



# Bilingual Education for Street Children in Kenya: Evidence from Language Mixing

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## Abstract

This article argues a case for bilingual education in the rehabilitation of street children in Kenya. These children are drawn from a variety of linguistic backgrounds. Too few of them are monolinguals when they are placed in rehabilitation centres where a four years non-formal education programme is run. The children mainly speak a mixture of Kiswahili, English and an urban youth variety called Sheng. Basing our study on the experience of Eldoret Children's Rescue Centre, we show that it is possible to achieve literacy through using the children's "home" language. The home language is the mixture of Kiswahili and English. The paper also highlights the challenges of adapting the approach.

Key words: street children, bilingual education, language mixing

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