Policy, Planning, and Implementation of Language Education in Sri Lanka: A Broken Thread

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ABSTRACT

Language policy is pivotal in shaping societal cohesion, educational outcomes, and economic opportunities, particularly in multilingual countries such as Sri Lanka. This study critically examines the evolution and implementation of language policies, planning and implementation in Sri Lanka, specifically focusing on the education sector. The study explores the challenges and gaps in executing the country's trilingual education policy by drawing on qualitative research, including semi-structured interviews with key policymakers and educational experts. This policy aims to promote proficiency in Sinhala, Tamil, and English. Despite constitutional provisions recognizing both Sinhala and Tamil as national languages and promoting English as a link language, the study finds significant discrepancies between policy intentions and actual language teaching and learning practices. Issues such as inadequate teacher training, lack of standardized assessments, and limited public motivation to learn additional languages hinder the effectiveness of the teaching of both the national languages (2NL) policy. Furthermore, there is a lack of integration between policy formulation and implementation, exacerbated by socio-political factors and public perceptions. This paper proposes a strategic language policy development plan incorporating a comprehensive language assessment, inclusive education programs, and stakeholder engagement. The proposed strategy aims to bridge the gap between policy and practice by fostering multilingualism and promoting language equity, ensuring that language policies contribute meaningfully to national unity, social integration, and sustainable development. This study underscores the need for a holistic and collaborative approach to language planning that considers the linguistic diversity and socio-cultural realities of Sri Lanka.

Key Words: Multilingualism, Language Education, 2NL language policy, Language teaching, Sri Lanka,

INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka's rich linguistic diversity has profoundly influenced its approach to language education, serving as a critical foundation for fostering a plurilingual society. This diversity is key in promoting interethnic and intercultural harmony among the country's various ethnic groups. However, the extent to which this complex linguistic heritage is effectively addressed within mainstream education today, particularly in language policy, planning, and implementation, remains a significant concern. Weerasooriya et al. (2025) concluded that Sri Lanka's language education programmes have fallen short of achieving the desired levels of bilingual proficiency among undergraduates. This study seeks to investigate the issue by analyzing expert perspectives on policy, planning, and educational implementation to assess the current state of language education in mainstream schooling. It aims to highlight the challenges in executing language policy and propose actionable solutions.

The research identifies the key issues in implementing language policy within education and formulating recommendations to address these challenges. A qualitative framework was employed for data collection and analysis. Key issues identified include the absence of clear language policy objectives, the lack of inclusive language education programmes, and insufficient comprehensive language assessments. Additionally, limited

efforts to promote bilingualism, multilingualism, and the preservation of minority languages have exacerbated the problem. The lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of language policy implementation has further hindered the country's Sinhala/Tamil bilingualism development.

BACKGROUND

The language background of the population in Sri Lanka is complex and diverse, reflecting the rich history and cultural amalgamation. The society has been influenced by various cultural and linguistic groups throughout its history, notably the Sinhalese, Tamils, Moors, Malays, and Burghers. Sinhala is the primary language of the Sinhalese ethnic group, comprising most of Sri Lanka's population. It belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family and has evolved from ancient Indo-European languages. The language has a script derived from the ancient Brahmi script. Sinhala is predominantly spoken in the island's southern, central, and western parts. Tamil, the second dominant language, is a minority language belonging to the Dravidian language family. It is spoken by the Tamil and Moor groups, primarily inhabiting the northern and eastern regions of Sri Lanka. The language has a rich literary tradition and is written in its distinctive script. Sri Lankan Tamil is a dialect that has influenced regional variations and historical interactions. Other minority languages in Sri Lanka include English, which is used widely in administration, commerce, and education and is spoken by smaller ethnic groups such as the Moorish community (dominantly using Tamil and Sinhala), Malay, and Burgher.

According to the country's language landscape and population distribution (See Map 1), Sinhala-Tamil bilingualism is an apparent necessity. It is a societal need, and there is a strong urge for Sinhala-Tamil bilingualism, specifically in some social contexts, such as education, work, survival, religious harmony, social and cultural harmony, etc. Additionally, even for the populations in the other regions, a knowledge of both the national languages is advantageous. Moreover, to make this a reality, language policy and planning level concerns as stated in the constitution are intended to be realized through language education, specially through mainstream education. Nevertheless, it is still a myth in the case of Tamil-Sinhala bilingualism in Sri Lanka.

