

The Languages of Ceylon in 1946 and 1953

THE publication of Volume III of the Census of Ceylon 1953, containing detailed figures on the languages spoken, makes it possible to review the language situation in 1953 and to compare it with that in 1946.

It is a matter for regret that the census-takers did not inquire about the mother tongue of each individual. The census tables consequently do not tell how many people spoke Sinhalese, Tamil, and English as their native language, nor can these figures be derived from the figures that are given. What the tables give are figures for monolingual speakers of Sinhalese, of Tamil, and of English, for bilingual speakers in three groups, and for trilingual speakers. The tables give no figures for the total number of speakers of each language, but these, of course, can be calculated from the figures given. However, all that can be said about the number of native speakers of each language is that it lies somewhere between the limits set by the number of monolingual speakers and the total number of speakers of that language.

Both the 1946 Census and the 1953 Census give figures by districts but no totals by provinces. As the latter might be of interest, they have been calculated and are given here in Table 1. The total number of speakers for each language was also calculated, as well as the total numbers of monolinguals and of bilinguals.

The 1946 Census included tables giving the percentage distribution of speakers of the three languages (Vol. IV, Tables 32 and 33), but the 1953 Census does not. These percentages are of great interest; they have accordingly been calculated and are presented here in Table 2, together with the corresponding figures from the 1946 Census.¹

Speakers of the three languages may be considered in the following twelve categories: monolingual speakers of each, total speakers of each,

1. In calculating the percentages, the total number of speakers of the three languages (these figures are given in the Census tables) was taken as base (100 %), not the total population. A check calculation shows that this was also the procedure used in the 1946 Census. The percentages for the two years are thus comparable with each other.

bilingual speakers in three groups (Sinhalese and Tamil, Sinhalese and English, Tamil and English), total monolinguals, total bilinguals, and trilinguals.

In absolute numbers each one of these categories showed an increase from 1946 to 1953 for the island as a whole. This pattern of increases was repeated in all the districts with only occasional exceptions. There are thirteen instances where the monolingual speakers of a language decreased; in every case but one the languages involved are minority languages in the given districts. Monolingual speakers of English decreased in seven districts (Kalutara, Galle, Hambantota, Jaffna, Mannar, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee); monolingual speakers of Tamil decreased in four districts (Kalutara, Galle, Hambantota, and Kurunegala); while monolingual speakers of Sinhalese decreased in one district (Nuwara Eliya). The only instance where the monolingual speakers of a majority language decreased occurred in Jaffna District: in 1946 there were 355,964 who spoke Tamil only, in 1953 there were only 333,487 (this decrease is connected with a great increase in the knowledge of English, as will appear later).

There are only two instances of a decrease in the total number of speakers of any language, both of them in Trincomalee District. The total number of English speakers declined from 9,129 to 9,012, while the number of monolingual speakers fell from 250 to 205. The total number of Sinhalese speakers declined from 20,300 to 20,197, although the number of monolingual speakers increased from 7,529 to 8,097.

In four instances there was a decrease in the number of bilingual and trilingual speakers. Two of them were in Trincomalee District, where bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and Tamil and of Sinhalese and English both decreased, the latter quite drastically, from 1,612 to 868. Bilingual speakers of Tamil and English decreased in Kegalla District. Trilingual speakers decreased in Hambantota District.

More interesting and more significant than the increases and decreases in absolute numbers are the percentages given in Table 2. The most interesting fact to emerge from these figures is the increase in the percentage of the population speaking two or three languages and the corresponding decrease in those speaking only one.

The proportion of bilinguals showed a 26.8 % rate of increase from 1946 to 1953, rising from 12.7 % to 16.1 %; all three languages shared in the increase. Bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and Tamil rose from 8.7 %

to 9.9 %, a 13.8 % rate of increase. Bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and English rose from 2.9 % to 4.2 %, a 44.8 % rate of increase. Bilingual speakers of Tamil and English doubled, rising from 1.0 % to 2.0 %. Trilingual speakers showed a 33.3 % rate of increase, rising from 2.4 % to 3.2 %.

In 1946, 84.9 % spoke only one language; by 1953 this had fallen to 80.7 %, a 4.9 % rate of decrease. Monolingual speakers of Sinhalese and of Tamil decreased at the rates of 4.1 % and 7.3 % respectively. Monolingual speakers of English actually increased, but the increase, at the rate of 1.6 %, was insignificant, and the numbers involved, less than 0.2 % of the population, even more so. This was the only one of the twelve categories in which a change counter to the general trend took place.

