

Implementing the Trilingual Policy: Challenges Encountered by the Translators of Government Institutes in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: - In a multilingual country like Sri Lanka, languages act as an indispensable factor for the ethnic identity of each community. Language policies are systemized and implemented to achieve a planned conversion in the language use in one or more communities. In Sri Lanka, language has been a cause for the communal unrest during the past few decades. After facing many crisis situations and thirty years of brutal war the trilingual policy has formulated to build up reconciliation among social groups. In terms of legal provisions, the trilingual policy is definitely established but practical implementation is a challenge. In the process of implementing the trilingual policy translators play a pivotal role. They are the bridge builders between languages. Translators confront certain barriers when implementing language policies. In order to investigate challenges encountered by translators in the arena of the implementation of the trilingual policy this study applies a mixed approach which includes both quantitative and qualitative data allocated by a survey. The research study analyses the perspective of government translators regarding the trilingual policy and attempts to highlight the solutions that can initiate to overcome the barriers. It was found that the effectiveness of the implementation of the trilingual policy get affected by the dearth of qualified and experienced personal who have the ability to translate in Tamil and Sinhala languages. This scarcity is the major drawback in implementing the trilingual policy. This study found that the positive attitude towards second language learning and professional training institute for translators will be of utmost importance to the success of the trilingual policy.

Key Words: Translation, Translators, Trilingual policy, Government institutions, Challenges

I. INTRODUCTION

The word 'translation' originally buds from the Latin term 'tranlatio' which stands to mean 'bring across'. One would identify it as a form of art which bridges the communication gap that arises due to lack of understanding of two different language elements. J. C. Catford states that it is a process performed by people. In the process of translation, the language to be translated is known as "source language" (SL) while the language to be translated into is known as "target language" (TL). Hence, scholars such as Catford (1995) further describe translation as the substitution of textual material in a specific language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL).

A translator is a trained individual in the arena of understanding linguistic nuances with the capability to accurately interpret between two languages or more. As explained by Seleskovitch, translation can be distinguished into four categories such as a science, a skill, an art and a matter of taste which are handled by a well competent translator (Newmark, 1988).

Being qualified as a translator does not simply consider the bilingualism of individual, it is also largely shadowed by other factors such as the ability to effectively interpret and transcribe message taking into account crucial factors such as social and cultural factors. It requires the skills to be able to work with different materials; whatever types of documents and specific knowledge in industries and fields involved. It involves the ability to relay the information as accurately and reliably as possible with the most suitable vocabulary applicable to each case. It is a highly specialised profession, where many common challenges are faced even by experts. Translators have to play different roles depending on the subject, value and the purpose of the work.

Policy Making

Policy making is a reactionary process meaning that certain aspects of an issue attracts the attention of the relevant authorities whose responsibility is to address the problem and come up with solutions by formulating new policies to alienate the issues. It is an interminable process which involves agenda, alternatives, decision making, implementation and evaluation.

Language is one of the best tools of communication which relays the uniqueness of a country's culture. Language Planning is a professional activity which is classified under Applied Linguistics. Languagespecialists, lawyers, and politicians are experts who principally involve in language policy making (Hadebe,2001).The language planning in Sri Lanka has been extensively influenced by its vivacious history, similar to many other former colonies throughout the world. To add to this, the daunting effect of the three decade long civil war that loomed over Sri Lanka had a serious detrimental effect on the process of language planning as well. This chapter further focus on language regulation and

legislation of Sri Lanka as well as political circumstances that have resulted to implementation of provisions.

The Swabasha Movement

After the British East India Company's conquest of Sri Lanka in 1796 island remained a British colony for 150 years, until independence was granted in 1948. During this time, English was the language of the civil service and the judicial service. (Perera, 2008) The initial agitation surrounding the language issue was called the Swabasha (self-language) movement. It is intended to achieve authority of either Sinhala or Tamil as the local language. In 1944 J. R. Jayewardene declared Sinhalese as the Official Language of Ceylon. The Sinhala-Only Act of 1956 was the root cause of many ethnic riots in that year. The Sinhala-Only Act and Sinhalese linguistic nationalism facilitated violent conflict among two ethnic groups.

Sinhala Only Bill

In 1956 the SLFP government passed the Official Languages Act (Sri Lanka Consolidated Acts 1956), popularly known as the Sinhala Only Bill, declaring Sinhala as the Official Language of the country (Edward Brown, & Ganguly, 2003). In 1966, the use of Tamil as the language of administration in Northern and Eastern provinces had begun after the implementation of the provisions of the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act (Sri Lanka Consolidated Acts 1958), prominently driven by the pressure from Tamil political parties. From then on until the mid-1980s, the issue of language remained a contentious political issue (Edward Brown, & Ganguly, 2003).

The Official Languages Policy

The Constitution of 1978 recognizes Tamil as a national language together with Sinhala, although Sinhala remains to be called the Only Official Language (Fernando 2017). Article 18 of the 1978 constitution acknowledges that whilst "the official language of Sri Lanka is Sinhala", "Tamil shall also be an official language". Furthermore, it also states that English will remain the "link language". In 1987, through the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, both languages were defined as 'national languages' while recognizing English as the 'link language'. Furthermore, 1988 saw the 16th Amendment to the constitution which reinstated the position that, "Sinhala and Tamil shall be the languages of administration throughout Sri Lanka" (Martyn, 2013). If there are substantial counts of both Sinhalese and Tamil-speaking people, both languages shall be used as the language of administration and for the purpose of record keeping and administration in the 29 Divisional Secretariat Divisions.

According to the section 23 of the 16th amendment, the languages of legislation will be Sinhala and Tamil while a translation of these laws must be available in English as well as section 4 mentioned languages of the courts will be Sinhala and Tamil (Coleman, 2015).

Trilingual Policy

Sri Lanka is a country with distinct identities in favor of language, religion, ethnicity and culture. The National Youth Survey (NYS) of 2013 indicates that the main factor dividing Sri Lankan society is 'ethnicity'. Other determinants promoting equality among communities include language, politics, religion, class and caste. As the vehicle of discussion and expression, language takes a protuberant place among these. Sri Lanka has been known in past three decades for the calamitous ethnic based civil war between Sinhalese and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). After unspeakable bloodshed and numerous counts of death to both parties, the excruciating war came to an end in May 2009.

The Trilingual policy of Sri Lanka is a long-term action plan which was introduced by the then government after 30 years of brutal war. Seeing the end of a spiteful civil war, the previous government in 2011 launched the 10-year national plan for a trilingual country, envisioning a trilingual society.