Firstly, due to strong nationalistic concerns about religion and nation, the education centres, the temples of the Buddhists and the Hindus, and the Mosques used a selected language for religious education concerning the ethno-religious concerns. Sinhala language was the key language in Buddhist education centered in the Privenas, and Pali and Sanskrit were used as additional languages in classical religious education. Similarly, the Hindu temple used Tamil for classical religious education, and Pali and Sanskrit were used. (Liyanage & Canagarajah, 2014; Liyanage 2019). The Moors were educated in mosques and used Tamil and Arabic for classical religious education. As a result of this situation, such educators' language literacy and proficiency were multi-linguistic, and their language knowledge was high, beyond conversational ability.

The English education of the country originated due to the British invasion in 1796 and the colonial administration and evangelical missions. English was initially introduced as an attempt to spread Christianity and for the smooth flow of administration of the plantation workers (Coperahewa, 2009; Punchi, 2001). In 1833, the Colebrook-Cameron Commission Reform established English as the country's official language. Some English secondary schools were established in Colombo, Galle, and Kandy to improve the English proficiency of local people. This resulted in a select community of Sri Lankans given the privilege of learning and using English, and the masses continued in their vernaculars. As pointed out by Liyanage (2019), the enactment of such a policy denied English language education to most Sri Lankans (2019:402). Perera and Kularathna affirm this situation in their seminal article on bilingual education in Sri Lanka (2014). Moreover, as claimed by Nanayakkara (2017), this policy also prevented the spread of vernaculars. The English-educated locals were admitted to the British civil service, while the native language education also produced vernacular speakers, as did other government officers. Consequently, English came to be seen as a language of `rational and scientific knowledge', 'thought and matter' for Sri Lankans. (Annamalai, 2004).

In post-independent Sri Lanka, language planning occurred in the context of various political and social upsurges. As many studies have stated, in the first decades of independence, language policy efforts were made to diminish the role of English in education, to establish ethno-nationalist feeling, to restore the status of the vernacular languages, and to diminish the status of English. (Coperahewa, 2009; Liyanage, 2019; Walisundara and Hettiarachchi, 2016; Walisundara, 2019). Scholars in literature critique this condition. Gunasekara (2005),

mentions, "The subsequent governments [after independence in 1948 emphasis added] responded to more populist demands and 'dethroned' English with the expectation of promoting vernacular languages.". (2005:15). However, subsequently, the Monolingual Policy of Sinhala, called 'Swabhasha Movement' (1956) and the 'Rural Youth Uprising' (1971), redirected the subsequent language policy by 1970s. Moreover, the Free Education policy of 1948 was implemented to liberalize education from English to minimize the gap between the country's urban and rural learners. Education was decided to be delivered in the learners' mother tongue, Sinhala or Tamil, to increase the country's literacy rate. The 13th Amendment to the 1978 Constitution of 1987 recognized English as a link language. Moreover, the term "link language has been defined in the local context as a situation that would lead to better communication between the different ethnic groups in the country (Walisundara and Hettiarachchi, 2018,2). Interestingly, according to the 2012 census, people wanted English as a link language.

Language has been a contentious issue in Sri Lanka's history, leading to sociopolitical tensions with the 'Sinhala Only Act' of 1956, which made Sinhala the sole official language, leading to marginalization and grievances among Tamil-speaking communities, which eventually contributed to the escalation of conflicts, notably the civil war that lasted for decades. The "Sinhala Only Act," also known as the Official Language Act, was introduced by the government in 1956. This act made Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka, displacing English, which had been the administrative and official language during the colonial period. The move was rooted in the Sinhalese nationalist sentiment of the time, seeking to establish the dominance of the Sinhala language in government, administration, and education. Though the Soulbury Constitution of 1947 granted independence to Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was then known), initially recognized both Sinhala and Tamil as official languages, the shift towards Sinhala dominance was reflected in subsequent constitutional changes. The 1972 Republican Constitution, following a period of amendments and alterations, further solidified the status of Sinhala as the sole official language. It proclaimed Sinhala as the country's official language and provided limited provisions for the use of Tamil in specified regions and circumstances. Bilingualism was promoted over time, recognizing the need for inclusivity and reconciliation. The most significant change came with introducing the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1987. It was introduced as a result of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. It aimed to devolve power to the provinces and recognize Tamil as an official language alongside Sinhala. It sought to establish parity between Sinhala and Tamil, acknowledging the importance of both languages in the country's governance. In recent years, Sri Lanka has tried to promote language equality and inclusivity. The 1987 Amendment, though a significant step, has not fully addressed the language-related grievances of Tamil-speaking communities. Efforts continue to balance linguistic rights, particularly in education and administration. Ongoing discussions, debates, and proposed legislation regarding language policies in Sri Lanka reflect the continuing struggle to find a balance that respects the linguistic rights of all communities while fostering national unity.
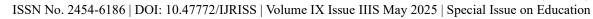
However, some studies have discussed whether such concerns are considered in language education policy in Sri Lanka (e.g., Walisundara and Hettiarachchi, 2016; Liyanage, 2019). Discussing this concern, Liyanage (2019) states,