The total percentage of the population speaking each of the three languages also increased. Sinhalese increased from 75.5 % to 76.2 %, a 0.9 % rate of increase. Tamil increased from 35.5 % to 36.7 %, a 3.4 % rate of increase. The difference in the increases for the two languages is about what one would expect if an equal proportion of each group learned the other's language.

The most striking and significant increase was in speakers of English. In 1946 a total of 6.5 % spoke English, in 1953 9.6 %, a 47.7 % rate of increase. In other words, in 1946 one person in sixteen spoke English, in 1953 one person in ten—a significant increase indeed. It is an interesting commentary that this increase occurred between the last census under British rule and the first census after independence.

In the individual districts there were only twenty-three instances of change counter to the general trend for the country as a whole (leaving out of account any changes in the proportion of monolingual speakers of English, since in the country as a whole the change in this was insignificant and the numbers involved negligible). In no case did such a change involve as much as 5 % of the population; in eleven cases less than one percent was involved.

Trincomalee District represents the only real anomaly: changes counter to the general trend occurred in eight out of twelve categories. This was the only district where the percentage of monolingual speakers increased and that of bilingual speakers decreased. Monolingual speakers of Sinhalese and of Tamil both increased; total speakers of Sinhalese and of English and bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and Tamil and of Sinhalese and English all decreased.

Changes counter to the trend (like changes with the trend) were often correlated in pairs. In Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Matara, and Trincomalee Districts the total percentage of speakers of Sinhalese declined while the percentage of monolingual speakers of Tamil increased (in Matara District the changes amounted to no more than 0.3 % of the population). In Jaffna, Batticaloa, Puttalam, and Anuradhapura Districts the total percentage of speakers of Tamil decreased while the percentage of monolingual speakers of Sinhalese increased (in Jaffna District the changes did not exceed 0.2 % of the population). In addition to these changes, the total percentage of Tamil speakers declined in Matale and Hambantota Districts, while monolingual speakers of Sinhalese increased in Trincomalee District. Only in Trincomalee District was there a decline in the total percentage of speakers of English.

But for the most part the general trend of change (decreases in all monolinguals, increases in all other categories) was repeated in the individual districts. The amounts of change were moderate, everywhere less than 5 % of the population except in five districts : Colombo, Nuwara Eliya, Jaffna, Batticaloa, and Puttalam. In Colombo and Jaffna Districts the changes were occasioned primarily by the increase in multilingualism ; in the other three they concerned the relative proportions of Sinhalese and Tamil speakers.

In Jaffna District the total percentage of bilinguals rose from 9.1 % to 23.3 %, a 156.0 % rate of increase ; trilinguals rose from 1.0 % to 1.9 %, a 90.0 % rate of increase. The increases were almost entirely due to the increase in speakers of Tamil and English : bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and English increased not at all, speakers of Sinhalese and Tamil moderately (from 1.4 % to 1.7 %), but speakers of Tamil and English nearly trebled, rising from 7.6 % to 21.5 %, an astounding 182.9 % rate of increase. The total percentage of speakers of Tamil and English (bilinguals and trilinguals combined) rose from 8.7 % to 23.4 %, a 169.0 % rate of increase ; in absolute numbers the increase was from 34,612 to 105,546. The total percentage of English speakers rose from 8.9 % to 23.6 %, a 165.2 % rate of increase ; in absolute numbers the increase was from 35,344 to 106,263. Thus where in 1946 one person in eleven spoke English, in 1953 it was one person in four. It is clear that this remarkable increase in the knowledge of English in Jaffna District was to a considerable extent responsible for the general increase in bilingualism and trilingualism and particularly for the increase in the total percentage of English speakers in Ceylon as a whole.

Jaffna District, with less than one-sixteenth of the total population of Ceylon, provided 23.9 % of the increase in the total percentage of speakers of English for the island.

In Colombo District the increases were more evenly distributed, but English was again the leader. The greatest increase was in bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and English, which rose from 7.0 % to 10.3 %, a 47.1 % rate of increase. Bilingual speakers of Tamil and English rose from 0.9 % to 1.2 %, a 33.3 % rate of increase. Speakers of all three languages rose from 5.7 % to 7.5 %, a 31.6 % rate of increase. Bilingual speakers of Sinhalese and Tamil rose from 10.1 % to 11.4 %, a 12.9 % rate of increase. The total percentage of speakers of English showed a 37.6 % rate of increase, rising from 14.1 % to 19.4 % ; speakers of Sinhalese increased from 91.2 % to 92.7 %, and speakers of Tamil from 24.1 % to 25.7 %.

