

Language Policy and Politics

Prof. R.M.W.Rajapakshe

Senior Professor, Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
rmwrajapaksha@yahoo.com

Language the most sophisticated invention of man, is a tool used to fulfill main requirements of the people inclusive of communication. Thus language is not a problem. However, when it is used as a medium of instruction in public administration, judiciary and in education in multi lingual countries, it sometimes becomes a problem. Language planning emerges when such problem arise. Could actually language be planned? Physical phenomenon like rivers, forests, mountains can be probed and planned. As language is a physical phenomenon, a tool, it can be planned. However there are differences between other objects. Firstly, language is a secondary invention of man. Secondly, it is strictly associated with religion and culture and therefore is a complicated physical phenomena. In the process of language planning, planners have to face various difficulties created by patriotic national movements and politicians. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the difficulties faced in the process of Language Planning in relation to the Sri Lankan context and the proposals to overcome them.

Key Words ÷ Language, Language Planning, Culture, Religion, Physical Phenomenon