"Language education policy of Sri Lanka was and is continued to be driven by several recapitulations of the interaction of diverse influences against a background of practical plurilingualism and individual desires and motivations evident in the formal and informal teaching and learning of additional languages.'(in Kirkpatrick & A. L. Liddicoat Eds. 2019; 399).

As claimed by Liyanage (2019), the Sri Lankan Language Education policy

"has seen policy- and grass-roots driven fluctuations in the dominance and influence of languages, in the prestige, rivalries, and inequalities among languages, the emergence of lingua franca, and linguistic convergences". (2009:329).

Even though language education policies target ethno-cultural harmony and economic development, due to numerous socio-political and financial constraints and governments' inability to maintain policy consistency and inappropriate structural weaknesses (Liyanage, 2009, p. 400), whether those goals were attained is problematic. However, the three central languages – Sinhala, Tamil and English – served the necessities of all

ethnic communities as needed and due to policy-level issues. As Liyanage (2019) points out, the centre stage in current education policy is occupied by Sinhala, Tamil, and English in Sri Lanka, as Sinhala and Tamil are considered local vernaculars, while English is still connected with colonization and is the lingua franca of globalization. According to Nanayakkara (2017) linguistic survey 2010 states that over 90% of respondents of different ethnic groups representing different regions had affirmed the need for children to be proficient in English (2017: 1).

Some significant findings of research have recommended suggestions. A study by Corrianne Wyss on the title Language Policy in Sri Lanka: Critical Junctures and Resistance Factors Preventing Successful Implementation states that

The path Sri Lanka took in making and adopting its language policy since independence is strewn with pivotal moments and critical junctures that exert an enduring influence on the country's language policy direction. While both Sinhala and Tamil are now constitutionally enshrined as national and official languages of the country, historical, institutional and political resistance factors still undermine the successful implementation of Sri Lanka's language policy and thus the effective building of post-war reconciliation. The changes needed at the institutional and political levels to address the shortcomings and failures of language policy implementation prove difficult to achieve, due to a lack of political will, fears of fragmentation of territorial integrity and fears of undermining the Sinhalese-Buddhist hegemony.
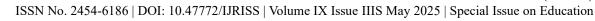
Liyanage (2019) in the title of Language education policy in Sri Lanka, mentions that,

A close association between religion and language was an essential and inseparable aspect of group cultural identity and education, including language education was centred on the religious institutions responsible for its provision. The established language education systems provided by religious institutions suffered a severe disruption following the early 16th-century arrival of the Portuguese, who gradually occupied the island's western and northern coastal areas. Since independence, policy for language education and language in education has been characterised by continually shifting parameters dictated by political imperatives against a background of social and ethnic division. Language education policy in Sri Lanka has been a source and an instrument of social and political division for nearly 200 years. Education Disparities: Studies may investigate how language policies impact education, focusing on language of instruction, access to education in one's native language, and academic achievement among different linguistic communities.

Public Administration and Services, a Research by Guruge (2017) recommends that all ministries consider language policy regarding documentation and public services. may examine the effectiveness of language policies in government offices, language usage in official documents, accessibility of services in multiple languages, and the inclusivity of public administration.

To promote ethnic harmony and reconciliation, the two national languages are introduced and taught as additional languages in mainstream education. Both Sinhala and Tamil are taught as additional languages in the mainstream education from Grade 3 to Grade 9. In this programme, Sinhala is taught as an additional language for Tamil medium students, and Tamil is taught to Sinhala medium students. The curriculum goals and competency levels are pre-designed by the NIE. However, whether the teacher is specially trained or graduated is problematic. Assessment is made using unit tests and other end-of-term and year-end assessments. The marks for these tests are counted when calculating the total marks for the end-term exams. However, teaching Tamil as an additional language is not continued after the Ninth Grade. The statistics show that the percentage of candidates who passed the GCE OL Tamil language exam has remained consistently high over the past decade, with an average pass rate of approximately 84%. However, it is essential to note that these statistics only provide a broad overview and do not provide information on the performance of individual candidates or specific schools or regions.

