, who emphasized the need for improved attention to mental health issues, particularly within black communities, it is evident that there is a significant gap in addressing such concerns effectively. The respondent remarked, “[a]ddress the issues of mental health especially in black communities. People are not schooled that depression is as bad as ANY other medical condition. There is a stigma around mental health.”



This extends to the critical issues of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual violence, which are prevalent in South Africa. The role of advocacy in addressing these issues is crucial. Language plays a vital role in driving this advocacy, making it more effective by incorporating South African languages and ensuring cultural sensitivity.

Healthcare Application & websites



A study was conducted to determine the importance of culturally sensitive content and support services in mental health apps and websites, with 78.6% of respondents indicating that it was very important. Despite these findings and the prevalence of gender-based violence in South Africa, it is disappointing to note that few healthcare and advocacy organisations have effectively localised their digital platforms. Research identified over 30 organisations claiming to stand against violence and abuse and to advocate for mental health, yet fewer than five have localised their websites to reach their target audience effectively. This lack of localisation limits the accessibility and effectiveness of these organizations' services, particularly for speakers of indigenous South African languages. It is crucial for organisations dedicated to combating gender-based violence and advocating for mental health to ensure their resources are available and comprehensible to all South Africans, reflecting the country's linguistic diversity.

However, all is not lost. Organisations such as Sonke Gender Justice and the Kwanele Foundation have effectively localised their content, taking into consideration the linguistic diversity of South Africa. These organisations set an important precedent by ensuring their resources are available and comprehensible to all South Africans, thereby enhancing the accessibility and effectiveness of their services.

Key Insights

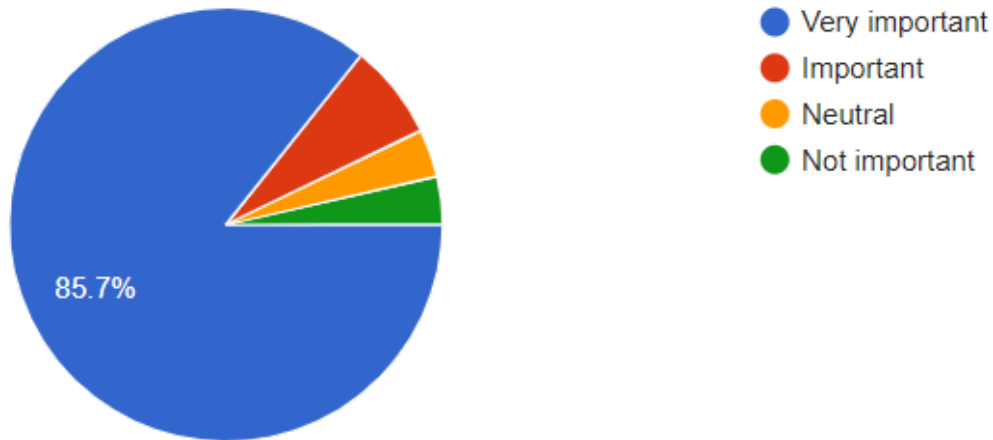
Linguistic Localisation

Sonke Gender Justice has translated its website into isiZulu to reach their target audience better. By doing so, Sonke Gender Justice acknowledges the linguistic preferences of the community they serve, making

information about gender justice and health services more accessible. In a study conducted for this Localisation guide, respondents were asked, "How important is it for health apps and websites to offer content in multiple languages to cater to diverse South African communities?"

As depicted in the accompanying pie chart, 85.7% of respondents indicated that it is very important to improve the

accessibility of health service information through health apps.



Source: <https://genderjustice.org.za/>

Cultural sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity is crucial in mental health and advocacy work, where understanding and respecting cultural norms can significantly impact the effectiveness of campaigns. The Kwanele Foundation exemplifies this through its use of indigenous language and culturally resonant terms in its campaigns.

Kwanele Foundation’s campaign slogans like “Kwanele ntombo, kwanele nsizwa, kwanele mfundisi, kwanele in-laws” harness the power of local language and cultural references to drive their message home. The term “Kwanele” means “it is enough,” a powerful declaration of resistance and demand for change.

By using “ntombo” instead of the more standard “ntombi,” the Kwanele Foundation taps into a term popularised by a local personality, Bobo, who encouraged women to be proactive and assertive with the phrase “yilwa ntombo.” This cultural reference makes the campaign more relatable and impactful, as it speaks directly to the audience’s lived experiences and linguistic preferences.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/100041655563468/videos/ilwa-ntombo-kodwa-bobsmbele-/1628792337324481/>

Target-Oriented Campaigns

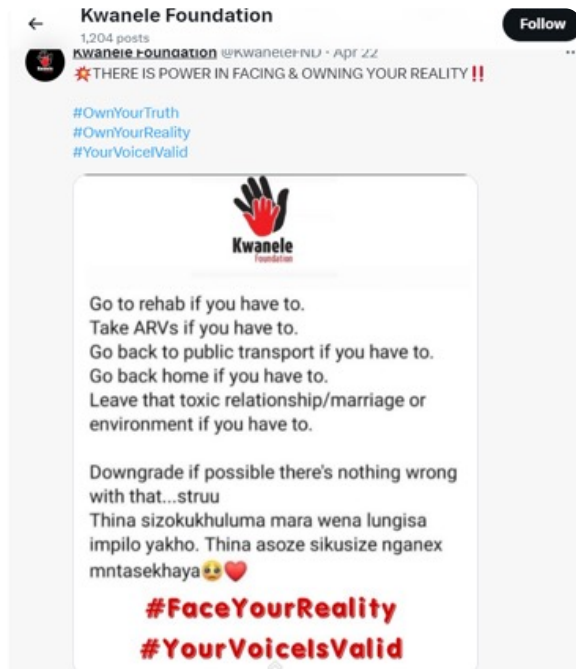
Each of Kwanele Foundation's campaigns addresses specific aspects of abuse and societal norms. Kwanele Ntombi focuses on empowering women and girls, encouraging them to stand up against abuse and assert their rights. Kwanele Nsizwa aims to challenge abusive behaviours ingrained in patriarchal traditions, targeting young men and promoting healthier, respectful norms. Kwanele Mfundisi addresses the issue of abuse within religious contexts, calling out financial, emotional, physical, and sexual abuses perpetrated by religious leaders. Kwanele In-laws seeks to abolish harmful cultural practices affecting widows and widowers, advocating for their rights and protection.



