Challenges Facing the Accused in the Use of English Only in Criminal Court Proceedings: Experiences from the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

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KEYWORDS Trial, Justice, Cross-examination, Culture-bound Words, Euphemistic Expressions

ABSTRACT The choice of language to use in South African courts is still a subject which gives rise to emotional debates in the public domain. In the Vhembe District Courts of Law, it is found that English is used as a language for case trials at the expense of African languages. Interpreting is a challenging activity because some languages do not always have words that allow a direct interpreting. The present research seeks to investigate interpreting or misinterpreting activities in courts of law in the Vhembe District. The conclusion of the case may completely change the verdict of guilty or not guilty. An interpreter should know both the source and target languages fluently and must make sure that the information is translated correctly and precisely. This research will be accomplished by analyzing interpretation in the courts of law in the Vhembe District.