

An Investigation into the Popularity of Hindi as a Foreign Language among Sri Lankan Students

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Hindi is spoken by more than 26 crore of people all over the world. With the development of technology fonts, web sites, online reading and blogs are available in Hindi medium. Though Sri Lankans do not use Hindi as an official language it is popular among students. Hindi is taught as a foreign language in schools, universities and cultural centers as well. Annually number of students go to India to study Hindi. University of Kelaniya offers special degree in Hindi and conduct certificate courses for internal students. Indian Cultural Center(ICC), Bandaranaike Center for International Studies(BCIS) and Indira Gandhi National Open University(IGNOU) conduct diploma and certificate courses to students. The main objective of this paper is to identify reasons for the popularity of Hindi. The methodology used were questionnaire survey method and interviews. Information was gathered from students of internal and external degree programs, certificate and diploma courses in University of Kelaniya, ICC, BCIS and IGUOU. This research focuses on student perception of 3 key areas: spoken ability, literature and teaching methods. The findings of this research may provide suggestions to improve foreign language courses in general. This study further recognizes the following: influence of the media, problems in learning and teaching

Key Words: Teaching and Learning Hindi as a Foreign Language, Media, Cultural Relation, Popularity