



Language Revitalization and Cultural Identity in East Africa: A Seychelles Perspective

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Abstract

Language revitalization efforts in East Africa often intersect with broader discussions about cultural identity and community cohesion. Seychelles, as an archipelagic nation with a diverse population including indigenous Mahorais, Creoles, and Indians, exemplifies the complexities of language maintenance and cultural preservation. The study employs a qualitative research approach, analysing interviews with linguistic experts, community leaders, and local residents. Secondary data from government reports and academic literature is also reviewed to provide context and evidence. Language revitalization in Seychelles has led to the revival of several indigenous languages such as Mahorais and Creole, which have seen a significant increase in use within families and educational settings. This trend mirrors broader trends observed across East Africa where language revitalization efforts are fostering stronger cultural identities. The findings suggest that concerted language revitalization initiatives can play a crucial role in reinforcing cultural identity, particularly among younger generations who may otherwise lose these languages due to globalization pressures. Policymakers should prioritise funding for language education programmes and community-based initiatives. Additionally, fostering dialogue between linguistic experts, educators, and local communities could enhance the impact of revitalization efforts.

Keywords: *Cultural Identity, East Africa, Linguistic Revitalization, Ethnography, Socio-linguistics, Oral History, Heritage Languages*

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