The greatest change in the relative standing of Sinhalese and Tamil occurred in Batticaloa District : monolingual speakers of Sinhalese increased from 4.0 % to 7.8 %, a 95.0 % rate of increase ; total Sinhalese speakers increased from 7.6 % to 14.3 %, an 88.2 % rate of increase. At the same time monolingual speakers of Tamil dropped from 90.5 % to 83.1 %, an 8.2 % rate of decrease, and total Tamil speakers dropped from 95.9 % to 91.7 %, a 4.4 % rate of decrease. In Nuwara Eliya District monolingual speakers of Tamil increased from 55.4 % to 57.8 %, a 4.3 % rate of increase ; total Tamil speakers rose from 69.5 % to 74.3 %, a 6.9 % rate of increase. Monolingual speakers of Sinhalese dropped from 29.6 % to 24.6 %, a 16.9 % rate of decrease, and total Sinhalese speakers dropped from 43.5 % to 40.8 %, a 6.2 % rate of decrease. In Puttalam District monolingual speakers of Sinhalese increased from 42.8 % to 44.2 %, a 3.3 % rate of increase, and total Sinhalese speakers from 58.6 % to 63.6 %, an 8.5 % rate of increase ; monolingual speakers of Tamil decreased from 40.7 % to 35.5 %, a 12.8 % rate of decrease, but total Tamil speakers decreased only from 56.7 % to 55.1 %, a 2.8 % rate of decrease. There was only one other district where speakers of one language increased and speakers of the other decreased with any of the changes amounting to more than 2.0 % of the population : in Anuradhapura District monolingual speakers of Sinhalese increased from 73.1 % to 74.5 %, a 1.9 % rate of increase, and total Sinhalese speakers increased from 86.4 % to 89.6 %, a 3.7 % rate of increase ; monolingual speakers of Tamil decreased from 13.3 % to 10.1 %, a 24.1 % rate of decrease, and total Tamil speakers decreased from 25.9 % to 23.9 %, a 7.7 % rate of decrease.

The most stable of all the districts in the years from 1946 to 1953 was Hambantota ; not a single one of the twelve categories showed a change of more than 0.5 % of the population.

The district with the highest proportion of people speaking more than one language in 1953 was Colombo, with 30.4 % ; Jaffna was second, with 25.2 %, and Kandy third, with 23.6 %. Colombo District also led in trilingual speakers, with 7.5 % ; Trincomalee was second, with 5.9 %, and Kandy third, with 3.8 % ; in this category Jaffna District ranked ninth among the twenty districts. Jaffna District was first in the total percentage of bilingual speakers, with 23.3 % ; Colombo was second, with 22.9 %, and Kandy third, with 19.8 %. The district with the highest percentage of monolingual speakers was Hambantota, with 95.3 %.

The district with the highest total percentage of people able to speak Sinhalese was Hambantota, with 98.9 %. The district with the highest total percentage of Tamil speakers was Jaffna, with 99.2 %. Jaffna also had the highest total percentage of English speakers, with 23.6 %.

In three districts Sinhalese and Tamil were each spoken by a majority. Puttalam District had a total of 63.6 % Sinhalese speakers and 55.1 % Tamil speakers. Badulla District had 63.6 % Sinhalese speakers and 54.2 % Tamil speakers. Kandy District had 67.2 % Sinhalese speakers and 51.7 % Tamil speakers. In 1946 Puttalam and Badulla Districts also had majorities for both languages, but Kandy District had only 49.6 % Tamil speakers.

In 1953 Matale District constituted a microcosm for Ceylon as a whole : in none of the twelve categories did it differ from the percentage for the whole country by more than 6.4 %, and in nine of them the difference was less than 3.0 %.

The three major cities provide interesting figures. We have seen that Colombo, Kandy, and Jaffna Districts had the highest percentages of multilingual speakers in 1953 ; in the cities of Colombo and Kandy the percentages were much higher still, but in the city of Jaffna they conformed much more closely to those for the district. Colombo and Kandy both had majorities of multilingual speakers : Colombo 58.8 %, Kandy 57.4 % ; but Jaffna had only 25.6 %. The complete percentages are given in Table 3.