However, while English/Sinhala and English/Tamil bilingualism are happening, there are no signs of improvements in Sinhala/Tamil bilingualism. Therefore, many projects such as The National Language Equality Advancement Project (NLEAP) and Listen Learn Commission (LLSR) proposals look up to contexts such as that in Canada, where English-French bilingualism is functioning well. While many scholars,

researchers, educationists, and journalists state that Sinhala/Tamil bilingualism is not working in Sri Lanka (Weerasooriya et al., 2025), it is also apparent that Sinhala/Tamil bilingualism is a failure. In the Sri Lankan context, it is believed that "language barrier" is at the core of inter-ethnic misunderstanding and conflicts (Kasynathan & Somasundaram, 1981; Canagarajah, 2005; Shanthakumar, 2008; Davis, 2015; Nanayakkara, 2017; among many others). Going back to recent history of the beginning of the problem, De Votta, (2005) and Walisundara and Hettiarachchi (2016), note that even if Sri Lanka's postcolonial leaders' prime motive was to substitute colonial language with Tamil and Sinhalese, the language rationalization policy that came into being in 1950s culminated in institutional deterioration, "produced by the dialectic between majority rule and ethnic outbidding. (De Votta 2005, p.141). Today, it is said that Sinhala-Tamil bilingualism is unsuccessful due to what is experienced in the bilingual context of language use of Tamil and Sinhala.

However, to our knowledge, no proper investigation has been conducted to determine the source/s of the failure to attain Sinhala-Tamil bilingual proficiency. This study was carried out to fill in this gap in the empirical domain in this field by comprehensively investigating the sources and reasons for failure. This is discussed in the following sections.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed qualitative research methods to conduct its procedures, ensuring a thorough exploration of the subject matter. Semi-structured and open-ended questionnaires were designed and utilized during the interviews to facilitate in-depth data collection. The sample of interviewees included three key personnel, each directly connected to the authorities responsible for policy formulation, planning, and the implementation of language policies within mainstream education. The collected data were meticulously transcribed, and a qualitative content analysis approach was employed, involving a systematic cross-referencing of each interviewee's transcription to identify patterns, themes, and insights.
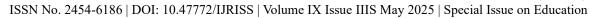
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Language Policy and Planning

According to the interviewee participants, in post-colonial Sri Lanka, many issues related to ethnic disharmony occurred due to language policy decisions. However, this concern was still not well-discussed by the ruling governments to resolve the concerns through education. Therefore, there is no change in the policy decisions that have already been taken. However, the 2NL language policy (teaching of both the national languages) is executed in administration and education.

Concerning the administration, many institutional bodies are established explicitly by past governments of the country to carry out those policies. For example, the Department of Official Languages in Sri Lanka plays a crucial role in implementing language policies, particularly concerning using Sinhala and Tamil in government functions and public services. The Ministry of Education also shapes language policies related to the education system. It is important to note that the structure and responsibilities of these institutions may evolve with changes in government and policy priorities. Research, investigation, and monitoring of language policy implementations in Sri Lanka are typically conducted by various entities, including academic institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies. These efforts aim to assess the impact of language policies on different aspects of society, such as education, public administration, and cultural identity. Academic institutions often engage in research to analyze the effects of language policies on communities, language proficiency, and social cohesion.

According to scholarly view, language policies in many countries are critical in education, as they shape the language of instruction, curriculum development, and access to educational resources. If language policies are well-designed, effectively implemented, and regularly monitored, they can contribute to positive educational access, quality, and equity outcomes. Sri Lanka's 1978 Constitution granted official status to both Sinhala and Tamil as national languages. Recognizing Tamil as a national language aimed at addressing the linguistic diversity in the country and promoting inclusivity. The expectation was to ensure that both Sinhala and Tamil-speaking communities had access to government services, education, and public administration in their

respective languages. The recognition of Tamil as a national language did not necessarily imply an assumption that a considerable portion of the population would learn Tamil. Instead, it aimed to provide equal opportunities and representation for both linguistic communities. In practical terms, policies related to language use in various sectors, such as education and public administration, would determine how much people would learn and use Tamil or Sinhala. The intention behind recognizing Tamil as a national language was to foster a more inclusive and equitable society, acknowledging the linguistic diversity present in Sri Lanka. However, the success of such policies depends on their effective implementation and the government's commitment to ensuring linguistic rights for all communities. The complexities surrounding language issues in Sri Lanka have been a subject of discussion and debate, reflecting the broader socio-political dynamics of the country.

