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Language Policy Implementation: A Comparative Study between Sri Lanka and Canada

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Accommodation of a multi-ethnic population within a territory of a single state has been largely acknowledged as a worldwide issue due to the problems stemming out from the linguistic disparities. In the most of the countries in the world, this scenario has been either erupted due to decade long colonial regimes or owing to the influx of the different migrant ethnic groups at various given times in the historical context of the countries concerning. Thus successive governments over the world for years have been implementing number of languages policies to lessen the widening rift between dominant ethnic groups and the minorities arising owing to the different kind of languages that they speak. The official bilingualism is the ultimate solution that the governments have been embarking on. This recognition of the two or more official languages can largely be attributed to a scenario stemming out of a socio-political dilemma therefore it had been a laborious task where the states concerning considered as the last resort to create the much needed harmony within their countries. To date, around 200 countries in the world recognise two or more official languages; The Sri Lankan and Canadian experience in this regard has much in common to share as the two countries had to undergo number volatile socio political nuances at various instances in their historical contexts. The fact that how Canadian language policy differs from the Sri Lankan language policy is considered here. Today, the Canadian experience in the bilingualism and language policy implementation has achieved tremendous success; therefore this paper attempts to highlight the currents problems relating to language policy implementation in Sri Lanka in a comparative perspective.

Key words: bilingualism, Canada, language policy implementation, official languages, Sri Lanka