

# The Impact of English Lexical Categories on Modern Colloquial Sinhala Language With Special Reference to Neologism and Borrowing

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**Abstract**—This study was carried out with the main objective of investigating the impact of the English language lexeme on modern colloquial Sinhala and exploring the specific mechanisms of neologism and borrowing. Among the major findings, the impact of English on colloquial Sinhala has been identified in the processes of the acronym, coinage, alphabetic abbreviation, clipping, blending, generification, and borrowing as the dominant processes that come under the umbrella term of neologism. As borrowing mechanisms, loan words, loan shifts and loan blends followed by other subsequent mechanisms like loan translations, loan renditions and loan creations have been established with colloquial Sinhala. Participatory observation, chunk recordings and secondary data sources are methodological instruments of this research. The English-influenced lexical items in modern colloquial Sinhala have been critically analysed and categorized logically with the final concluding remark that the English language's influence on modern colloquial Sinhala is inordinate with special reference to lexical categories.

**Index Terms**—neologism, borrowing, colloquial Sinhala, English influence, Sri Lanka

## I. INTRODUCTION

All languages are subject to change with time at each definite moment of their lives (Vogt, 1954). The direct or indirect contact of one language with neighbouring or culturally dominant languages influences each language with a change of any range (Sapir, 1949; Crystal, 2005). Language contact and contact-induced change are commonplace throughout the world (Dutton & Tryon, 1994). Sinhalese, belonging to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family is the dominant language of Sri Lanka which was a British colony for more than a century. With this contact initially and now for many other reasons Sinhalese has unavoidably been influenced by English.

Thus, the main aim of the study is to investigate the impact of English lexical items on the modern colloquial Sinhala language. The nature of the influence of the English language on colloquial Sinhala can be investigated under several aspects; however, this research has confined its discussion to neologism and borrowing mechanisms which are more productive in terms of lexeme compared to the influences on other forms like phonology, pronunciation, structure, morphology, etc.

The lexical items that came from English are commonly being used by the entire language community in Sri Lanka, not as a big bundle, but separately as a community and geographical area-wise. Particularly, words related to food and beverage, dresses, vehicles, machinery, weapons, medical items, administrative bodies and positions have been introduced by English people and directly related to day-to-day life. On the other hand, when Westernized people speak Sinhala, a huge collection of English words is used. Similarly, those who live in metropolitan areas and those who have learnt English as a second or a foreign language also use many English words in their daily life (Jayasekara, 2008). Also, science, technology and the academic field have adopted a lot of English words into Sinhala. Some of them are frequently used and well-established as Sinhala words by now.

Neologism and borrowing mechanisms with appropriate examples from colloquial Sinhala are presented in this work.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of the English language on the modern colloquial Sinhala lexeme. Philosophically this work falls into the naturalistic research paradigm. As we believe, access to reality can only be possible through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments. The second is nature of the data we have used is almost qualitative. We have tried to observe reality subjectively in contrast to positivism. Based on the same philosophical stance, qualitative data gathering was done by using observations, chunk recording and accessing secondary data sources. The data from both secondary and primary sources were collected using qualitative data collection tools. Secondary data sources such as previous research work, journal

articles, published and unpublished books, paper articles, research papers, web references, corpora, etc. are used while the main method of primary data collection was participatory observation applying the convenient sampling method. The participatory observation was conducted in a state university by having a pre-planned schedule. The other method used to gather raw data was chunk recordings of television programmes of the state and private television channels that were telecast in the Sinhala language. This data was collected from entertainment programmes, but not from formal news reading which uses high standard Sinhala consciously avoiding code-mixing, switching or borrowing to a greater extent. The minimum time duration of chunks was 10 minutes and the maximum was 30 minutes. All the recorded chunks were transcribed into texts manually. The reason for using electronic media programmes to gather raw data apart from participatory observation is the belief that media use the standard dialect for their communication in a country (Dissanayaka, 2002).

The type of this research is deductive as we used some already developed theoretical constructs to analyse gathered data and did not have any intention to develop any new theories by using our empirical data. Thus, the current work is confirmatory in approach. The study utilises the qualitative method by aligning with the research philosophy. The strategy of this research is partly ethnographic as the data was collected from a natural/uncontrolled environment through observations and partly experimental as the chunk recordings are not from an uncontrolled environment. The time horizon of the research is cross-sectional as the data gathering was done at one point in time. The sampling strategy is random. In terms of primary data collection, two methods are employed as has already been mentioned. They are participatory observation and chunk recordings. In addition, the study used secondary data as well. The data analysis was also done qualitatively through content analysis on two levels; descriptive and interpretative. A facility available in Microsoft Word was used to identify English lexical items in Sinhala colloquial chunks recorded from television programmes.