In 2009 His Excellency the President formally declared that his vision for the country was that of a trilingual Sri Lanka where Sinhala and Tamil people would relate to each other in each other's language and where English would be a life skill, a useful tool for occupation and employment and an instrument to access information and knowledge from the outside world. The Action Plan of Ten-Year National Plan for a Trilingual Sri Lanka (2012 – 2022) states: "The objective of the trilingual initiative is to create social integration through the spread of languages, while the different groups of people continue to maintain and foster the heritage and ethos of their forefathers."

The activities planned for the ten-year national plan includes restricting language courses, establish national cadre of language translators, language research and training, national campaign, and participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Problem Statement

The trilingual policy first launched in 2011 with the vision to turn Sri Lanka into a trilingual nation within the next ten years. The government has the crucial responsibility of rebuilding the equality, social integration and fraternity in Sri Lanka, through comprehensive policies and successful programs. The Government intention was to implement the trilingual policy in order to provide access to information in all three languages and to ensure much needed reconciliation.

The constitutional and legal framework for a trilingual Sri Lanka has been in place since 1987 but the country is still away from the trilingual target enshrined in the constitution due to factors such as lack of resources, accountability, innovative thinking, and inefficiency in the government departments. The active involvement and effective contribution of translators, ministries, departments, and the administrative structure of the local government authorities is

essential for the effective and efficient implementation of Official Languages Policy.

In response to this problem, our study proposes to investigate obstacles encountered by government translators in implementing trilingual policy. Further this study explores measures that can be taken to make the Trilingual policy an efficient process in government institutions.

Accordingly, this particular study will address the following research questions with reference to Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- What are the challenges faced by translators of government institutions in implementing trilingual policy?
- How translators and government institutions can overcome the challenges when implementing trilingual policy.

Objectives of the Research

The main purposes of this study are to obtain an insight into the challenges faced by translators of government institutions in implementing trilingual policy with reference to Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

General Objectives

- To assess the prevailing attitude of translators of Government institutions with regard to implementation of trilingual policy
- To identify the challenges faced by translators of government institutions in implementing trilingual policy with reference to Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Specific Objectives

- To suggest solutions for translators and government institutions to overcome challenges faced by translators in implementing trilingual policy.
- To draw Government's attention for the hardships which are confronted by translators when implementing trilingual policy.
- It is intended that the findings of this research project will be used in Government institutes to assess and evaluate the current situation of translators in implementing trilingual policy.

Justification of the Study

Even though there are skilled translators in the Government sector, in this long journey of eight years trilingual policy is still not working properly and translators of government institutions face many challenges while in the process of implementing the trilingual policy. Hence this study will be useful to approach challenges encountered by translators in implementing the trilingual policy. It is extremely helpful for government institutions to have knowledge about issues regarding translators when employing language translators. Therefore, it is intended that the findings of this research

project will be useful to assess and evaluate the current situation of trilingual policy in Sri Lanka and to gain knowledge on solutions which can be suggested to advancement of implementing trilingual policy in Government institutions as well as findings of this study could be used to identify barriers which are faced by translators of government institutions in implementing trilingual policy.

Limitations

Limitations are inevitable in any research thus the limitations of this research are as follows.

The first limitation is that the most of the data of the research is limited only to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the limited frame of sixteen weeks did not permit a research of that nature.

The sample size is small as there is a dearth of translators in the ministry and the researcher attempted to conduct research interviews with some translators and academics who are connected with government institutions.

This study faced some difficulties in arranging interviews and accessing sensitive documents.

One of the main challenges faced during this study was majority of the respondents were not interested to participate for the survey.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

From the epoch of human civilization, people have been engaged in the process of 'translation' in order to communicate. Translation has played a considerable role in history as one of the oldest practices. Evidence for this can be found in the clay tablets, which was discovered by Italian archeologists in the ancient town of Elba, in the Middle East. The translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, which is known as the 'Septuagint' in the 3rd century BCE is contemplated as the earliest prominent translation in the west.

Theoretical Background

Many scholars have defined the term translation. As noted by Bassnett, translation involves the transfer of 'meaning' continued in one set of language signs through competent use of the dictionary and grammar; the process involves the whole set of extra-linguistic criteria. (Bassnett, 1920). It is the process of transferring meaning of signs of a language to another language with the effective aid of dictionary and grammar. Translation is an act through which the content of a text is transferred from the source language in to the target language (Foster, 1958). Translation is a process of converting or rendering a particular information from its source language target language. It is a top process of laying with languages by bringing art and the science of languages to a one place with the talent of the translator. Danila Seleskovitch distinguishes translation into four categories such as a science, a skill, an art and a matter of taste (Newmark).

Translator is an exceptionally talented individual that he or she has to play multiple roles in their profession as translators. In his book, 'Translation as a profession,' Roger Chriss says:

Translators are language professionals. They are applied linguists, competent writers, diplomats, and educated amateurs. Like linguists, translators have to be capable of discerning subtleties and nuances in their languages, researching terminology and colloquialisms, and handling new developments in their languages. Like writers, translators have to be accustomed to working long hours alone on a subject which interests few people and with a language that few people around them know. Like diplomats, translators have to be sensitive to the cultural and social differences which exist in their languages and be capable of addressing these issues when translating. And like educated amateurs, translators have to know the basics and some of the details about the subjects they deal with (Chriss, 2006).

Language Policy Planning

The field of language policy planning has greatly evolved through the years. Language policies are formally initiated in many countries by governments, scholars and community leaders. Language policy and planning have a great influence on the rights of the citizens, language evolution and some social concerns. Language policies fulfill social and political ambitions of a multilingual community.

When it comes to what is language policy, (Spolsky, 2004) points out: Language management refers to the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use. As we will see, the existence of such an explicit policy does not guarantee success.

Spolsky says that languages do not cause wars but languages has been a major cause for ethnic riots: Assam in 1960 and 1972, Sri Lanka in 1956, Ranchi in 1967, Mauritania in 1966, and Bangalore in 1994. Policies are the key results of reactions which are taken by a government or an administrative body in order to overcome an issue. (Hadebe, 2001) points out:

The government officials are the policy makers while public workers are entrusted with implementing policy. Implementation may be regarded as simple but is considered to be difficult because of number of things, such as the environment, inadequate resources, information, interests, ambiguity of objectives and lack of control, to mention a few.