Source: <https://www.kwanelefoundaWtion.org/>

Social Media Engagement

Platforms like X.com (formerly Twitter) are used to interact with the audience in their preferred language, making the engagement more personal and immediate.



Source: <https://x.com/kwaneleFND>

What improvements would you like to see in the Localisation efforts of health apps and websites to better meet the needs of diverse South African communities? Respondent's answer,

“Good medical care is a relevant driver of the economy and the nation at large. Healthy citizens contribute positively to the economy of their countries/communities. There is need for diversity in languages on the apps in order to make people of all age groups, education backgrounds and levels of education access and acquire Good knowledge about their health.”



Gaps in Localisation in the Healthcare and Advocacy Sector: A Case Study of SADAG

During a recent research interaction, the researcher utilized SADAG’s “please call me” option, which resulted in a prompt callback—an aspect of their service that is commendable. However, the interaction revealed significant localisation issues. The initial representative did not understand isiZulu, the language in which the author requested assistance. Despite the author’s attempt to communicate in isiZulu, the representative requested if the author understood English. The researcher, adhering to their language preference, reiterated their lack of English proficiency in isiZulu.



Subsequently, the representative promised to transfer the call to someone who could speak isiZulu. However, the follow-up call was from a representative who was not fluent in isiZulu and could not effectively communicate or explain mental health terminologies in the language.

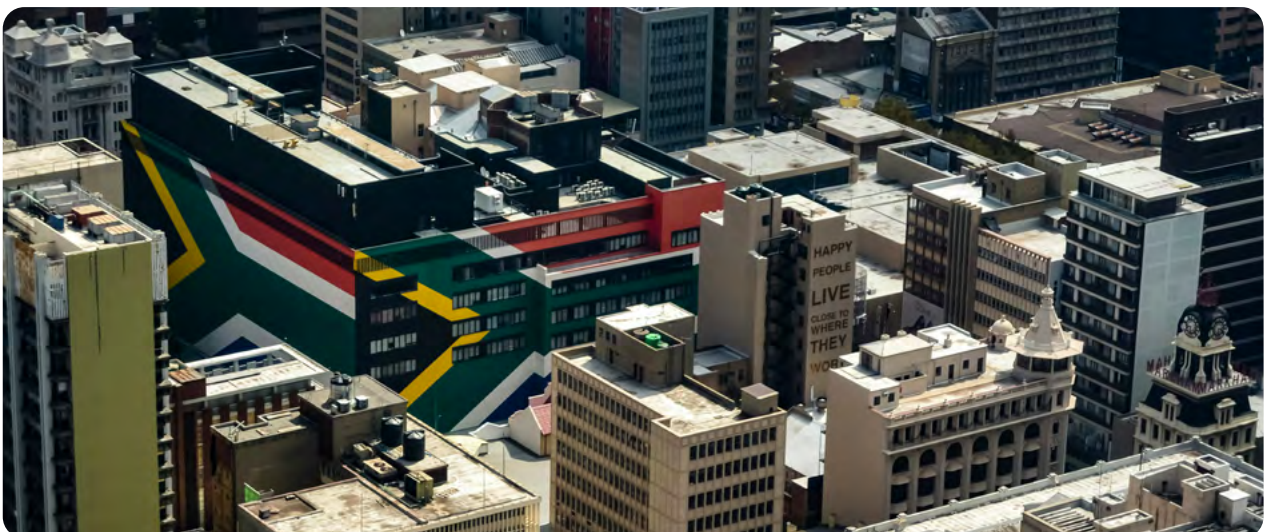
This situation highlights a critical shortcoming in SADAG's approach to language accessibility. For individuals in distress seeking immediate support, the inability to communicate in their preferred language can significantly impact the quality of assistance received. Effective communication is essential in mental health care, and language barriers can lead to increased distress and reduced efficacy of support services (Cohen et al., 2007). The lack of proficiency in South African indigenous language among staff members, despite SADAG's reputation and extensive experience, highlights a significant localisation gap.

Additionally, the absence of physical walk-in centres and reliance solely on telephonic support further limits accessibility. For many individuals, especially those in rural or underserved areas, the lack of face-to-face interaction can hinder access to timely and effective support. This is particularly concerning given SADAG's role in providing widespread mental health support and advocacy across South Africa. As Kirmayer et al. (2011) argue, mental health services must be adapted to local contexts to ensure they are accessible and responsive to the needs of the communities they serve.

It is to be noted that addressing these localisation loopholes is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and accessibility of mental health services.

Conclusion

In conclusion, effective Localisation is essential for businesses aiming to succeed in South Africa's dynamic and multicultural landscape. By tailoring content to reflect the country's linguistic diversity and socio-economic complexity, organizations can better meet the needs of their diverse audience across various sectors. Whether in media and entertainment, e-commerce, healthcare and advocacy, or food and beverages, understanding and integrating local languages and cultural nuances is crucial.



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