

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CUMARATUNGA MUNIDASA AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANGUAGE PLANNER

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Language planning refers to deliberate and systematic attempts taken to solve the language problems of a speech community. Usually such measures in standardising a language's structure and determining its political status are taken by a country's political authority. Cumaratunga Munidasa (25th July 1887 - 02nd March 1944) was one of the greatest classical Sinhalese scholars of the 20th century, whose service to the Sinhalese language has been subjected to extensive studies in various disciplines. It has been observed that certain acts of Cumaratunga Munidasa reflect the features of a corpus planner, while his impact on promoting the Sinhalese language to the official language status has been of extreme significance. Since Cumaratunga's contribution has not been substantially evaluated in the perspective of language planning, this study attempts to recognise Cumaratunga as an individual language planner. Data for the study were collected from writings of Cumaratunga ranging from paper articles to voluminous books. The language planning model proposed by E. Haugen (1983) was adapted in the evaluation process. In this study it has been observed that it is proper to recognise Cumaratunga Munidasa's role in revitalising the Sinhalese language as the contribution of an individual language planner.

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