In the spring of 1961 it was announced that the total population of Ceylon had reached 10,000,000. This makes it possible to estimate the

numbers of speakers of the three languages in 1961, if it is assumed that the percentages which obtained in 1953 still hold good in 1961 ; the estimated figures are given in Table 4. Doubtless the percentages have changed somewhat ; if the trend of change evidenced between 1946 and 1953 continued from 1953 to 1961, then the figures given for the total number of speakers of Tamil and of English are too low and the rest of the figures too high. This is pure conjecture, however ; the figures given in the table are the best estimate that can be made at the present time.

Sinhalese, Tamil, and English are not the only languages spoken in Ceylon ; there are others which, though insignificant compared to these three as to total numbers of speakers, are nevertheless of great interest ; and the linguist, the anthropologist, and the sociologist (at least) would like to have accurate data on these minor languages. Unfortunately the census reports give no figures for any of these other languages (a census question as to the individual's mother tongue would provide the desired information, as well as that mentioned at the start of the article).

However, indirect information on two of these languages can be found in the tables on race and on literacy, in which the Veddas and the Malays have separate listings. In 1953 there were 803 Veddas in Ceylon, of whom 73 were literate in their own language. In 1946 there were 2,361 Veddas. If the census figures accurately reflect the change in the real situation (though a note in the Introduction to Vol. III of the 1953 Census suggests that perhaps they do not), then the Veddas are certainly a dying race, and it appears probable that in another generation the language will be completely forgotten.

There were 25,464 Malays in Ceylon in 1953, of whom 5,447 were literate in Malay.²

In both cases it may be assumed that the number who speak the language is much higher than the number of literates, very likely a majority of each group. The census figures thus set limits, albeit wide ones, for the numbers of speakers of Vedda and Malay. But for another, equally interesting language, Portuguese Creole, we have not even this indirect indication of the number of speakers.

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2. There is a discrepancy in the Census regarding the number of people literate in Malay : Table 19 gives 5,447, but Table 20 gives 4,216. Addition of the figures given for the districts shows that the higher figure is probably correct.

TABLE 1

NUMBERS OF SPEAKERS OF SINHALESE, TAMIL, AND ENGLISH,
ARRANGED BY PROVINCES, FOR 1946 AND 1953

	WESTERN PROVINCE 1946	1953	CENTRAL PROVINCE 1946	1953	SOUTHERN PROVINCE 1946	1953
Monolingual						
Sinhalese	1,241,909	1,343,014	466,082	508,017	792,928	884,345
Tamil	131,129	120,683	372,859	446,278	22,423	24,095
English	6,446	7,030	1,764	2,847	974	900
Total						
Sinhalese	1,595,529	1,867,541	660,257	765,246	862,041	985,324
Tamil	390,119	478,728	554,490	682,116	63,645	80,595
English	207,522	334,567	59,241	89,611	37,021	58,916
Bilingual						
Sinhalese-Tamil	165,559	215,823	144,076	181,698	33,575	44,514
Sinhalese-English	107,645	185,315	19,922	32,624	28,400	46,030
Tamil-English	13,015	18,833	7,378	11,233	509	1,551
Total monolingual	1,379,484	1,470,727	840,705	957,142	816,325	909,340
Total bilingual	286,219	419,971	171,376	225,555	62,484	92,095
Trilingual	80,416	123,389	30,177	42,907	7,138	10,435
	NORTHERN PROVINCE 1946	1953	EASTERN PROVINCE 1946	1953	NOR. WESTERN PROV. 1946	1953
Monolingual						
Sinhalese	5,031	7,153	14,846	27,137	519,589	632,173
Tamil	399,407	390,553	216,976	254,259	42,624	45,293
English	508	357	467	399	548	730
Total						
Sinhalese	18,728	30,505	34,476	54,998	577,593	720,990
Tamil	444,120	512,287	241,402	289,873	93,920	120,065
English	37,296	110,328	14,199	19,679	13,652	26,992
Bilingual						
Sinhalese-Tamil	8,363	12,481	12,476	18,255	45,578	64,082
Sinhalese-English	438	718	1,782	1,921	7,386	15,572
Tamil-English	31,454	99,100	6,578	9,674	678	1,527
Total monolingual	404,946	398,063	232,289	281,795	562,761	678,196
Total bilingual	40,255	112,299	20,836	29,850	53,642	81,181
Trilingual	4,896	10,153	5,372	7,685	5,040	9,163
	NOR. CENTRAL PROV. 1946	1953	UVA PROVINCE 1946	1953	SABARAGAMUWA PROV. 1946	1953
Monolingual						
Sinhalese	96,224	151,688	158,875	185,402	487,467	551,028
Tamil	17,454	20,555	125,307	150,991	106,792	117,377
English	95	123	390	731	511	949
Total						
Sinhalese	113,788	182,294	213,215	264,805	572,782	678,585
Tamil	34,101	48,676	177,881	227,047	185,631	230,007
English	3,640	8,273	12,357	19,971	17,348	33,415
Bilingual						
Sinhalese-Tamil	14,313	23,026	44,239	62,239	69,810	97,076
Sinhalese-English	1,211	3,055	3,632	5,423	7,808	16,912
Tamil-English	294	570	1,866	2,076	1,332	1,985
Total monolingual	113,773	172,366	284,572	337,124	594,770	669,354
Total bilingual	15,818	26,651	49,737	69,738	78,950	115,973
Trilingual	2,040	4,525	6,469	11,741	7,697	13,569

