

THE CHANGING ROLES OF ASIAN LANGUAGES A STUDY IN REGISTER CREATION

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ABSTRACT

I propose to do three things in this paper; (i) to show how notions like ‘Mother Tongue’ (L_1). ‘Second Language’ (L_2), and ‘Foreign Language’ (FL) derive their ‘meaning’ and ‘value’ from the system network of languages in which they function; (ii) to highlight the fact that changes in the role of any of the languages in the network can create problems for planners; and (iii) to prove on the basis of the use of Hindi in India and of English in Singapore that ‘role-changes’ and ‘function assignments’ necessitate the creation/adoption of role-worthy registers, extension of register-range, and recognition of teaching and training strategies at secondary and tertiary levels to meet the changing communicative needs of people who operate in multilingual and multicultural settings.

KEYWORDS: Foreign Language (FL), Lingua Franca, Multilingualism, Modernization, Official Language, Register Creation, Socio – Cultural, Second Language (SL)



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