### III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section discusses existing literature in English focusing on the concepts and theories related to the topic under discussion. The present study deals with several mechanisms of language contact phenomenon in detailing the lexical influences of the English language on modern colloquial Sinhala. The contact linguistic theories were formulated in the 1970s; Poplack (1980), Gumperz (1982), Grosjean (1982), Kachru (1983), Auer (1984), Ralph (1984), Myers-Scotton (1993), Monika (1995), Muysken (2000), and Thomason (2001) contain a considerable value in the field. These contributors have discussed bilingualism, code-switching, code-mixing and language borrowing in different capacities and different depths but still, the depth of explanations for bilingualism, multilingualism, language borrowing, etc., are prominently owned by Weinreich (1962) and Haugen (1953) even after more than 60-70 years of their interventions.

The major variable of our research topic is 'language influence' which deals with language mixing due to contact-induced situations. This as a study area falls into specifically sociolinguistics, but earlier into historical linguistics or the main discipline of philology. The new subject area that arose during the last five decades is called 'contact linguistics'.

The second variable of our study is 'colloquial Sinhala' which needs a theoretical base to strengthen the study. Several studies helped to formulate the required theoretical backing in this regard. Gair's (1970, 1971) research works such as *Colloquial Sinhalese Clause Structures* and *Action Involvement Categories in Colloquial Sinhalese* help to understand what colloquial Sinhala is. Gunasekara's (2008) *A Comprehensive Grammar of Sinhala Language* also remains in the same capacity whereas this study gives some sort of classification and definition for colloquial Sinhala even though the masterpiece of this book has a diminutive relevance to the present study as it provides a small data corpus to understand English words used in Sinhala. Two studies quite recently published by Wheeler (2006) *Complementation in Colloquial Sinhala* and Zubair's (2008), *Doxastic Modality as a Means of Stance Taking in Colloquial Sinhala* contain data with some relevance.

To differentiate the colloquial language and formal language used in Sinhala, language diglossia played an important role as a theoretical concern. *Diglossia* by Ferguson (1959) was a masterpiece in this subject area and this theoretical layout educated the researcher about two language registers in Sinhala viz; colloquial and formal Sinhala. *Purifying the Sinhala Language: The Hela Movement of Munidasa Cumaratunga* (Coperahewa, 1999) discusses the socio-political matters regarding the Sinhala language and, particularly the role of the *Hela Movement* of Munidasa Cumaratunga enabled the present research to understand how patriotic movements behave against the influence of other languages such as the situation with the English language in Sri Lanka under the colonial and post-colonial contexts.

The studies related to Sri Lankan English conducted by some university academics such as *The English Language in Ceylon* by Passe (1943) and recent studies like *The Post-Colonial Identity of Sri Lankan English* by Gunasekera (2005), *The Vocabulary of Sri Lankan English: Words and Phrases that Transform a Foreign Language into Their own* by Fernando (2003) and *English and Sinhala Bilingualism in Sri Lanka* by Fernando (1976) are also quite important for the current study. Also, the works by the British expatriate, Michael Meyler in connection with the variety of Sri Lankan English, *A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English* (2007) and *Sri Lankan English: a Distinct South Asian Variety* (2009) also show the same importance to the current study. All these previous works have been done with different objectives and motivations in comparison to the current study but certain parts of their findings could purposely be linked with the current work. Another important outlying contribution that empowered the current study is *An Introduction to Language and Communication* (Akmajian et al., 2008). This study presents the concept of 'neologism' concerning

language. According to them, a neologism is an outcome of language contact which has become an inevitable fact nowadays. In terms of that aspect, the study is well-meaningful and motivated us to include an analysis under a separate topic.

Studies that have been conducted directly regarding the present study are not many. Even though there are some studies on the English language's influence on Sinhala, studies that are particularly confined to modern colloquial Sinhala with special reference to lexicon are very few. *Impact of English loan words on modern Sinhala* by Premawardhena (2003) is a research paper published in this respect with a broad spectrum objective but the contribution has not been sufficiently comprehensive to achieve it. The study, analysing data from both literary and spoken Sinhala, attempts to discuss structural changes in modern Sinhala that occurred through English loanwords. This also differs from the scope and the aim of our study. The aim is elaborated further by giving its subcomponents as the phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic implications of the English loan words (Premawardhena, 2003). Also, it looks at how both monolingual and bilingual speakers adopt these loanwords into Sinhala. This piece of research has arrived at some important conclusions by referring to Anderson (1973) and Aitchison (1998). As the research concludes, the main reason for linguistic borrowing is to fill a void in the borrowing language to describe new concepts and elements, which may not have existed earlier and entering suddenly a language demands a term to identify it (Premawardhena, 2003). As the study further concludes, "since the introduction of policies of an open economy in the late seventies, the influence of English loan words on Sinhala has been on the increase" (Premawardhena, 2003, p. 6) also the electronic media has taken the hitherto foreign language of English to the doorsteps of the rural communities. Especially in the field of advertising, the use of English loan words with Sinhala texts is very common today (Premawardhena, 2003). Out of these conclusions, the policy of open economy which made a paradigm shift in the economic policy in 1977 in Sri Lanka has subsequently accelerated the influence of English loanwords on Sinhala. This evidence is more than a language influence as it touches upon the socio-political interventions of the country which then affected the language change, particularly to change the official language's heart of the expressions that is lexicon. Although there are some oversights in the sample and mismatches between set objectives and conclusions, this study captures ample space in this specific research focus.

