

The Influence of Mother-Tongue Maintenance on Acquisition of English Language Skills among Day Secondary School Students in Imenti South District, Kenya

Peter Kinyua Muriungi and Mercy Kimathi Mbui

Abstract

In Kenya, English is a very crucial language. For a long time English has been the sole official language in the country, but after the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010, Kiswahili was accorded the status of an official language too. English is a compulsory subject in secondary school education. Proficiency in English is very critical for a student who wishes to compete favorably with other learners in the country for prestigious careers and consequently jobs. In Imenti South District day schools, little is done to enforce the use of English among students' interaction in their day today activities. The study established that mother-tongue maintenance influenced the acquisition of English language skills in day secondary schools. Since mother-tongue is a hindrance to the acquisition of English language among day secondary school students, the study recommends that school administration and teachers should enforce rules to limit the use of vernacular in students' interaction. It is the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that students use English language while in school. Other programs in school like debates and discussions should be put in place to build confidence and proficiency in students in the use of the English language.

Keywords: Mother-tongue maintenance, Acquisition of English language skills, Day secondary school students

Full text: <http://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/ijl/article/view/3318/pdf>