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## Language Vitality in South Africa

By Anika Kehl

GRIN Verlag GmbH Sep 2014, 2014. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 211x149x7 mm. Neuware - Seminar paper from the year 2011 in the subject English - Pedagogy, Didactics, Literature Studies, grade: 1,3, Ernst Moritz Arndt University of Greifswald (Anglistik/Amerikanistik), course: Hauptseminar: English in Contact, language: English, abstract: There are 24 languages which are regularly used by more than 44.8 million South Africans and almost 80 % of the South African population use one of the African languages at home. The most commonly spoken home language is isiZulu, which is spoken by 23.8 % of the population, followed by isiXhosa (17.6 %) and Afrikaans (13.3 %) Although English is the home language of only 8.2 % of the South African population it is still used as a lingua franca throughout the nation. The eleven official languages are used by 99% of the country's population and those languages are all supposed to have equal rights. Belonging to these languages are English and Afrikaans, and nine other African languages: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu . There are also many other languages spoken in South Africa like for example Arabic, German, Greek, Hindi, Tamil, Hebrew and many more. Some...



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South Africa's nine African official languages all fall into the Southern Bantu-Makua subfamily, part of the broad and branching Niger-Congo family of languages. The languages arrived here during the great expansion of Bantu-speaking people from West Africa eastwards and southwards into the rest of the continent. The expansion began in around 3000 BCE and was largely complete by 1000 CE. Language is fluid, especially in South Africa. Our languages are and have been for centuries in a constant swirl, mixed by work, migration, education, urbanisation, the places we live, friendship and marriage. Because of this, South Africans are a code-switching people. African languages form part of four language groups, namely Afro-Asiatic covering Northern Africa, Central Sahara and the Horn of Africa, Nilo-Saharan covering Central and Eastern Africa, Niger-Congo covering Central, Southern and Eastern Africa and Khoisan, covering the western part of Southern Africa. English and French are both widely spoken throughout the continent, though the number of native speakers is probably less than that of Amharic. For example, English has around 5 million native speakers in South Africa and probably less than 10 million continent-wide. Below are top 11 African languages. South African Sign Language is also understood across the country especially when interpreters decode the message. Popularly Spoken Native Languages. Zulu is the most widely spoken language in South Africa with about 12 million speakers representing 23% of the country's population. The language is understood by more than half of South Africans. The other popular language is the Xhosa with 16% of the population speaking the language. Xhosa is the most widespread language in the country with the majority of the speakers living in the Eastern Cape. The distribution of Xhosa language makes it one