*Sinhala-English code-mixing in Sri Lanka: A sociolinguistic study* by Senaratne (2009) is a comprehensive research that has considerable relevance to the present study, but it too deviates from its scope and objectives with the present study. It elucidates code-mixing between Sinhala and English and presents a structural analysis of the mixed language that has evolved as a result of the code-mixing. Apart from identifying the main syntactic, phonological, morphological and semantic features of the mixed language, this study describes the sociolinguistic aspects of bilingual language usage in post-colonial Sri Lanka. In this attempt, this treatise strives to reveal not only the complexities but also the creativity and productivity that have evolved as a result of more than two hundred years of contact between an international language and an Indo-Aryan local language (Senaratne, 2009). The concluding remarks of each chapter of this work have brought out important facts in terms of the English language's influence on Sinhala. Some of the conclusions indicate the impact of English very positively and in other places more descriptively. The mixed code has effectively equipped the Sinhala speaker to meet the challenges of the presence (Senaratne, 2009, p. 60). The research sample has been highlighted to indicate the nature of their language usage and as it declares 'the use of both Sinhala and English in discourse is becoming widespread with urban bilinguals between the age 19 to 40' (Senaratne, 2009, p. 72). The study further concludes that English is positioned as a high language and Sinhala as a low language in urban Sri Lankan society. Also, it shows that the contact between Sinhala and English has resulted in code-mixing, lexical borrowing, Sinhalization, and hybridization. Language mixing has successfully brought together two typologically and culturally distant languages. In a socio-cultural context, Sinhala-English code-mixing reveals the acculturation of English by the native Sinhala speakers in Sri Lanka.

*Sinhala Vag Malava Kerehi Ingrisi Balapema* (Influence of English on Sinhalese Lexeme) by Jayaseka (2008) is another important research in the same line of study. All these studies also lie in a different space when comparing them with the objectives, scope and research variables of the present study.

#### IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The research questions that unpack the major research puzzle into manageable pieces are:

1. What is the influence of the English language on the modern colloquial Sinhala lexeme in general?
2. How neologism and borrowing mechanisms have impacted modern colloquial Sinhala due to the English language influence?

These research questions are followed by two major objectives:

1. To investigate the influence of the English language on the modern colloquial Sinhala lexeme.
2. To scrutinise and explore the neologism and borrowing mechanisms of modern colloquial Sinhala language that occurred due to English language influence.

#### V. DISCUSSION

### A. Neologism

Neologism is a newly coined word or phrase or a new meaning for an existing word, or a word borrowed from another language (Arnold, 1986, p. 217). Algeo (1991) says that a new word is a form or the use of a form not recorded in general dictionaries. 'Neologism' takes place due to language contact. 'Neologism' is an adding process. Formation of new words, expressions and adding new meanings to existing words have become a natural and critical experience in the Sinhala language due to the impact of the English language, particularly, in its colloquial form. The Sinhalese speakers influenced by the English language create new words continually using several processes and this section discusses those processes with special attention to nouns. The acronym, coinage, alphabetic abbreviation, clipping, blending, generification, proper noun, and borrowing are the dominant word-formation processes under neologism. Even though lexical borrowing has been discussed much in the contact linguistic literature, the other processes have not been scrutinised in that depth in the Sinhala language.

'Acronym formation' is a process of abbreviation of the first letters of each word and pronounced as a word that is treated as a noun in its use. As a word-formation process, this does not take place in the Sinhala language with the impact of English, but already-formed English acronyms are commonly used to the extent that they have become almost Sinhalese words in both literary and colloquial Sinhala. Some acronyms like DOS (Disk Operating System), WAN (Wide Area Network), and LAN (Local Area Network) are newly added to the Sinhala language with the arrival of computer technology. The colloquial Sinhala language has become a mixed discourse with many English acronyms added recently.

Example utterances:

/dæŋ DOS ɔgəŋŋə næ/ (DOS is not taught nowadays).

/mɛθəŋ θijɛŋə WAN ekak/ (This is a wide area network).

Names of international organizations are also used in Sinhala in the same manner as UNESCO, UNO, IMF, WHO etc.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/UNESCO eken θamai help kəŋŋə/ (UNESCO is the helping body).

/UNO ekə məkətə sambahāi/ (UNO get involved with this).

'Coinage' is another process of neologism through which entirely new, previously non-existent words keep entering into a language. Speakers coin new words by inventing a new sound sequence and pairing it with a new meaning. This can be observed in the Sinhala language in several forms as a result of English language influence.

'Alphabetic Abbreviation' is another process of forming new words. Most probably they are one-time abbreviations. The alphabetic abbreviations are individually pronounced, not like acronyms.

Examples:

RDA (Road Development Authority)

CD (Compact Disk)

IT (Information Technology)

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/RDA ekə melə: wədak kəŋŋə næ/ (Road Development Authority does nothing).

