

Indonesia and Tanzania– Neighbors Trans–marine: Ushering in Language Diplomacy

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Abstract:

Further to the 1955 Asia Africa Conference, Asian and African countries promoted African-Asian economic and cultural cooperation. In 1965, Indonesia and Tanzania formally established diplomatic relations with English as a medium. With the continued intensification of the relations, the language is losing its fascinating opportunity in facilitating the reaching out between the two peoples. To overcome the problem between the people speaking different mother tongues and where a third language is not that alluring, the use of the countries' official languages bilaterally would fit as a good choice. Kiswahili and Indonesian have a large amount of Arabic words in them. The study applied a desktop research methodology. Data were collected from existing resources in published studies and reports. Kiswahili and Indonesian indigenous speakers assisted in confirming the compatibilities. Though entrenched as a communication tool, English in both Indonesia and Tanzania is variously understood with a differing proficiency at various levels. As a consequence, users are either not so comfortable with its use, do not prefer its use to that extent or in some cases do not even speak it and therefore it is losing its appeal. Perhaps the most important thing is a continued benefit of true cognates enticing learning each other's language as a way to better understand each other's culture and attitudes in this rapidly evolving world. Cultural Exchange between peoples that are historically both distant and closer (neighbors transmarine) is a possibility. Finding a common linguistic ground in business interactions and trade negotiations is another strategy in creating economic and trade opportunities. The international acclaims Indonesian and Kiswahili have attained shall spark off studies on ways to seize such an opportunity for mutual gains.

Keywords:

Cognate, Communication, Lingua franca, Neutral Language, Multilingual.