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The Influence of English Language in the Production of Mixed Compounds in Colloquial Sinhala

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Abstract

Language contact as an inevitable and global phenomenon has produced rich literature in sociolinguistic studies after the 1950s. Among various types of language contacts, lexical influence is prominent irrespective of the language. The main objective of this study is to find out and explore English-influenced compounds in the colloquial Sinhala language. Sinhala is the majority language in Sri Lanka and is spoken by almost 20 million people. Apart from secondary data sources and previous literature employed in this research, the primary data was collected from the chunk recordings from public media television programmes, particularly the feature programmes that use colloquial spoken language and from language classrooms of a state-run university in Sri Lanka. Qualitative content analysis was the data analytical technique, thus, the research approach has become qualitative. The study has established six major types of compound formation processes resulting from the direct influence of the English language. Their realisations in colloquial Sinhala in different contexts are presented with contextual-based examples. This study concludes that the emergence of mixed compounds in colloquial Sinhala has been excessively boosted by the direct influence of the English language and that this has

produced a considerable structural change in the colloquial Sinhala language with special reference to mixed lexical formation.

Keywords: *Colloquial Sinhala, Contact Linguistics, English Influence, Mixed Compounds, Sociolinguistics*

Introduction

As a common lexical category, compounds have received special attention from linguists. It is interesting to have compounds been introduced as “protolinguistic fossils” considering their earliest development and influence on the development of other linguistic processes (Jackendoff, 2002). Protolinguistic fossils indicate that the modern language was preceded by a protolanguage. Thus, the contemporary use of the language contains protolanguage characteristics. Moreover, the linguistic significance of compounds grows due to their ability to create new phrases by combining words productively strengthening the vocabulary. “One of the most commonly used word forms today, which is considered to be holistic and concise, as well as productive is compound words” (Rahmanovich, Yusufovich, Almasovna, Dilshodqizi, & Ibragimovich, 2020: 925). Most of such derived words from English are naturalised now in the Sinhala language (Gunasekara, 2008: 379). Ice cream, cake, pudding, and sink are a few to name out of hundreds of naturalised words.

/sɪma:sə/ is the Sinhala term used for this grammatical category. *Sidat Sangarava* identifies five kinds of compounds in the Sinhalese language. When sounds that have different meanings, link together to generate a single meaning, it is a compound (Jayathilaka, 2009: 215; Pannasara, 2011: 114). However, scholars have doubted the correctness of this *Sidat Sangara* definition as this grammatical process does not generate a single meaning from sounds with different meanings. According to Karunathilaka (2011: 246), “*/sɪma:sə/* means putting together/presenting succinctly or putting several words as a single construction”. According to Gunasekara (1891: 323), “word that is made up of two or more parts, each of which is a true word by itself is called compound”. There is a slight difference between the English definition of compounds and the Sinhala definition of *sama:sə*, but they share almost common characteristics.

The influence of the English language on Sinhalese has been identified in different ways. This influence on Sinhalese compounding has led to huge changes in the traditional Sinhalese compounds and the study of this influence and its consequences as new compounds are the major focuses of this study.

Literature Review

This section includes an introduction to basic concepts and related theories followed by a survey of existing literature on the topic.

Theoretical Literature

The area under discussion in this research covers contact linguistics as a sub-discipline. Weinreich's definition of the goal of contact linguistics is to identify "typical forms of interference from the socio-linguistic description of a bilingual community" (1953: 86). This definition supports encapsulating this study under the same discipline as this also focuses on the analysis of compounds formulated by the interference of the English language in the Sri Lankan bilingual community. Here interference is employed as a cover term for all kinds of contact-induced change (Thomason and Kaufman, 1988). This contact with the source language of an agent language could be in different forms as code-switching, code-mixing and language borrowing as have been introduced by scholars. However, the depth of explanations for bilingualism, multilingualism, language borrowing, etc., are prominently owned by Weinreich (1962) and Haugen (1953) despite many years of their pioneering work. On the other hand, this contact-induced change could result in different lexical, grammatical, semantic, and syntactic changes in the native language. Contact-induced change can be either system-altering or system-preserving (Aikhenvald, 2006). According to Winford (2003), language contact situations can result in language maintenance, language shift, and language creation.

Compounding is vital to discussion on language contact. Compounding in language contact is the creation of complex elements out of the contact of a new language with the already existing ones (Joseph, 2020). The basic conundrum here is that we might expect compounds to show assimilation/adaptation to the borrowing language's structure, but in fact, in many instances, we found just the opposite. That is, often, compounding involving both foreign elements and foreign patterns provides a ready device that speakers incorporate into their usage even if at the expense of having to deal with certain anomalies, these elements might cause within their native language.

Theory of Lexical Diffusion by Sarah Thomason, a renowned linguist known for her work in language contact and historical linguistics could be employed to analyse the formation of contact-induced compounds in Sinhala language. The Theory of Lexical Diffusion focuses on how words and lexical items from one language are borrowed and diffused into another language over time. This theory posits that borrowing does not happen all at once but rather through a gradual process of diffusion, where

borrowed words may undergo phonological, morphological, and semantic changes as they integrate into the borrowing language. Thomason's theory provides valuable insights into the dynamics of language contact and how new words and compounds evolve within a linguistic community. The following aspects of her theory could be assimilated into the current study.