/mɛ CD ekə wədə kəŋŋə næ/ (This CD does not work).

'Computer-inspired alphabetic abbreviations' are a very common experience now in Sinhala language usage. HTML, HDL, OOP, and EDP are a few examples and this also can be observed in some professions. For example, ASP (Assistant Superintendent Police), SP (Superintendent Police)

These are related to police service and are now used as Sinhalese nouns or adjectives among the general public.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/hambanθvətə ASP ma:ru kəŋŋə/ (ASP has been transferred to Hambantota).

/eja: SP θanθvətə promote kəŋŋə:/ (He has been promoted to the post of superintendent police).

'Clipping' is another process of neologism. In this process, clipped abbreviations such as *prof* for the professor, *fax* for facsimile, *math/maths* for mathematics and *exam* for the examination are some popular nouns in modern colloquial Sinhala. There are also orthographic abbreviations like Dr. (doctor), Mr. (Mister), Ms. (miss), and Ven. (venerable) where the spellings of a word have been shortened without altering its pronunciation.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/prof mɛ wela:ve kaθa: kəŋŋə pɔləvən ðə?/ (Professor, can I talk to you now?)

/mɛ fax ekə wədə kəŋŋə næ/ (This facsimile does not work).

Clipping is of course not common in colloquial Sinhala, but more frequent in literary Sinhala. The actual word of the clipping is used when they are pronounced in colloquial Sinhala language.

'Blend' is another common word-formation process in the Sinhala language due to the English language influence. New words can be formed from the existing ones by various blending processes. /bus ekə /, /car ekə/, /bag ekə/, /van ekə/ are some examples and this will further be discussed in-depth under borrowing.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/mɛ bus ekə kədila/ (This bus is broken).

/mamə aluθ car ekak gaθθa:/ (I bought a new car).

'Generified words' have become a unique process of neologism in the Sinhala language nowadays. Also, this is

common even in other living languages in the world. Using specific brand names of products as names for the products themselves, in general, is introduced as 'generified words'.

E.g. *Sunlight*, a brand name for washing soaps

*Bata* is the company name that produces well-known slippers in Sri Lanka.

Except for well-educated English speakers, almost all the others alter *Bata* for slippers in general and *Sunlight* for washing soaps. How these generified words have imprinted in the public mind has been understood by the business world as well, therefore, the new companies that produce washing soaps at least try to amalgamate the latter part of the generified words to brand their new products such as *wonder light*, *daylight*, etc.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/oja: enəkətə sunlight kətəjak arəgenə ennə/ (Bring a sunlight soap when you come).

/maɣe bata ðekə kədila:, aluθ dekək gannə ɔ:nə/ (My pair of slippers is broken, I need to buy a new one).

/wonder light kijanne sunlight vələtə kopijak/ (Wonder light is a duplicate version of sunlight).

'Proper nouns' are also another part of neologism but the English language has not significantly influenced the Sinhala language in this case. A trait, quality, act, or some behaviour, associated with a person is identified with that person's name, most probably with his/ her last name. For example, the *guillotine* derives from the last name of Dr Joseph Guillotine. Thousands of such words are being added to English daily. The same example of *the guillotine* is used in Sinhala as /giləti:nəjə/.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/minihaθ giləti:nəjətə jaj vage/ (He also may go to the guillotine).

/maɣe baba: dæn Montessori janəva/ (My baby attends pre-school now).

'Borrowing' is also a process of neologism that has made the latest and the biggest contribution to colloquial Sinhala and it is broadly discussed in the section below.

## B. Borrowing

Language borrowing is an area that has been broadly discussed in the field of language contact. This is a process where lexical borrowing can be investigated. Some linguistic researchers have concluded that contact-induced lexical borrowing changes languages, whereas some have included even code-switching and bilingual mixing as a part of borrowing. Simply, the findings of some researchers have presented this language phenomenon as an occurrence out of three processes of language contact; convergence, relexification, and borrowing. Sankoff (2001) following Van (1988) defines borrowing as involving speakers' importing features from other languages into their native language. The borrowing occurs widely from the language of the majority to the minority which is termed substratum influence. But, for the present study, the conclusion is quite far as the Sri Lankan language community does not consist of the English language majority and Sinhalese minority. Even though there are miscomprehensions related to lexical borrowing and code-mixing, this has been clarified while separating the appearance of foreign lexical elements in a language as borrowing and going beyond the single lexical elements into other areas such as code-mixing.

Long existed doubts about language borrowing have now been cleared and basically "major class content words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives are the most likely to be borrowed" (Poplack & Meechan, 1998, p. 127). By identifying what borrowed is in contact situations, some have drawn the grammatical border saying that 'the transfer of features from one language to another does not involve syntax, but lexicon and pragmatics' (Silva, 2008, pp. 214-215). When borrowing from one language to another, the grammatical impact is minimal, but there is a discussion called grammatical borrowing. So-called 'grammatical borrowings' are indeed lexical: conjunctions, subordinators, and prepositions that do not affect the syntax of the recipient language when they are transferred (Silva, 2008). This conveys that grammatical borrowing means the borrowing of lexical items from popular lexical categories. As Silva (2008) has further discussed, it consists of lexicon and pragmatics. Different scholars have used terms like 'interference' and 'transfer' to refer to any type of cross-linguistic influence, including borrowing (Winford, 2007, p. 25).