The designation of English as a link language in Sri Lanka bridges the two national languages, Sinhala and Tamil. While Sinhala and Tamil have been recognized as national languages to acknowledge the country's linguistic diversity, English is designated as a link language to facilitate communication and understanding between communities that may not share a common vernacular language. The purposes of having a link language like English include: administrative and government communication, National unity, education, and international communication. While the concept of a link language aims to facilitate communication and cooperation between communities with different vernacular languages, the successful implementation depends on various factors, including the level of proficiency in English among the population and the policies adopted by the government to promote multilingualism and inclusivity.
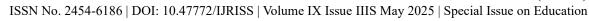
At least in principle, the expectation has been to promote proficiency in all three languages—Sinhala, Tamil, and English—among the population. This trilingual approach would enable individuals to communicate effectively in their vernacular language and the link language (English) for broader communication and international engagement. However, realizing a trilingual society involves various challenges, including developing language education programs, language proficiency among the population, and integrating multilingualism into multiple public and private life aspects. Political, social, and economic factors can also influence the success of trilingual policies.

In conclusion, experts agree that it is widely recognized in the field of economics and development studies that language policies can indeed have a significant impact on economic development within a country. The relationship between language and economic development involves various factors, including communication, education, workforce skills, and international trade. Effective language policies that promote multilingualism, access to education in multiple languages, and communication in the business environment can contribute to economic growth. Governments must consider these factors when formulating language policies as part of a comprehensive approach to national development. The relationship between language policy and economic development is complex and multifaceted, and the success of such policies depends on their thoughtful design and effective implementation.

Language Policy Implementation

Implementing the language policy through various governmental bodies faces challenges due to a lack of consensus. Most organizations prioritize supporting the 2NL (Two National Languages) policy by offering assistance, such as translating government documents and providing language courses to educate the public. The Department of Languages and the National Languages Commission are key in facilitating trilingual translation and compiling glossaries for Sinhala and Tamil terms across various subject areas. The National Languages Commission has developed over 80 glossaries in Sinhala, Tamil, and English, translating English terms into Sinhala and Tamil for fields like public administration and other specialized areas.

Additionally, the commission develops curricula for adults and conducts language examinations. These examinations assess national language qualifications, enabling public officers to qualify for promotions or incentives based on their proficiency in the two national languages. This initiative aligns with Public Administration Circular 18/2020, which mandates that officers recruited after 2007 must achieve the required language proficiency level within three years, depending on their category. This measure aims to promote equality between the two national languages, though amendments to the policy are ongoing. While the

department does not directly serve the public, it provides support in the language of their choice and aids government organizations in implementing the official language policy.

Experts, however, highlight a lack of motivation among citizens to learn both national languages. This is attributed to the limited interaction between the two communities, typically occurring only in work or service-related contexts. Although government circulars mandate officers to learn an additional language, there is no strong practical incentive or purpose to encourage meaningful language learning.

Language Policy Implementation in Education

The Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education (NIE) have determined that general education should be delivered in either Sinhala or Tamil, with English introduced starting from grade one through activity-based oral English programs and formal instruction from grade three. The concept of Amity Schools has since evolved into bilingual medium education.

The education system in the country is referred to as 2NL, reflecting its emphasis on the medium of instruction, English language teaching, bilingual education, and the second national language. These strategies are key components of the country's language policy in education.

However, significant challenges persist, including a shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate teacher training. Teaching quality is often compromised due to ineffective use of teaching materials, and the primary issue lies in delivering content that aligns with classroom needs. Furthermore, assessment methods for Sinhala, Tamil as additional languages, and English heavily rely on paper-and-pencil tests, which fail to evaluate language proficiency.

A common national framework for language teaching has been proposed to address these issues. This framework would integrate three major language programs: mother tongue instruction, English as a second language, and additional or bilingual language programs. The NIE has sought international benchmarks for language proficiency to establish clear learning outcomes and incorporate "can-do" statements. Their goal is to consistently benchmark language skills for every student at each grade level.