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SPEAKERS OF SINHALESE, TAMIL,
AND ENGLISH, ARRANGED BY PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS,
FOR 1946 AND 1953

		Sinhalese only	total	Tamil only	total	English only	total	Mono- lingual total	Bi- lingual total	Tri- lingual total
Ceylon	1946	61.4	75.5	23.3	35.5	0.2	6.5	84.9	12.7	2.4
	1953	58.9	76.2	21.6	36.7	0.2	9.6	80.7	16.1	3.2
Western Province	1946	71.1	91.4	7.5	22.3	0.4	11.9	79.0	16.4	4.6
	1953	66.7	92.7	6.0	23.8	0.3	16.6	73.0	20.9	6.1
Colombo District	1946	68.4	91.2	7.4	24.1	0.5	14.1	76.2	18.1	5.7
	1953	63.5	92.7	5.7	25.7	0.4	19.4	69.6	22.9	7.5
Kalutara District	1946	79.6	91.9	7.9	16.7	0.1	5.0	87.6	11.1	1.2
	1953	76.9	92.7	7.0	17.5	0.1	7.5	84.0	14.3	1.8
Central Province	1946	44.7	63.3	35.8	53.2	0.2	5.7	80.7	16.4	2.9
	1953	41.5	62.4	36.4	55.7	0.2	7.3	78.1	18.4	3.5
Kandy District	1946	47.8	68.1	31.0	49.6	0.2	6.6	79.0	17.7	3.2
	1953	44.5	67.2	31.6	51.7	0.2	8.5	76.4	19.8	3.8
Matale District	1946	56.5	75.5	24.0	41.9	0.1	4.4	80.6	17.1	2.3
	1953	56.1	77.7	21.6	41.8	0.2	6.0	77.8	18.9	3.3
Nuwara Eliya Dist.	1946	29.6	43.5	55.4	69.5	0.2	3.9	85.2	12.6	2.2
	1953	24.6	40.8	57.8	74.3	0.3	4.9	82.7	14.5	2.8
Southern Province	1946	89.5	97.3	2.5	7.2	0.1	4.2	92.1	7.1	0.8
	1953	87.3	97.4	2.4	8.0	0.1	5.8	89.9	9.1	1.0
Galle District	1946	87.5	97.3	2.5	7.9	0.1	5.7	90.1	8.8	1.0
	1953	84.8	97.5	2.2	8.9	0.1	7.9	87.1	11.6	1.3
Matara District	1946	90.1	96.8	3.1	7.3	0.1	3.2	93.3	6.2	0.6
	1953	87.6	96.5	3.2	8.5	0.1	4.8	91.0	8.1	0.9
Hambantota District	1946	94.2	98.5	1.4	4.6	0.1	1.8	95.7	3.7	0.6
	1953	94.2	98.9	1.0	4.2	0.03	2.1	95.3	4.2	0.4
Northern Province	1946	1.1	4.2	88.7	98.7	0.1	8.3	90.0	8.9	1.1
	1953	1.4	5.9	75.0	98.4	0.1	21.2	76.5	21.6	2.0
Jaffna District	1946	0.5	3.0	89.3	99.3	0.1	8.9	89.9	9.1	1.0
	1953	0.7	4.4	74.0	99.2	0.1	23.6	74.8	23.3	1.9
Mannar District	1946	2.1	7.9	89.8	97.5	0.3	3.7	92.3	6.4	1.4
	1953	1.9	9.3	87.6	97.5	0.1	5.6	89.6	8.5	1.9
Vavuniya District	1946	11.5	21.1	76.8	88.2	0.1	3.9	88.4	10.2	1.4
	1953	10.9	22.8	73.8	88.7	0.1	6.1	84.8	12.9	2.3