Empirical Literature

Language Planning Situation of the World

Zimbabwe is a country enriched with the goodness of multilingualism and some of the spoken rich, tasteful languages are iKalanga, chiNambya, Sesotho, isiSena, chiChangani, chiTonga as well as a variety of others. Additionally, the national languages of the country are ChiShona and isiNdebele whereas the budding language

practices in the Zimbabwean society has called upon English being the official language of the country with the language taking over most necessities of the society including education, media, law, administration, business among others.

Based on the findings of this study, translation policies in Zimbabwe can be discussed in terms of the language policy, more specifically, with the prevalence of English as the dominant language. The responses to the questionnaire hint that English is the more popular source language in translation with most respondents claiming they often translate between English and chiShona or isiNdebele. The findings published in a translated survey was indicative of the fact that although there exists no lack of translation work between chiShona and isiNdebele, this is only applicable to literary publications. Hence, deducing by the directionality of translation, an important classification is made between the kind of translation prevalent within the Zimbabwean community; one to serve the vast majority of its population who lack proficiency in English and the other, undertaken to improve the audience of texts which were originally produced in native Zimbabwean languages (Hadebe, 2001).

According to a study conducted by Suh, it was found that translation plays a significant role in the language policy of Cameroon since it remains the base of implementing multilingualism within the country. He/she goes on to predict that should the relevant authorities allocate better functions to it and facilitate better macro-translational provisions; the language policy would have a better hand in promoting Cameroon's national languages (Che, 2011).

JairosKangira in his research has pointed out solutions to overcome Challenges of the implementation of language policies in southern Africa

- Develop dictionaries, grammar books and promote fiction writing in indigenous languages.
- Focus on corpus planning – corpus planning involves providing terminologies to serve socio-economic development.
- It also involves developing new vocabulary and discourse which will in turn help in the development of teaching material and other applications. Eventually, developing corpus resources could facilitate the ultimate functioning of previously disadvantaged languages in most or even all socio-economic communicative domains.
- Language specialists should utilise new and technologically-based initiatives to develop and preserve each and every language. Computers can play a pivotal role in corpus planning especially in development of dictionaries and localizing content. Computers are also used in storing a large amount of speech-based and text-based corpora for further research in African languages (Kangira, 2016).

Language Planning Situation in Sri Lanka

According to Coperahewa in his study “The language planning situation in Sri Lanka” mentions Language planning as a practical activity came into being in the 1950s when Sinhalese replaced English as the official language (Coperahewa, 2009) Both Tamil and Sinhala politicians espoused the idea of *swabasha* (native languages) during the colonial period to make a position in the country for Sinhala and Tamil as the local languages

Language became an exclusive marker of ethnicity, by two dominant groups in the country, the Sinhala and the Tamils. They espoused the idea of *swabasha* (native languages) during the colonial period in order to achieve primacy of place for Sinhala and Tamil as the local languages (Perera, 2011). According to Michael Edward Brown and Sumit Ganguly, *Fighting words: language policy and ethnic relations in Asia*, 2003:

“The passage of the Sinhala-Only Act of 1956 was a turning point in Sinhalese-Tamil relations. Tamil grievances subsequently grew because, in Sri Lanka as elsewhere, language policies had wide-ranging implications for educational and economic opportunities. By the 1970s many Tamil youth had become both radicalized and militarized.”

“Both groups, in the main, enjoyed cordial relations for more than 2,000 years. Then, in the 1950s the Sinhalese abandoned the movement to make both Sinhala and Tamil the country's official language and instead instituted Sinhala as its sole official language. The Sinhala-Only Act of 1956 led to ethnic riots in that year and in 1958, marking the beginning of acute Sinhalese-Tamil animosity. The manner in which the Sinhala-Only Act and Sinhalese linguistic nationalism facilitated violent conflict, however, has not been fully appreciated”

Methodological Literature

This field research of the study carried out by the Scholar Sasanka Perera in Vavuniya, Jaffna, and Kandy assesses the situation with regard to how far the OLP has been implemented and to what extent facilities are available for people to receive services in either Sinhala or Tamil.

“They also point to the failure of the Official Languages Policy at the level of practice due to sheer lack of capacity, mechanisms and skills and [failure to recognise] such lapses” (Perera, 2011).

Strengthening the newly designed translation studies course at the undergraduate level;

- Strengthening the English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC) so that it can offer extension services beyond the university;
- Strengthening the Sinhala language training capacity of the Department of Linguistics and English by recruiting at least two new members of staff;

- Strengthening the capacity of the Department of Tamil so that it can offer its services to organisations such as the armed forces and the police.

In his study “Language policy practices and national integration of Sri Lanka” 100 respondents were selected from ‘Rathnapura district’ covering public servants, officers, and Tamil publics using random sample methods. Sample of ten officers were used as key informants from the Ministry of Language Policy and Social Integrity. He suggests that responsible officers should be inspected to serve good services to the public and to facilitate documents in three languages as well as to provide service there should be good training programs to develop three languages proficiency of public servants. (Ranjith, 2013)

“A Study Report on Translation and Interpretation Training and Services in Sri Lanka” for “The National language Project-201” used meetings and discussions held in ministries, departments, agencies and universities, government training institutions, and in different parts of the country to gather data for the analysis. The study was commenced with the purpose of to determine the need of translation undergraduate degree program in Sri Lankan universities and to provide recommendations to support the implementation of the official languages policy through the training of translators and interpreters.

The summary report of the “Survey on the Implementation of Official Languages Policy At Ministerial Level in Sri Lanka-2017” conducted a survey which focused on the current status of the implementation of official languages policy with the criteria 1) Ambiance and Visibility, 2) Administration and Documentation, 3) Service Delivery, and 4) Institutional Commitment and Support Mechanism and feedback gathered through interviews with diverse range of assigned officials.

Research Gap

The literature gap of the research depicts the scope of the research that has not been discovered or studied by scholars. Many studies have been conducted under the sphere of language policies and planning in Sri Lanka. Studies have recognised and recommended numerous recommendations to advance the movement of language planning of Sri Lanka. However, this form of research concentrate on the specific area of translators in government institutions has not conducted before while addressing the implementation of the Trilingual policy. Previous explorations have conducted on general basis without giving a higher concern for challenges faced by government translators therefore this is recognised as the empirical gap of this study.

III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter comprises of the procedure used by the researcher in conducting the research, the sampling methods, steps used in gathering quantitative, qualitative and secondary data. At the same time, it discusses about the instruments used in analysing and presenting the collected data. The main

purpose of this study is to obtain an insight into the barriers faced by translators of government institutions when exercising trilingual language policy. Hence this study acquires information on challenges faced by translators of government institutions in implementing trilingual policy. Therefore, the researcher has used the mixed approach (both qualitative and quantitative).

