

THE INTERLOCKING RELATIONS BETWEEN EDUCATION, LANGUAGE AND GENDER

Geoffrey Wango

Abstract

Language and naming are sources of power. This is because aspects of reality that are named become 'real'; they can be talked about and easily outlined. Language as a form of communication also enables us to share our thoughts, feelings and experiences, especially with each other. Language therefore shapes ideas and the thought processes. In education and in schools, language is bound to influence the way pupils and students learn. This is because pupils and students are taught several languages in school. In addition, they learn other subjects majorly through language. This draws attention to the way language creates the reality of the world for the child especially in the school. This paper examines the interlocking relations between education, language and gender with a view to determine in what ways language perpetuates sex and gender stereotypes. The paper argues that the way language devalues girls and women through sexism in language can be redeemed, that is engendering the language.

Keywords: Language, sexism, engendering, education, schools.

© Wango, G. M. (1999). *The Interlocking Relations Between Education, Language and Gender*. Workshop on the Development of Gender Responsive Teacher's Guide in Primary English and Mathematics. Kenya Commercial Bank, Karen. Nairobi: Unpublished Paper.