

Language and Communication for National Development

transcribed plenary speech of

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Chair, members of the panel, fellows of the today's session, participants, ladies and gentlemen my presentation is themed on the importance of making the general public aware on the link between the language and development. Our language can occur and using the language can influence kind of a opening remark of the session which will be held tomorrow under professionalism for national development under the domain of management, social sciences and humanities. Indeed our language can condemn or forgive, can encourage or kill. Our reputation is largely born through language. Using the language the dictators have to whole people into misery while men felt with wisdom from above were blessing to the humanity. Especially my point of view as a linguist, look at the three nouns given as language, communication and development are the words most commonly use under multiple situations. This liberty of interpretation of these individual words is restricted when they are placed together with the grammatical relativity because of the intention of the author or the interpreter.

Let us first focus on the first noun language. The term Language consists of two meanings. One refers to the generic meaning and the other refers to the specific meaning. According to the generic meaning language is a tool use for communication in general applicable for human, animals to the domain of signals and icons.

In these circumstances let us see how dictionary refers to the word language. I referred to several dictionaries. One of the definitions is any system of formalized symbols, signs, sounds, gestures, or means of communicating thoughts etc. It is also defined as means of communication use by animals. Communication of meaning in any way an medium that is expressing significance. Some of the definition of word language with generic meaning. When the same wording used as specific meaning it is described as a body of word and system common to people in same geographical area or in same cultural traditions. Another definition communication by voice in the distinctly human manner using arbitrary sounds in conventional way with conventional meanings any set of symbols by number of people who are thus enable to communicate intelligently with one another. With conventional meaning in a more

or less Examples of the second category are the languages that we speak English, Sinhala and Tamil. Thus understanding different meanings become less ambiguous or in linguistic term less arbitrary. But in Sinhala, English and Tamil there are only the single word which gives both meanings known as polysemic word or in other words the interlocutor need to look at the context of utterance in order to interpreted the word.

Let us now take the term communication which is now defined as sending or receiving information. Imparting information and also preferred. Suppose if we consider the communication or ideas from one person to another will be the act of transferring information, ideas from one place to another or one person to another. But if you consider purpose of communication it is not as simple as that. There are number of factors that affects on the effectiveness of communication. Depending on how managing the factors some of the issues will be able to effectively manage the communication. Some of those questions are pertaining to communication. What you want to communicate in the sense what is the message you want to communicate, how do you communicate with others, what form you need to communicate is it verbal or non verbal or both. What are the physical means of your communication, what are your personal experience and In communication you need to be in undisturbed environment in practical situation this ideal environment is unable to achieve.

Let us see how the language emerges as a factor of the development. It is the act of growth, a significant consequence, elaboration, evolution, expansion and maturation etc... Those are the synonyms of development. Further, it can define as systematic use of scientific and technical knowledge and extension of theoretical and practical aspect of concepts of design. it is more convenient to define the development of economy, society and environment that is based on complicate cultural factors.

Now let us put those three concepts together. I quote Sujatha Susadi a well-known academic in the field of communication, "A great deal of scholarly enquiry the world wide democratic communication. Conversely many modern communication media were themselves

considered to be indicators of development. Communication and development have been viewed as closely intervene phenomenon where one is believe to guarantee the other". Where scholars have mentioned people have ways to change their life. Communication becomes important in informing, persuading, listening, educating, training, data gathering and managing the change. The change is a vital term in this context. In fact we can explore the constructed nature of communication and development from a dispersed perspective. That encompasses communication have both cause and effect of development.

We live in a multilingual world. A reality that cannot be denied and also which is irreversible. In the history of

people and nations a mono lingualism is often the result of a hegemonic practice and rarely a natural phenomenon. It is a claim to universality. In order to avoid systematic use of lingua franca it should promote free thought continue in each language. In order to preserve linguistic diversity It is helpful to enhance mutual understanding by language teaching and translations. It is important to train translators that preserve the diversity of languages and cultures. Let me conclude with a quote made by Nelson Mandela who said "if you talk to a man in a language which he understands that goes to his head but if you talk to a man which is his own language that goes to his heart".