- *Sampling method*

There were only five translators at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus the researcher with the intention of carrying out a valid research collected data from 30 translators working at other different government institutes. The questionnaire was divided into three sections in order to investigate the current situation of the trilingual policy at government sector, language capability of translators, and attitude of translators towards to improve trilingual policy.

Institutions are listed below.

1. Presidential Secretariat
2. Prime Minister's Office
3. Office of the Cabinet of Ministries
4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
5. Ministry of Home Affairs
6. Ministry of Finance
7. Ministry of Education
8. Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation
9. Ministry of Fisheries
10. Ministry of City Planning, Water Supply and Higher Education.
11. Department of Official Language
12. Department of Irrigation

Data Collection

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data needed for the research was collected with the use of questionnaires. The questionnaire included both closed- ended and open – ended questions. Initially it consisted of 18 closed – ended questions which were under a series five-point Likert scale as; 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree or Disagree, 4=Agree, 5 =Strongly Agree. Later after the pilot survey the researcher felt the need of including 10 open - ended questions in order to get more insight into the research problem. Cronbach's alpha, was used in order to check the reliability of this questionnaire, since it is the most common measure of internal consistency ("reliability") and at first the questionnaire enjoyed a reliability of .765.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.783	.765	18

Thus, after the pilot survey, in order to increase the reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher decided to increase its reliability by excluding the question no. 18. Then the questionnaire enjoyed a reliability of .875 which is considered as a high reliability according to Pallant, 2007.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.896	.875	17

A questionnaire of 17 closed ended questions has been distributed via emails and by person to the target audience. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, which covered the intended areas of the research.

Qualitative Data

The qualitative data needed for the research were collected through the 10 open – ended questions. Qualitative data helped the researcher to get an insight into the challenges faced by the translators in implementing the trilingual policy in the government institutions. These data were examined thoroughly and inter - connected with the other findings obtained through questionnaires.

Secondary Data

The secondary data required for the research were gathered by the means of referring to journals, scholarly articles, and books that are connected to the topic.

Data analysis

The gathered data were analyzed by the SPSS statistical software.

Data presentation

Analyzed data were presented in the report by using tables and pie charts.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

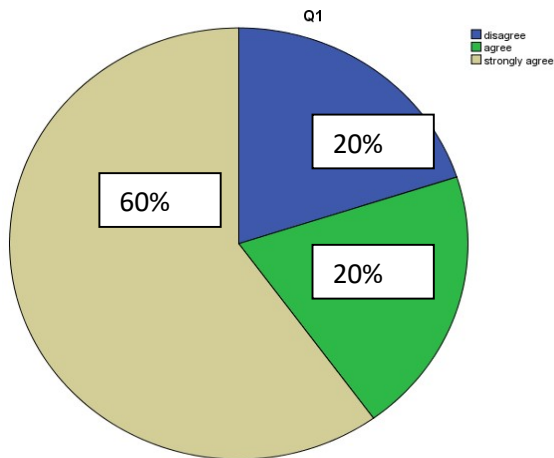
In order to enrich the present discussion from a practical point of view as well as to obtain the most relevant argument and to reach the final conclusion, views of 30 translators have been interviewed. The first 5 and last 2 questions covered the current situation of trilingual policy and translator's attitude towards it. Other 10 questions concerned with the perspective of government translators regarding other national languages.

Descriptive analysis of the quantitative data

1. *As a translator were you well aware about trilingual policy.*

Question 1

Figure 4.2.1. Question 1

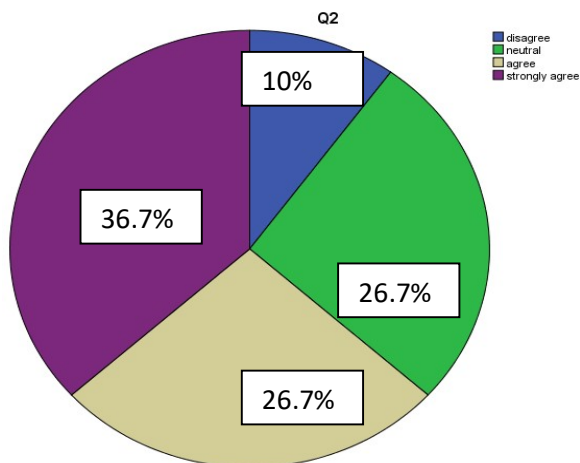


Source: Sample data, 2019

As for the above pie chart, out of 30 participants altogether 60% of participants are strongly agree to the fact that they are well aware about the trilingual policy as a translator. Among all the participants' 20% of them are equally agree and disagree to the fact that they are aware of the trilingual policy. The percentages are 20%, 20% and 60% respectively for the disagree, agree and strongly agree.

2. Sri Lanka needs the trilingual policy.

Figure 4.2.2. Question 2

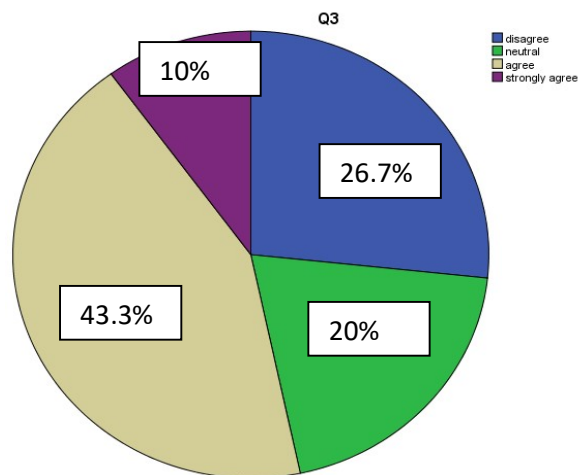


Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the above pie chart, the highest percentage of participants (36.7%) are strongly agree to the fact that Sri Lanka needs the trilingual policy and equal percentage of participants (26.7%) of them are neutral and agree to the fact that Sri Lanka needs the trilingual policy and least number of participants (10%) are disagree to the fact that Sri Lanka needs the trilingual policy and percentages are listed as 10%, 26.7%, 26.7% and 36.7% respectively for disagree, neutral, agree and for strongly agree.