Uniform language proficiency is critical for effectively teaching subjects like mathematics and science. This requires aligning language instruction with the goals of communication or academic achievement. For second national languages, the primary focus is on developing communicative competence.

When given curriculum choices, students often avoid core subjects, influenced by familial preferences for economically advantageous fields. This trend can lead to a decline in enrollment for less popular subjects, relegating them to secondary importance. To counteract this, a revised curriculum has been introduced and categorized into three groups.

Category one includes seven core subjects students study in grades ten and eleven, culminating in Advanced Level examinations. Category two comprises compulsory subjects, such as second national languages, for which students must earn credits. However, this categorization faces challenges, as global trends show that non-core languages are often overlooked due to their perceived lack of relevance or practical purpose.

Findings and proposing a strategic plan for language policy development

Developing a strategic language planning and policy plan in Sri Lanka requires a comprehensive approach considering the country's diverse linguistic landscape and cultural context. The following framework can be utilized in making a plan.

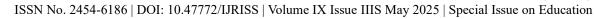| Main Idea	Description
Conduct a comprehensive language assessment.	Recognize and investigate the linguistic diversity in Sri Lanka, taking major languages spoken, dialects, and minority languages into consideration, and then evaluate the socio-economic, cultural, and educational implications of

	language use in different regions.
Establish clear language policy goals.	Outline the predominant goals of language policy, such as promoting linguistic diversity, ensuring equitable access to education, and fostering national unity in language planning.
Develop inclusive language Education Programs.	Device policies that enable quality education in their mother tongue for all citizens. Encourage multilingual education to promote proficiency in multiple languages.
Encourage bilingualism and multilingualism.	Promote bilingualism and multilingualism as the norm. Encourage learning multiple languages, including the two vernaculars, Sinhala and Tamil, from the early stages of school education till the end of secondary school.
Support minority language preservation.	Establish cultural and linguistic preservation programs in collaboration with local communities.
Foster language-inclusive workplace policies	Encourage workplaces to adopt language-inclusive policies that respect linguistic diversity.
Develop language technology solutions.	Invest in language technology to bridge communication gaps and facilitate language learning.
Engage stakeholders	Facilitate dialogue among government officials, educators, linguists, community leaders, and citizens to ensure diverse perspectives are considered. Involve local communities in the decision-making process to enhance the effectiveness and acceptance of language policies.
Monitor and evaluate language policy implementation.	Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impact of language policies. Regularly review and adjust policies based on feedback and evolving needs.
Raise awareness and promote language equality.	Conduct awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of linguistic diversity and language equality. Encourage public discourse on language-related issues to build support for inclusive language policies.
Establish legal frameworks	Develop and enact laws that protect linguistic rights and ensure equal opportunities for all language communities.
Collaborate internationally	Learn from international best practices in language planning and policy. Collaborate with international organizations to share knowledge and resources.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of language policy in promoting national unity, ensuring educational equity, and driving socio-economic development in multilingual societies like Sri Lanka is indispensable. This study underscores the intricate and multifaceted nature of language planning and implementation within the Sri Lankan context, highlighting achievements and persistent challenges in establishing a cohesive and inclusive language framework.

Despite the constitutional recognition of Sinhala and Tamil as national languages and English as a link language, practical implementation continues to encounter significant hurdles. Key issues include inadequate teacher training, insufficient instructional materials, ineffective assessment mechanisms, and a lack of public

motivation to learn additional national languages. Furthermore, the fragmented execution of language policies across various governmental institutions reveals the absence of a unified and consistent approach.

At the grassroots level, the disconnect between language policy objectives and everyday realities has fostered a perception of language learning as a bureaucratic obligation rather than a meaningful tool for communication and empowerment. This study emphasizes that a policy without a clear purpose risks remaining symbolic rather than transformative.

To address these challenges, the proposed strategic framework advocates for a participatory and evidence-based approach to policy development. Key recommendations include conducting comprehensive language assessments, advancing multilingual education, ensuring active stakeholder engagement, promoting inclusive workplace language practices, and utilizing technology to bridge linguistic divides.

Ultimately, language policy should be viewed as a dynamic and evolving process that reflects the nation's needs and aspirations. A steadfast commitment to inclusivity, accountability, and long-term planning is crucial to fostering a society where linguistic rights are upheld, diversity is celebrated, and every citizen is empowered through language.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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