



Standardization of Kiswahili language in East Africa and its Challenges

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East African countries are in the process of reforming their recent community which collapsed, more than twenty years ago. The number of member countries of this community has increased whereby Rwanda and Burundi have joined the Community. Among other important matters discussed in this community is the question of language that will facilitate communication within these countries. Kiswahili language has been given an important role to be used as a means of communication among the community members.

While these issues are in progress, the challenge is that, the representative committee of this community (Inter Territorial Language Committee) which was formed during the British colonial era collapsed. However, there is in place, the Institute of Kiswahili Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam which is the successor of some of the committee functions.

It is important to note that, in order for this language to be used as an effective channel of communication among the community members, there are notable initiatives to be undertaken. One of them is to standardize the language as it was the case during the British colonial era under the East African Swahili Committee.

The aim of this paper therefore, is to discuss some challenges that hamper the Kiswahili language standardization under the new East African Community. Moreover, the paper gives some suggestions on how to overcome those challenges and therefore have a good and effective use of Kiswahili language within the East African Community.