3. You are aware that it is successfully implemented in your office.

Figure 4.2.3. Question 3

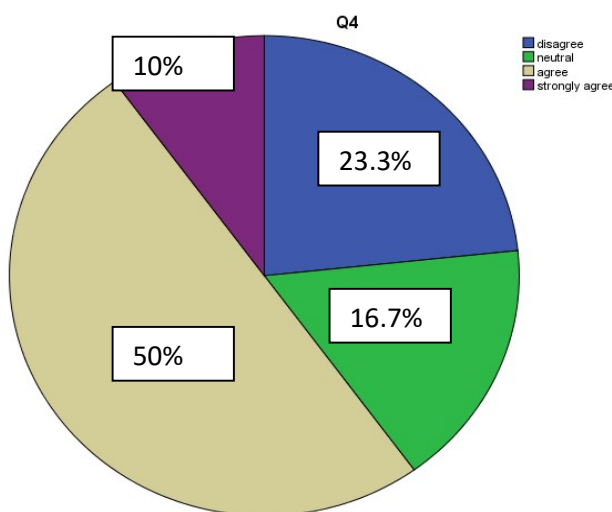


Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the above pie chart, 43.3% or the highest percentage of participants are agree to the fact that, the translator is aware that the trilingual policy is successfully implemented in their office and the least number of percentage or 10% percent of participants are strongly agree to the fact that the trilingual policy has been successfully implemented in their office. 26.7% and 20% of participants are respectively disagree and neutral to the matter that, they are aware of the trilingual policy as successfully been implemented in their office.

4. Translators play a major role in implementing trilingual policy.

Figure 4.2.4. Question 4



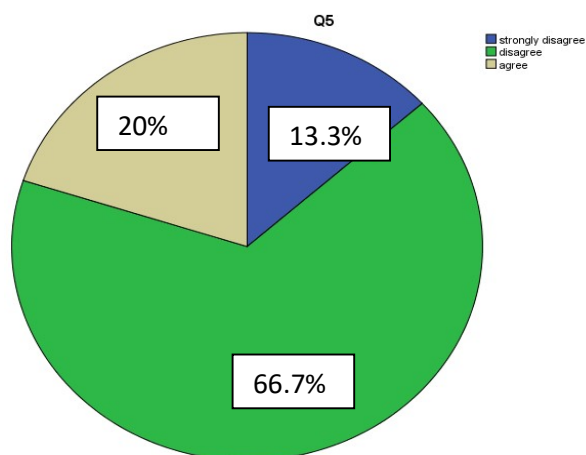
Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the pie chart, 50% of translators agree that, translators play a major role in implementing trilingual policy

and it scores the highest percentage. Least percentage of translators or 10% of them are strongly agree to the fact that translators play a major role in implementing the trilingual policy. 16.7% and 23.3% of the participants are neutral and disagree to the fact that translators play a major role in implementing the trilingual policy.

5. *There are enough trilingual translators in your working place*

Figure 4.2.5. Question 5

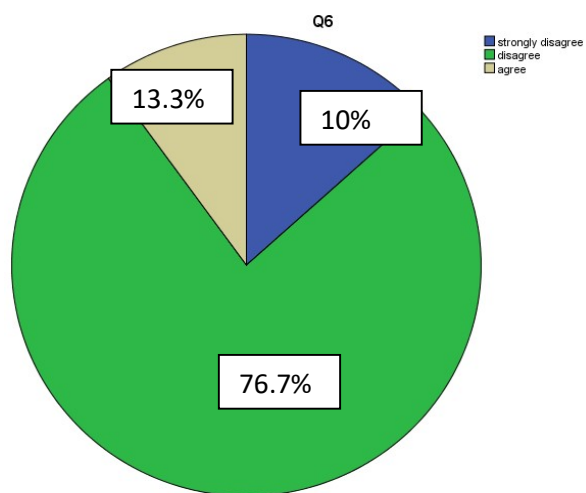


Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the pie chart, 66.7% of the participants don't think that there are enough number of translators in their work place and this is the highest percentage of translators who have selected a particular option. A least percentage of participants (13.3%) are strongly disagree to the fact that there are enough trilingual translators in their working place and 20% of the participants agree to the fact that there are enough trilingual translators in your working place

6. *You have the ability to translate in all three languages.*

Figure4.2.6. Question 6

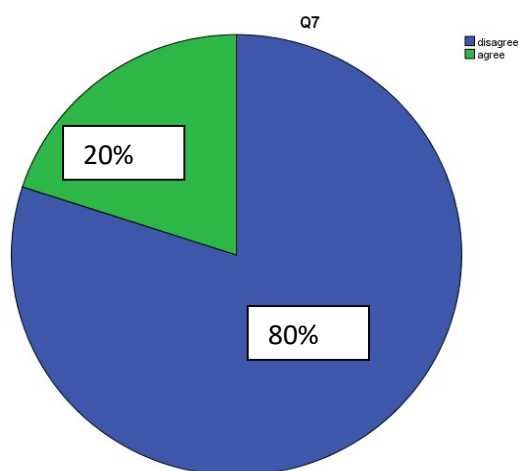


Source: Sample data, 2019

Among all the respondents 76.7% of them don't have ability to translate in all three languages and this is the highest percentage of participants who have selected the option among the options strongly disagree, disagree and agree. 10% of participants or the least score of the participants have selected the option strongly disagree to the fact that they have ability to translate into all the three languages. 13.3% of them agree that they have ability to translate into all the three languages.

7. *You are capable to translate from either English to Tamil or Tamil to English.*

Figure4.2.7. Question 7

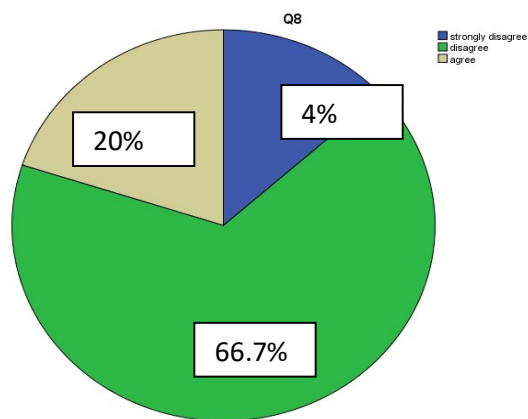


Source: Sample data, 2019

80% of the translators among all the participants' 80% of them are not capable to translate from either English to Tamil or Tamil to English and this is the highest percentage of score. Among them 20% of them agree to the fact that they are capable to translate from either English to Tamil or Tamil to English.