Borrowing is treated as a vehicle of contact-induced change. In both cases, there is a source language and a recipient language. These terms serve as alternatives to various other terms that have been used in literature, such as 'donor language', 'substrate', 'replica language' and the like (Winford, 2007, p. 26). The source language of the present study is English whereas the recipient is Sinhala language. If there is a question like 'Why are only lexical items borrowed?' 'Stability gradient' is the answering term used by Van (1988, p. 25). This refers to the fact that certain components of a language, such as phonology, morphology, and syntax, tend to be more stable and hence resistant to change, while others such as vocabulary are less stable and subject to change (Winford, 2007, p. 26).

### (a). Language Borrowing Mechanisms

There are several mechanisms of language borrowing observed by the researcher and they are comprehensively presented with examples from colloquial Sinhala.

Nominal roots and verbal roots are divided into three kinds each in the Sinhala language as per *Sidath Sangara*, a Sinhalese grammar book available since the ancient days. They have been explained as:

/nipan ða: pijəwi/ (native)

/θasəmə ða: pijəwi/ (loaned)

/θabəvə ða: pijəwi/ (derived) (Pagngnasara, 2011, p. 5).

The nominal and verbal roots born in Sri Lanka itself without associating with other languages are called *nipāṇ* (native) in language analysis according to *Sidath Sangara*. The roots similar to Pali and Sanskrit are called *θaθsāmā* (loaned), whereas roots derived from those languages (Pali and Sanskrit) are called *θaθbawā* (derived). Out of these three kinds, two can be considered as general mechanisms of language borrowing in the analysis of the modern colloquial Sinhala language. They are 'loaned' and 'derived' words. Many examples can be presented for both 'loaned' and 'derived' words from English to Sinhala. In modern language analysis, there are more advanced and comprehensive mechanisms introduced by linguists. Even though the *Sidath Sangara* provides examples only for nominal and verbal roots, the other word categories are also available in modern colloquial Sinhala as 'loaned' and 'derived' words now with the influence of other European languages. Some examples are given below.

(b). *Loan Words and Colloquial Sinhala Applications*

blouse - /maɣe blouse ekə kəː?/ (Where is my blouse?)

print - /mekə print kəɾəpə saːrijak/ (This is a printed saree).

point - /eθənə checkpoint ekək θijənəvaː/ (There is a checkpoint there).

The words included in English itself in the above utterances have retained the original characteristics of English when they are used in Sinhala to a greater extent. Even though there are slight differences when they are pronounced by Sinhalese, they still can be treated as loan words since the author of *Sidath Sangara* has not specified those suprasegmental features when defining this language-transferring mechanism.

The other word category is 'derived' words. Most of the English borrowings in Sinhala are derived words that have been adapted following Sinhalese methods. Some of them have changed due to euphony and some have followed Sinhalese sound characteristics.

Examples:

**Derived words in Colloquial Sinhala**

English	Sinhala
Mile	/mailəjə/
Rhythm	/ri θnəjə/
Theme	/θemaːvə/

/hərijətəmə ðorə mailə ðekai/ (The exact distance is two miles.)

/e siŋ ðowe ri θnəjətə maŋ kəməθij/ (I like the rhythm of that song.)

/nijəmə θemaːvak/ (Very good theme)

As it has been noted by Daller (2007), Leonard Bloomfield is one of the first figures in which an attempt is made at classifying lexical borrowing. He distinguishes between "dialect borrowing, where the borrowed features come from within the same speech area (as, father, rather with [a] in an [ɛ] -dialect), and cultural borrowing, where the borrowed features come from a different language" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 444). When speakers of different languages come into more intensive contact, borrowing "extends to speech forms that are not connected with cultural novelties" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 461). This is called intimate borrowing and it is generally one-sided: borrowing goes predominantly from an upper language to a lower language that is from the speakers of a culturally, politically or economically dominant language to the speakers of a less prestigious language. During colonization and even today, culturally, politically and economically dominant language speakers are English speakers and so the prestigious language is English and Sinhala has become the lower language in terms of language borrowing.

Haugen (1950) and Weinreich (1963) have developed the typology of lexical borrowing. Haugen's approach is quite new. He discusses the structural constraints on borrowing and the structural effects on the borrowing language as a whole. As Weinreich's and Haugen's classifications are almost similar, the following discussion is limited mainly to Haugen's.

