Study of Incentives to Use the Bilingual Features and the English Language on Name Boards: With Special Reference to Kandy Municipality

P. S. Manthrirathna[a]* and H. M. T. M. H. Molagoda[a]

[a]*Department of Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka,
P.O. Box 02, Belihuloya 70140, Sri Lanka.*

Correspondence: sachimanthri@gmail.com

The use of English as the first language (L1) and code-mixing between Sinhala and English are common linguistic behaviors in both formal and informal spoken and written discourses in Sri Lanka. The majority of modern name boards of Sri Lanka also provide a variety of instances in this respect. However, the language used on name boards has been rarely examined in the linguistic field. Thus the major objective of this study was to examine the reasons for using such language behaviour on name boards. It also examined the attitudes of society towards these language variations and the effects of such language behaviour on Sinhala/Tamil and English languages. The study was a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis: a questionnaire, interviews and field observations. The sample of the questionnaire consisted of 100 participants, and 15 individuals were taken for the interview. The samples of photographs and images of name boards were indicated as evidence. The relevant findings of the questionnaire were indicated using charts and graphs. In conclusion, the results of the research depict the modern trend, to attract people, blind imitation, as a token of status, false attitude, globalization, multiracial identity of Sri Lanka, the development of tourism and the minimum quantity of Sinhala equivalents for several English lexical items as the reasons for the utilization of code-mixing on name boards. The study revealed that, there are various social and learning advantages in this language phenomenon and there are mixed responses from the community in this regard.