8. *You are capable to translate from either Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil.*

Figure4.2.8. Question 8

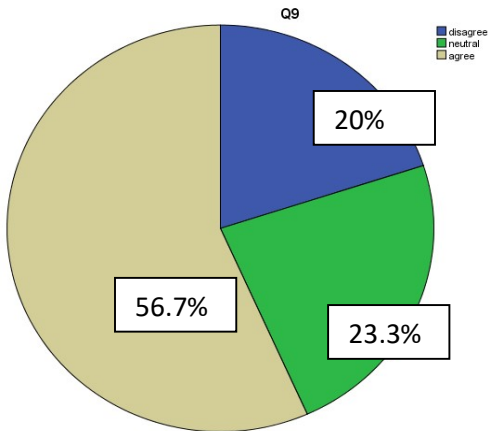


Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the pie chart, 66.7% of them are disagree to the fact that the translators are capable to translate from either Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil and this is the highest score among all the answers. 20% of them are agree that they have the capability to translate from either Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil and least number of participants or 4% of them are strongly disagree to the fact that they are capable to translate from either Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil.

9. You are capable to translate from either English to Sinhala or Sinhala to English.

Figure4.2.9. Question 9

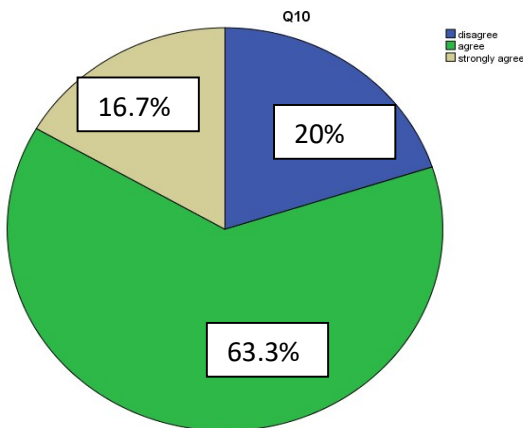


Source: Sample data, 2019

A highest number of participants or 56.7% of the participants are agree that they are capable to translate from either English to Sinhala or Sinhala to English. 23.3% of participants or second highest number of participants are neutral about the fact that translators are capable to translate from either English to Sinhala or Sinhala to English. 20% or least number of translators don't have the capability to translate from either English to Sinhala or Sinhala to English.

10. You think that it is necessary to be competent in Tamil and Sinhala languages as a Sri Lankan translator.

Figure4.2.10. Question 10

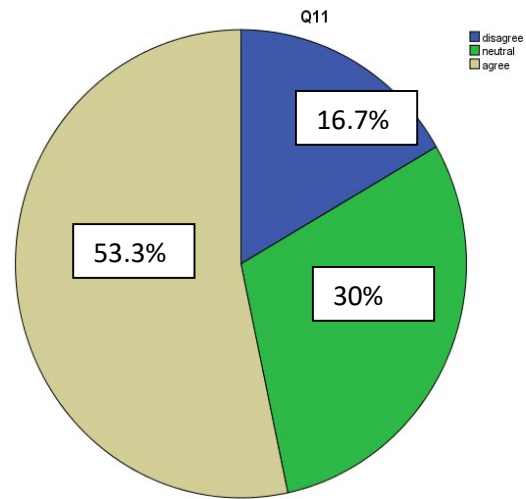


Source: Sample data, 2019

63.3% or the highest portion of translators agrees that it is necessary to be competent in Tamil and Sinhala languages as a Sri Lankan translator. Second highest number of participants or 20% of them don't agree with the fact that it is necessary to be competent in Tamil and Sinhala languages as a Sri Lankan translator. Least number of translators or 16.7% of participants are strongly agree that it is necessary to be competent in Tamil and Sinhala languages as a Sri Lankan translator.

11. You think that Tamil language is difficult.

Figure4.2.11. Question 11

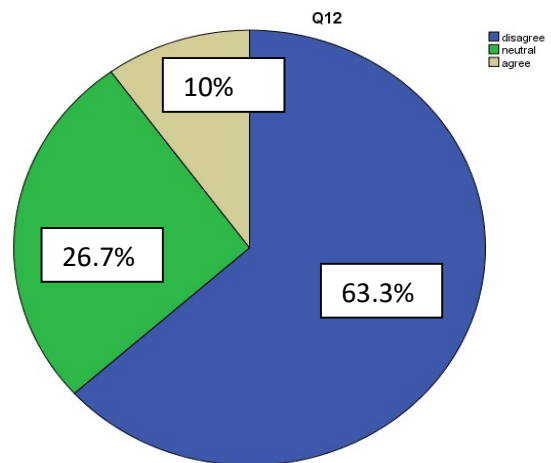


Source: Sample data, 2019

53.3% or highest percentage of translators think that Tamil language is difficult. Second highest portion of translators who scores 30% of the respondents are neutral to the fact that Tamil language is difficult. Least number of participants or 16.7% participants don't think that Tamil language is difficult

12. You think that Sinhala language is difficult.

Figure4.2.12. Question 12

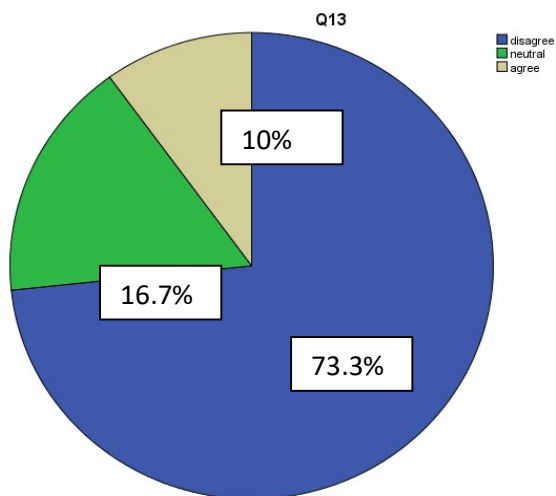


Source: Sample data, 2019

63.3% or highest portion of translators don't think that Sinhala language is difficult. Second highest portion of translators have selected the option neutral to the fact that Sinhala language is difficult. 10% of the translators or the least number of translators believe that Sinhala language is difficult.

13. You think that English language is difficult.

Figure4.2.13. Question 13

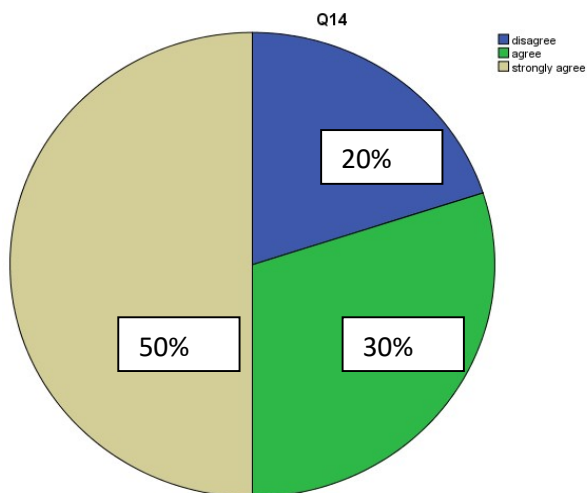


Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the pie chart, 73.3% or highest percentage of translators don't think that English language is difficult. Second highest portion of translators or 16.7% of translators are neutral about the fact that English language is difficult and least number of translators or 10% of participants thinks that English language is difficult.