Haugen (1950) distinguishes different types of borrowing. There are only three types of borrowing according to Haugen; Loanwords, Loan blends, and Loan Shifts (Daller, 2007, pp. 7-8). Bates L. Hoffer by referring to the classic work of *A Course in Modern Linguistics* by Hockett (1958) has introduced four types of language borrowing mechanisms; 1) Loanword 2) Loan-shift 3) Loan-translation 4) Loan-blend. This is a simple typology in comparison to Weinreich and Haugen. It is also not descriptive and comprehensive like Weinreich's work. Some researchers have used completely different explanations to denote the same processes. Among various classifications, loanwords, loan-shifts, loan-blends, and loan translations have become quite common in all classifications and therefore the examples from the colloquial Sinhala language due to English influence are presented here onwards based on this typology.

*1. Loanwords*

By the definition of loanwords, it does not expect a substitution after arriving at the recipient language from the source language, but pure loanwords are impossible to be seen in Sinhala. Nonetheless, without taking the prosodic features into account, many lexical items can be treated as loanwords by and large in colloquial Sinhala. A few examples are Ice, Butter, Cheese, Gas, Lorry, Telegram, Telephone, Bill, etc.

Out of these given examples, *telegram*, *telephone*, and *bill* are originally not from English and their origin may be from Greek (Jayasekara, 2008, p. 16). Even though these can be considered as loanwords, their pronunciation in colloquial Sinhala may not be exactly similar to native speakers' pronunciation. The British pronunciation of butter is

/batə/ but most of the colloquial Sinhala speakers pronounce this word as /batər/ with the final /r/. The British pronunciation of telephone is /telifəʊn/ but this word realizes in colloquial Sinhala as /telifə:n/ or /telipə:n/. Even though there are such trivial differences, still these can be included in loanwords as they do not affect the semantics of these lexical items. Most English loanwords can be declined/conjugated in many forms of traditional Sinhala declension/conjugation rules, but certain cases cannot be applied under traditional rules of the Sinhala language when declining/conjugating. However, when considering the lexical items as loanwords in the present study, those minor facts were not taken into account.

## 2. Loan-Shifts

A process of adapting native words to new meanings (Hoffer, 2005, p. 5) or, in other words, an indigenous form of acquiring a new meaning to translate a foreign concept is a loan shift. As scholars have scrutinized, cultural innovation (Darmadasa, 1996, p. 47) is the reason to occur loan-shifts in languages in contact. /pi:təjə/ is the Sinhala word for a group of departments that specializes in a particular subject or a group of subjects in a university and this word is used as a similar term for the English word *faculty*. From the inception of the Sri Lankan university system, this word has come into practice in this sense, but it is not a new word for the Sinhala lexicon as it has been used to denote a different meaning by then. When the university system was established in Sri Lanka during the colonial period, they needed to use appropriate terms in Sinhala for some entities, subjects, and designations, so that some of the words were absorbed from the traditional Sinhala vocabulary to name the aforesaid. /pi:təjə/ is one such word that had earlier been used for a 'chair or cripples' or a 'walking stick' (Wijethunga, 2008, p. 1129).

The Sinhala word /nala:və/ is used in modern Sinhala to denote the meaning of the English word *stethoscope*. This is an instance of semantic broadening in a loan shift influenced by Western medical terminology. The word /nala:və/ had earlier been used to refer to the *horn* and this meaning is a new semantic addition to the same word.

## 3. Loan-Blends

This is some sort of a morphemic importation with a substitution. In other words, one element is a loanword, whereas the other element is a native word in the form of loan-blends. This has been understood by Weinreich as a *hybrid compound* (1963, p. 52). He has given such examples from the language of *Penna* in his study. As Weinreich further explains, the reproduced element of a hybrid compound, like a simple word or the element of a loan translation semantically extended can be affected by homophony. This borrowing mechanism has also been designated as 'interlingual portmanteaus' by him. There is a huge collection of lexical items of loan blends in colloquial Sinhala. English influenced loan-blends in the Sinhala language can mainly be placed under two categories:

01. Compounds with the loanword at the initial position and native word at the final/second position
02. Compounds with the loanword at the final position and native word at the initial position

The first category has many realizations in colloquial Sinhala. Some of them are re-duplications and the others are different combinations of compounds. In analysing the gathered data, we found seven types of loan blends in the Sinhala language due to the influence of English.

### (1). Reduplicated Loan-Blends

*These hybrid compounds have been formed* by Sinhalese speakers to explain the English meaning of the first word by using the Sinhala word as the second element of the compound. English-educated Sinhalese do not use these loan blends but this is very common among other colloquial Sinhalese speakers. The most common examples are:

- /bæg-mallə/ (bag)
- /bætən-pəllə/ (baton)
- /bɔ:d-lellə/ (board)

All the words used in the final positions of these hybrid compounds are similar to Sinhala words for the initial English words. Some of them are loan translations and some are similar Sinhala words. These hybrids have perfectly settled in colloquial Sinhala to the extent that some are unaware of their combination in the English language. The loan blends like /lait-elijə/ (light) and /bled θaləjə/ (blade) are sometimes used even by the English-educated people in their colloquial usage showing their firm settlement in colloquial Sinhala. This reduplication is used even with verbs in colloquial Sinhala. But it is a further question whether they can be considered as loan-blends as they are used separately too in Sinhala. Some of them are: /pəssətə rīvəs kəɾənəwə/ (reverse), /a:pahu ritɜ:n kəɾənəwə/ (return), /kætf ʌllənəwə/ (catch). Some of these contain three elements; the initial element is the Sinhala translation of the second element which is in English and the last element is a Sinhala helping verb. The middle part of the compound; in other words, the English loanword of the compound is a verb, but sometimes it acts as a noun too. Also, a usage like /həri-raɪt/ (right) can be considered as reduplicated loan-blends though it is neither a verb nor a noun. /həri/ is similar to *right* in English. Therefore, despite its lexical category, it is a loan-blend as well as a reduplication in modern colloquial Sinhala. Some adjectives are also used as reduplications in colloquial Sinhala.

