

## **Department of Modern Languages**

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The Sri Lanka Vidyalandara University was established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1959 according to Parliamentary Act-45, 1958. Initially, five faculties were established including the Faculty of Languages. Oriental Languages such as Pali, Sankrit, Hindi and English were taught in the Departmental level. Initiative was taken to teach foreign languages in 1962/63. Accordingly, steps were taken to teach Russian with the support of the Russian Embassy in Sri Lanka and consequently, German and French languages were taught from 1963/64 with native lecturers coming from respective countries.

The department of Modern Languages was established in 1974 and foreign languages were taught by this department thereafter. This included Hindi and Professor Samson Weerathunga functioned as the Head of the Department.

The new Department of Modern Languages offered many new languages such as French, German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and Portuguese with the support of the respective embassies in Sri Lanka. The teaching process was so effective that the Embassy of France donated a Language Laboratory to be used in the teaching process. Hence, the Department of Modern Languages became the centre for learning foreign languages. The embassy of Japan donated a fully equipped language laboratory which has been of immense importance and the students of the department have immensely benefited. In 1995, the Department of Hindi was established with Professor Indra Dasanayake as the Head of the Department.