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		Sinhalese		Tamil		English		Mono-	Bi-	Tri-
		only	total	only	total	only	total	lingual	lingual	lingual
								total	total	total
Eastern Province										
	1946	5.7	13.3	84.0	93.4	0.2	5.4	89.9	8.1	2.1
	1953	8.5	17.2	79.6	90.8	0.1	6.2	88.2	9.3	2.4
Batticaloa District										
	1946	4.0	7.6	90.5	95.9	0.1	2.7	94.5	4.8	0.7
	1953	7.8	14.3	83.1	91.7	0.1	4.4	91.0	7.7	1.3
Trincomalee District										
	1946	10.5	28.3	67.0	86.9	0.3	12.7	77.8	16.4	5.8
	1953	10.7	26.7	68.4	87.9	0.3	11.9	79.4	14.8	5.9
North Western Prov.										
	1946	83.6	92.9	6.9	15.1	0.1	2.2	90.6	8.6	0.8
	1953	82.3	93.8	5.9	15.6	0.1	3.5	88.2	10.6	1.2
Kurunegala District										
	1946	89.6	96.4	3.5	9.3	0.1	1.9	93.2	6.1	0.7
	1953	88.2	97.0	2.8	9.9	0.1	3.1	91.0	8.0	1.0
Puttalam District										
	1946	42.8	58.6	40.7	56.7	0.1	2.6	83.5	15.0	1.4
	1953	44.2	63.6	35.5	55.1	0.1	3.4	79.8	18.3	1.9
Chilaw District										
	1946	75.6	91.8	8.0	22.4	0.1	3.2	83.7	15.2	1.1
	1953	73.6	92.3	7.3	23.1	0.2	5.1	81.1	17.4	1.6
North Central Prov.										
Anuradhapura Dist.										
	1946	73.1	86.4	13.3	25.9	0.1	2.8	86.4	12.0	1.5
	1953	74.5	89.6	10.1	23.9	0.1	4.1	84.7	13.1	2.2
Uva Province										
Badulla District										
	1946	46.6	62.6	36.8	52.2	0.1	3.6	83.5	14.6	1.9
	1953	44.3	63.6	36.1	54.2	0.2	4.8	80.5	16.7	2.8
Sabaragamuwa Prov.										
	1946	71.5	84.1	15.7	27.2	0.1	2.5	87.3	11.6	1.1
	1953	69.0	84.9	14.7	28.8	0.1	4.2	83.8	14.5	1.7
Ratnapura District										
	1946	67.2	80.2	19.5	31.6	0.1	2.7	86.7	12.0	1.2
	1953	64.6	81.0	18.5	33.3	0.2	4.3	83.3	14.9	1.9
Kegalla District										
	1946	75.3	87.3	12.4	23.5	0.1	2.4	87.7	11.2	1.0
	1953	72.9	88.5	11.3	24.8	0.1	4.1	84.3	14.2	1.6

TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR COLOMBO, KANDY, AND JAFFNA

(DISTRICTS AND CITIES)						
	Colombo District	Colombo city	Kandy District	Kandy city	Jaffna District	Jaffna city
Monolingual						
Sinhalese	63.5	25.0	44.5	33.5	0.7	1.1
Tamil	5.7	15.2	31.6	8.7	74.0	73.1
English	0.4	1.0	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
Total						
Sinhalese	92.7	81.1	67.2	89.3	4.4	9.5
Tamil	25.7	61.8	51.7	51.0	99.2	98.5
English	19.4	34.0	8.5	33.6	23.6	22.1
Bilingual						
Sinhalese and Tamil	11.4	25.9	15.3	24.3	1.7	3.6
Sinhalese and English	10.3	12.1	3.5	15.0	0.1	0.3
Tamil and English	1.2	2.7	1.0	1.5	21.5	17.3
Total Monolingual	69.6	41.2	76.4	42.7	74.8	74.4
Total bilingual	22.9	40.7	19.8	40.8	23.3	21.1
Trilingual	7.5	18.1	3.8	16.6	1.9	4.5

TABLE 4
ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF SPEAKERS FOR 1961

	Sinhalese	Tamil	English
Monolingual speakers	5,297,620	1,938,879	17,370
Total speakers	6,853,989	3,296,405	866,585