### 1. English Noun + Sinhala Noun Loan-Blends

In these loan-blends, the English noun acts as an adjective always in colloquial Sinhala.

- /gæs lipə/ (gas stove)
- /ti: bənis/ (tea buns)

/bætəri kəllə/ (battery)

are some typical examples in colloquial Sinhala. As has been mentioned above, the words like *ice*, *tea*, *telephone*, and *battery*, are nouns, but their function in these loan-blends or hybrid compounds have become adjectives. These given examples are adjectives in English as well.

## 2. English Adjective + Sinhala Noun Loan-Blends

In these loan-blends, the initial element is original English adjectives, and the second element is a Sinhala noun. Sometimes, the euphony is the reason to realize these types of loan blends in colloquial Sinhala.

/ku:l waturə/ (cool water)

/æsbæstɔ:s- θəhəduvə/ (asbestos sheet)

/kɔrəl-pərə/ (coral reefs) are some examples from colloquial Sinhala.

## 3. English Single Words → Sinhala Loan-Blend Compounds

These loan blends have been created by the Sinhalese speakers for both formal and colloquial usages. The original words are not very familiar to Sinhala speakers as most of them are technical terms, and this unfamiliarity may be the reason for the emergence of a new loan-blend as a compound from English single-word usages.

### English Single Word

Acidity

Communism

Marxism

### Sinhala Loan-Blend

/æsid-gəθijə/

/kəmijunis-va: ðəjə/

/ma:ks- va: ðəjə/

Even though these lexical items can be considered as loan-blends, some of these are not compounds in Sinhala. Lexical items like /ma:ks- va: ðəjə/ (Marxism) and /libərəl-va: ðəjə/ (liberalism) are single words in Sinhala, still a part of them in English and the other part is in Sinhala, therefore, they are loan-blends in the Sinhala language.

## 4. Loan-blends with Sinhala Inanimate Material Noun+ka:rəja:

This is a traditional way of forming personal nouns in Sinhala too. In this process; an inanimate material noun is included in the Sinhala word /ka:rəja:/, and then it becomes a personal noun. The same has been analogized to English-influenced words as well and ultimately they have become loan-blends in Sinhala. This is merely limited to colloquial Sinhala, but not in literary Sinhala.

/kɔ:t ka:rəja:/ (A person wears a coat)

/bɪsnəs ka:rəja:/ (businessman)

/θri: wi:l ka:rəja:/ (tri-show driver/owner)

What is interesting in this usage is /ka:rəja:/ contains a gender value as well. Almost all these loan-blends are masculine in colloquial Sinhala. Also, the English-Sinhala hybrid lexical items are formed by adding /ka:rəja:/ into country names to introduce the citizens who belong to that particular country.

/in ðjən ka:rəja:/ (an Indian)

/æmərikən ka:rəja:/ (an American)

## 5. Loan-Blends with English Noun+Sinhala ekə (means one in the Sinhala language)

This is also a traditional way of declining nouns in the Sinhala language. The same has been analogized to English words too in colloquial Sinhala. This is a very popular declension of forming loan blends among all the Sinhala speakers. It is mostly used with inanimate material nouns in Sinhala.

/faɪl ekə/ (file)

/hɔ:n ekə/ (horn)

Some loan blends contain more than two elements in colloquial Sinhala with /ekə/ meaning one in English. They are original compounds in English. After coming into Sinhala, /ekə/ has been included in them.

/vaɪn bɒtl ekə/ (wine bottle)

/maʊs pæd ekə/ (mouse pad)

/laɪt bɪl ekə/ (electricity bill)

/bɑ:θru:m tawəl ekə/ (bathroom towel) are some popular examples. These kinds of loan blends are very frequent in colloquial Sinhala.

## 6. English Profession+Sinhala Explanation Loan-Blends

In these loan blends, the initial lexical item is a profession and the second lexical element contains some sort of an explanation about the profession. This is not a broadly spread lexical category like other loan blends.

/ɒfɪsərə mahaθəjə/ (the officer)

/kla:k nɔ:nə/ (the female clerk)

/pɒlɪs ra:ləha:mi/ (the policeman)

## 7. Loan-Blends with Sinhala Adjective + English Noun

Loan blends are also available in colloquial Sinhala. The first element functions as an adjective and the second element is an English noun of these blends.