14. You are interested to improve your Tamil/Sinhala language knowledge as your second language.

Figure4.2.14 Question 14

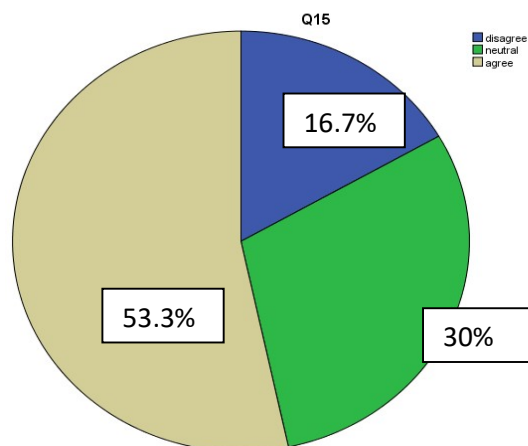


Source: Sample data, 2019

50% of the translators are strongly agreed to the fact that they are interested to improve their Tamil/Sinhala language knowledge as their second language and this is the highest option which have been selected. 30% of translators or the second highest portion of translators are agreed to improve their Tamil/Sinhala language knowledge as their second language. Lowest portion of the translators don't think that they are interested to improve their Tamil/Sinhala language knowledge as their second language.

15. You prefer to be a Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil language translator.

Figure4.2.15. Question 15

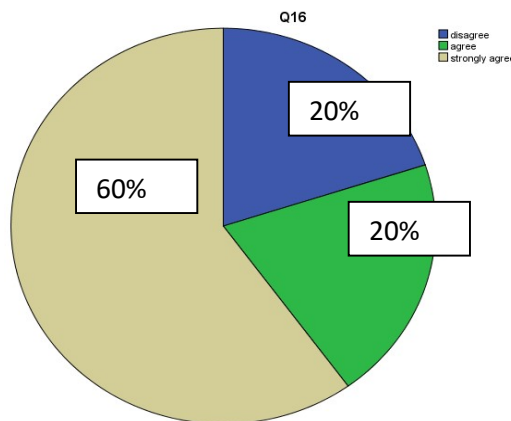


Source: Sample data, 2019

The largest number of translators or 53.3% of translators prefer to be a Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil language translator. The second highest portion of translators or 30% of the translators neutral to the fact that they prefer to be a Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil language translator. The least portion of translators or 16.7% of translators don't prefer to be a Tamil to Sinhala or Sinhala to Tamil language translator.

16. As a translator, you are helping to build reconciliation among communities.

Figure4.2.16. Question 16

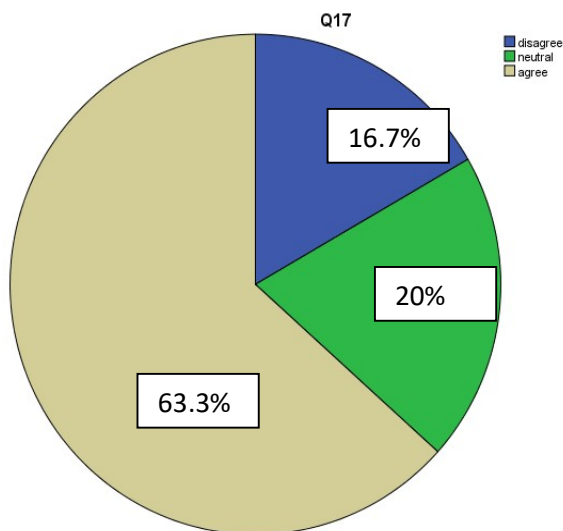


Source: Sample data, 2019

According to the pie chart, 60% of translators think that they are helping to build reconciliation among communities as a translator and this is the highest portion of translators. 20% of translators are equally disagree and agree to the fact that they are helping to build reconciliation among communities as a translator.

17. As a translator, you are doing a compulsory national service rather than a profession.

Figure4.2.317. Question 17



Source: Sample data, 2019

The highest portion of translators or 63.3% of translators believe that they are doing a compulsory national service rather than a profession as a translator. The Second highest portion of translators or 20% of translators are neutral about the fact that they are doing a compulsory national service rather than a profession as a translator. The least portion of translators don't believe that they are doing a compulsory national service rather than a profession as a translator.

Quantitative data

- 1) The researcher questioned about the current situation of trilingual policy after ten years of its implementation. Many have answered that the trilingual policy is being implementing in many government institutions. Even officers tend to learn the third language other than their mother tongue. Yet many have the idea that even though the policy has introduced ten years back, its progress is lagged behind in practical terms except in areas where the need of multilingualism is immensely felt. Some have the idea that the awareness level of the trilingual policy is not satisfactory even among the staff officers. Many have the idea that there are issues in the process of its implementation. Some have said that Tamil language is out of use and people are less familiar with that language. This make rare to find people who speak all three

languages. Many said that the implementation of this policy is limited only to name boards, letter heads, general forms and still in its basic level. Some are holding the view that it is not properly implemented and suggested that separate institutions should be established to examine this.

- 2) As the second question the researcher asked the reason that the country needs a trilingual policy. Many have given the answer that the country is a multi-ethnic country. Some have said that it's for the development of the country. Some said it will help to build up harmony and reconciliation among societies where trilingual people live and will avoid the recurrence of conflict wars.
- 3) Third is aimed to find answers for the reasons for the slow progress of the implementation of trilingual policy in the work place. Some said that the policy is implementing well in their work places even though there are insufficient number of trilingual translators. Many pointed that the lack of awareness is the main issue and apart form that recognition and the associated benefits for those who are capable of handling more than one language are at minimum level. Also, the lack of trilingual translators and poor awareness has been given for slow progress of it in work place. Some said that Tamil language is a difficult language to learn.
- 4) Fourth is to know the perspective on the effectiveness of implementing the trilingual policy. Some said that it is not implemented well and the government organizations are not taking necessary actions to implement it well. Probably the officials who have been assigned the responsibility of implementing the policy are not the fittest for the job. The human resource must be well versed in three languages and they must be provided with adequate resources and facilities to follow the policy. Some said that translation service should be upgraded. More translators should be absorbed into the service, since there is lack of translators and the most of existing translators look forward to exit the industry.
- 5) The Fifth question examines the opinion regarding implementation of trilingual policy in government institutions. Many have the view that it is difficult until higher ranked officials get the responsibility. Also due to the lack of human and physical resources. It is vital to implement it in government institutions as many of the public services are provided by government ministries, departments and statutory boards for people who are belong to diverse communities. Some have said that if there are enough trilingual translators, the implementation of trilingual policy in government organizations will be easy. It is must yet it is progressing very slowly.
- 6) Six question is to find out whether the translating in all three languages is a challenge. Many have answered that being competent in all three languages,

