

# **Language in Education and the Role of Applied Linguistics in Kenya**

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## **Abstract**

Language in education has remained a major concern in most African countries, especially those that were formerly colonized by European countries. Several problems that Africa and Kenya in particular, faces are closely tied to the language of education. What is the nature of these problems and whose responsibility is it to solve them? What is the role of an applied linguist in this linguistically complicated situation in Kenya? The definition of applied linguistics or who an applied linguist is eludes many. This paper does not propose to provide a definition either. Using the varied definitions that exist in literature, a working definition is developed and based on that definition; the paper shows that Kenya has several language issues that call for the services of applied linguists. While the issues range from the national language policies, language in education, multilingualism, second language teaching to language acquisition, the paper narrows the focus to four language-based problems, all of which are closely tied to the language of education. Although no solutions are suggested to these problems, a list of questions is formulated for the applied linguist to research on.

**Keywords:** Language planning, Language in education, Language policies

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