/wiðli bʌlb/ (electric bulb)

/sɪnhələ nəvəls/ (Sinhala novels)

/ma:rə dʒem/ (strategic works) are some examples.

## (2). Loan-Translations

Technological advancements interfere a lot with this borrowing category. For instance, when the word *telephone* is imported other relevant words such as 'call', and 'exchange' are also taken. Sometimes, we may introduce our own words for these external lexical arrivals. These are called loan translations (Darmadasa, 1996, p. 45). Linguistically, a foreign composite form is translated directly, element by element into the native language in loan translation. Loan translations are also known as calques in contact linguistics. Weinreich (1963, p.51) has subcategorized this loan translation again into another three subcategories viz; Loan translation proper, Loan renditions and Loan creations. Reproducing elements in the compound or phrase, element by element is the loan-translation-proper whereas, loan-rendition is a model compound that furnishes only a general hint for the reproduction. Loan creation is applied to new coinages which are stimulated not by cultural innovations, but by the need to match designations available in a language in contact as we explained at the outset of this discussion by referring to Uriel Weinreich. Weinreich's classification takes compounds into account, but all the examples in Sinhala are not only compounds. There are single words too. The result of this borrowing mechanism is not just mixing English words with modern Sinhala but increasing the vocabulary of Sinhala. Out of those sub-categories given by Weinreich, many examples can be given for loan-translation proper. The new English-Sinhala dictionaries and glossaries contain a lot of loan-translation proper usages. This borrowing mechanism enriches the recipient language by adding new lexical items.

Examples:

<b>Loan-Translation (proper)</b>	<b>English Usage</b>
/səθi anθəjə/	weekend
/əθ borusowə/	tooth-brush
/dʒəŋɡəmə ðrəkəθənjə/	mobile phone

It is interesting to observe here that most of these loan translations are not frequently used in colloquial Sinhala but their original English words are used frequently. A word like /ʊlpəθ pæ nə/ is rarely used in colloquial usage but is sometimes used in informal literary Sinhala writings. Loan translation is not a natural consequence of language evolution and is an effect of language planning efforts done by scholars well conversant in Sinhala language and etymology.

Loan renditions do not associate with word-to-word translations of the source language but they are sort of general hints for the original usages. The examples given for semantic interference by Darmadasa (1996) can be considered as some kind of loan-renditions in Sinhala due to the influence of English. He provides two lexical items; *alligator pears* and *deputy fiscal* as examples of semantic interference. English alligator pear is a fruit and after hearing this word in Sinhalese, they thought that this is kind of a /perə/ (guava) according to available Sinhala usage. "The unfamiliar *alligator* without having a proper meaning changed into /*aligətə*/ following the available words and ultimately it has become /*aligətə perə*/ in modern Sinhala" (Darmadasa, 1996, p. 37) which is now used for avocado in English. Even though this can be considered as a loan rendition, it is obvious that there is a semantic change as well. As Darmadasa further points out, such semantic changes happen in the words which are taken from other languages under *folk etymology*.

Loan-creation is the other loan-translation category given by Weinreich in his study and the same has been discussed by some other linguists as well. These are new composite forms based on indigenous elements to translate a foreign concept. /ðrəkəθənjə/ is the loan translation for the English word *telephone* but the same has been given a loan creation as well by Sinhalese.

/θeləbənɔwə/ is the loan-creation for the English word *telephone*. Another similar kind of loan creation is /pinna pahina pɔlə/ for the post office. The common usage among the colloquial Sinhala speakers is not this loan-creation but the loan-translation as /θəpæl kəθɔ:ruvə/. However, the original English words are also more frequently used as loanwords in colloquial Sinhala than loan creations. The Sinhalese term /jəθorɔ lijənəjə/ for English *type-writer* and /ðəmrijə/ for English *train* are also loan-creations in the Sinhala language.

Expert scholars in the Sinhala language have taken the factors of language history into account in giving loan creations for English lexical items. /ʊθowə:dəmə/ in Sinhala also can be considered as a loan creation. This term has been given to the English word, a *pad* which is used by women as a sanitary towel. In giving this loan-rendition, the evolution of the Sinhala language parallel with other languages has been considered. For example, the word /ʊθu/ has been derived from Sanskrit /irθu/. Now it is apparent that giving loan-creations and translations for foreign-influenced words are the results of language planning efforts.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The discussion makes it clear that the influence of English on the colloquial Sinhala could be mainly identified through the mechanisms of neologism and borrowing and they have spread into several areas of the language by making complicated structural changes. As our study confines merely lexical influences, the other structural changes are not discussed in this work. The impact of the English language on modern colloquial Sinhala in terms of lexical borrowing and neologism is not just a matter of fact that is negligible as a result of language contact. An immense number of borrowing mechanisms have been identified with examples while showing up how complicated they are, and in a way, these have helped to enrich the recipient language of Sinhala. Ultimately, it can be concluded that there is an inordinate impact of English lexical items on modern colloquial Sinhala language with special reference to above mentioned

lexical areas.

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