which requires much time, exposure to the languages and indeed self-determination. Some stated that it is in itself a challenge to do it by one person. Achieving such a higher level of proficiency is extremely difficult and challenging. Some said that it is not difficult if different languages are learnt, the translations could be done. Yet the idea of the majority is that it is really difficult to become equally fluent in more than two languages as it needs many years to be competent.

- 7) The seventh question investigates whether the government has taken relevant steps to implement the trilingual policy in all government institutions successfully. Many answered 'yes'. The ministries and public institutions pertaining to the language policies assist for the implementation of the policy. Some said that it is well implemented in some institutions and in some, it is not actually well implemented. The thing is that the collective attempt is important. Some have answered that even though the government took actions, the policy is not successfully implemented. All the steps are bound only to an examination or a salary increment other than that no one use the Tamil language.
- 8) The next is to find the opinion of translator's role in implementing trilingual policy. Many said he is the person who is doing language handling. Some have said that it is not a duty of translators yet all other individuals too. The government should recruit more translators. Some said that doing translations during the given time period is important. It is also explored that not everyone has the overview that they are doing a national service to the country in order to build reconciliation.
- 9) The ninth question covers the challenges faced by them in implanting the policy. Some said that the lack of training, dearth of trilingual translators, lack of understanding other languages by other staffs, lack of sources, the authorities are not allowing, the less acceptance, lack of calm office setting, having heavy work load, scarcity of competent translators, lack of glossaries,
- 10) The solutions that can take to overcome these barriers is the last question. Many answered that the recruitment of translators should be increased, the officers should be advised, higher rank officers should get the responsibility, trilingual policy should begin at the school level, provide less noisy locations for translators, allowing sufficient time, giving an acceptance to the job of translator.

Overall Discussion

Most of the respondents agreed that it is important to learn and have the ability to translate in all three languages as a Sri Lankan translator. Majority of the translators are interested to improve their Tamil or Sinhala language competence and to

become trilingual translators. Sinhala translators. Although a reasonable number of respondents disagreed with that idea. Since the learning second languages such as Tamil and Sinhala is difficult rather than learning English language. This has resulted for the lack of trilingual translators in government institutions. Most of the translators agree to the fact that they are doing an immense work to build reconciliation among ethnicities. An interesting fact that has emerged from the results is that major number of translators have not possessed a degree related to translation.

Under the second section of the questionnaire, the researcher formulated questions to identify challenges faced by translators. Most of the population stated that lack of language competence in particular fields such as legal or diplomacy as well as lack of knowledge in technical terms and language style of specific documents as challenges, along with that some of them mentioned that the lack of enthusiasm to learn and improve language competence as a barrier to recruit qualified translators to the service. As per these results the researcher, it was able to derive the fact that the present salary scale and the professional status of government institutions as a vast obstacle to attract skillful professionals to the government translation service. An acceptable number of populations agreed that absence of facilities such as internet and computers, trilingual dictionaries and glossaries acts as a barrier when carrying out a translation within a short period of time, which eventually leads to failure of the implementation of the trilingual policy in work places.

V. CONCLUSION

During the past decades in Sri Lanka we have seen that language has been a cause for communal unrest. At that point in time Tamil speaking population believed that the 'Sinhala Only Policy' was dominating them and their rights. At present the trilingual policy is being implemented effectively. The present situation is very positive. It is far better than what it was few decades ago. Every government institution works in all three languages, sign boards and official websites of the respective institutions are in all three languages.

VI. FINDINGS

The study proved that translators are the implementers of the trilingual policy. They play a very pivotal role. In order to implement the trilingual policy, it is compulsory to translate everything into other two languages for people who lack the language skills to use the other official languages. They should have the perspective that they are doing a national service rather than doing a mere profession.

The lack of expertise in specialized fields, not enough experience, lack of knowledge in jargon and technical terms, absence of knowledge in itself, and lack of formal language education are the key drawbacks for the professional competence of translators. In relation to challenges which are faced by translators at workplace environment, raise attention to the fact that some translators lack computer and internet

facilities. There are instances where translators have computers without internet facilities. Internet facility is important in the matter of dealing with new technical terms related to diplomacy and other scientific subject areas. It is crucial to have a calm environment in a workplace but some government institutions may not have definite translation units.

Unattractive remuneration, low status, inadequate recognition, and having no career prospects for the profession of translation are the dominant factors that makes it difficult to recruit qualified translators to the service. The fact that once you are a translator you are a translator for the whole life finds it to arduous to attract graduates and competent personal to the service.

The trilingual policy is very well established in terms of its legal necessity. However practical implementation is a challenge. In order to effectively implement it we have to have commitment and a good working attitude as well as will from the executive officers. The issue is even if you have the will and the support from the other responsible officers you will not be able to do it unless you are supported by capable personal. Therefore, it is evident that the effectiveness gets affected by the dearth of translators.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to compete with the private sector and attract well qualified individuals it is important to enact attractive salary scales for translators.
- It is crucial to establish a practical training academy or an institution where translators are trained properly so that they can work professionally.
- Universities, it is important to concentrate more on practical lessons rather than the theoretical knowledge. Course units should allocate more time to practical lessons.
- Translator should be provided with necessary resources and facilities. It is advantageous to provide necessary glossaries related to each specialised areas, dictionaries, and reference material for translators in government service.
- Provide more opportunities to translators in government institutions to improve their language competence.
- Relevant authorities should focus to build the background to improve mental satisfaction of a translator as it impacts the quality of translation as a service.

In conclusion, it is important to concede that this study has touched on issues regarding translation, government translators and official language policy in Sri Lanka to suggest that government authorities, linguists, language practitioners, and experts in translation field need to pay their concern more to change the statuses of national translation service and to successfully preserve the trilingual policy of Sri Lanka.

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