

Abstract

Using Kenya as a case study, the paper demonstrates how indigenous African languages have suffered delegitimization and devaluation in education both in colonial and post-colonial Africa. Ethnographic data from Kenya are presented to show how the use of English as the medium of education contributes to differential educational treatments. It is argued that this leads to the perpetuation of social inequalities. The paper advances the argument that indigenous African languages should be given greater emphasis if education in Africa is to contribute to the much needed social, economic and political transformation. The paper makes suggestions as to how indigenous African languages in education can be introduced/strengthened.