

Difficultés Liées À La Prononciation Du Français Au Kenya: Le Cas Des Apprenants Des Écoles Secondaires Des Comtés De Nairobi Et Bungoma

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Abstract

Research shows that speech work is a commonly neglected aspect in the teaching of French as a foreign language in spite of difficulties experienced by learners in this linguistic area. Over the last ten years, the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) has in its annual reports pointed out numerous articulation challenges on the part of candidates having sat the Kenya National Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) French oral examinations. It is against this background that this study sought to examine pronunciation difficulties on the part of secondary school learners of French in Kenya. The relevant data was collected from thirty secondary schools systematically and conveniently sampled from the Counties of Nairobi and Bungoma. As such, the study sample comprised recordings of topical exposés by 90 students of French in fourth form during the year 2015, three series of text books used in the teaching of French in Kenyan secondary schools, and responses to a questionnaire addressed to 30 teachers of French. The recorded expositions were analyzed by Error Analysis and the text books subjected to a speech work-based content analysis. The data collected was descriptively presented by use of frequencies and percentages in the form of tables and graphs. The set hypotheses were tested by use of SPSS aided statistical tests namely Chi-square and T-test. The results of the study showed that majority of pronunciation errors in the learners' speech were intra lingual in nature. It also emerged that the learning resources analyzed were not appropriate to solve the above stated problem. Finally, The study seems to show that the key challenges compromising the teaching of speech work in French were scarcity of suitable teaching and learning materials, incompetence on the part of teachers and time-related constraints. In the light of these challenges, the study recommends the review of existing resource materials, capacity building for teachers of French on pronunciation and the teaching of the same, and finally, a curriculum review to increase the time allocated to the teaching of foreign languages. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of this study will shape and improve actions by concerned stakeholders in Kenya namely students and teachers of French, teacher trainers, policy makers as well as researchers in this field.

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