

The Role of Language in Socioeconomic Development: A Case of Kiswahili In Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Language plays an important role in enhancing communication in the society. This is a vital component through which the society interacts while undertaking various activities that help to foster unity, development and wellbeing of its members. For the achievement of various goals set out by different communities, there is need to make deliberate and coordinated efforts in structured use of language that is understood by members concerned. Kiswahili is the lingua franca of Kenya. It is also the official and national language of the country as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya (2010). This therefore means that in order to achieve meaningful development in the country the citizens should embrace the use of this language in their daily endeavors so as to achieve desirable results. It should be noted that it is through language that the society develops socially and economically. This paper intends to explore the place of Kiswahili in the socioeconomic development in the country. Data for this paper will be collected through review of related literature and appropriate content analysis. The findings will help various stakeholders to understand and appreciate the place of language in enhancing social and economic development in the country. The various policy makers will also benefit from this research which will unearth ways in which language can be utilized to strengthen the basis for meaningful development in different sectors.

Key Words: Lingua Franca, socioeconomic, language, communication.