Lexical Diffusion in Contact-Induced Neologisms: Thomason's theory suggests that contact-induced neologisms are not static; they undergo a process of diffusion. When analysing such neologisms, it's crucial to examine their historical development and how they spread within the borrowing community. This may involve tracing the phonological and morphological changes that occurred as the new terms diffused.

Morphological and Semantic Changes in Hybrid Compounds: In the context of hybrid compounds, Thomason's theory can be applied to understand how elements from different languages gradually fuse together. It explores how the morphology of compounds may adapt to fit the phonological and morphological constraints of the borrowing language. Additionally, it can shed light on how the semantics of these compounds may shift as they become more integrated into the linguistic system of the borrowing language.

Variability and Loanword Integration: Thomason's theory acknowledges that not all borrowed words and compounds follow the same path of diffusion. Some may remain relatively stable, while others may undergo significant changes. Analysing the variability in the integration of loanwords and compounds can provide insights into the linguistic and sociolinguistic factors that influence the borrowing process.

Sociolinguistic Considerations: Thomason's theory also considers the social aspects of borrowing and diffusion. It explores questions related to who initiates borrowing, which social groups are more likely to adopt loanwords and neologisms, and how language contact affects linguistic identity. These sociolinguistic aspects can be crucial when analysing contact-induced neologisms and hybrid compounds within specific communities.

Among these concepts, she identifies two types of responses to contact from the native languages as deliberate non-changes and deliberate structural changes depending on the manner in which the interference occurs.

In summary, Sarah Thomason's Theory of Lexical Diffusion offers a valuable framework for analysing contact-induced neologisms and hybrid compounds in the context of language contact. It emphasises the gradual and dynamic nature of

borrowing and diffusion, providing insights into how linguistic elements from different languages interact and evolve within a contact situation (Thomason, 1999).

Empirical Studies

Joseph conducts how compounds are formed through contact, referring to a few cases where languages create compounds through contact, It is obvious that the borrowed element shows its own way, exhibiting properties that outstrip what was possible in the donor language (Joseph, 2020). They develop more productivity than the donor language. Contact-induced interference affects the grammaticality of the languages. Analysing the constraints encountered in contact-induced grammaticalisation, (Heine & Kuteva, 2008) find that choices that speakers make when looking in the replica language for translational equivalents of use patterns and categories that they find in the model language are considered as one constraint. Further, constraints relate to directionality in contact-induced grammatical change. Grammatical change due to language contact even though does not direct the focus of the current study, lexical changes also can lead to grammatical change. Kosmata and Schlücker in their study deal with the question of whether the word-formation pattern of proper name compounding in German and Dutch is an instance of grammatical borrowing from English, as is often claimed in the literature. Conducting a structural analysis of the pattern in the three languages based on original and translation corpus data, they find that the pattern, at first glance, seems to be identical in all three languages. Although this does not necessarily preclude transfer from English, they conclude that there is no evidence in favour of the said influence of English on German and Dutch (Kosmata & Schlücker, 2022). Similar studies to the current context where the influence of English on Sinhala have been studied by other researchers as well. Premawardhena discussing structural changes that occurred in modern Sinhala by English loan words, confirms that literary Sinhala has been somewhat slow in adopting English loan words while spoken Sinhala has made less or no restrictions in this regard. Thus she concludes that English loan words appear more in spoken Sinhala than in written Sinhala. The field of advertising seems to break the barriers and loan words appear even in the written variety (Premawardhena, 2003). Another study of similar context yet focusing on colloquial Sinhala only has been conducted by Gamage and Dilani. In their study, they discuss the causes of the influence of English on colloquial Sinhala and categorise them as political, social, religious and commercial which can be generalised as top-down and bottom-up. However, according to them, this influence is complimentary and multi-dimensional while bottom-up influence is prominent (Gamage & Dilani, 2022). In a similar manner, the current study specifically focuses on the mixed compounds in colloquial Sinhala.

As the above survey of literature makes it clear, Sri Lankan researchers have done a great deal of research on the field of contact linguistics. Even though there is research related to the contact between English and Sinhala and their influence, a dearth could be found in relation to this specific field of study. This is the anomaly that was identified and is to be addressed in the current study.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of the current study are;

- To investigate the nature of English influence on original Sinhalese compounds [1].
- To examine how new compounds are formed in Sinhala due to the influence of English.
- To understand the applications of these compounds in colloquial Sinhala.

Research Methodology

The study belongs to the qualitative research of the interpretive paradigm. The data was collected from a natural/uncontrolled environment through observations. For observations, the selected specific sample was the university classrooms at a state university in Sri Lanka. This can be considered as a longitudinal section as the same classroom was observed several times in regular intervals. The informants were informed that they are observed for their language use but did not exactly explain the research-specific goal to observe their natural language behaviour. The researcher is aware that this observation is not completely natural as the classroom itself is kind of a conditioned environment. Therefore, we consider this as a limitation of the data collection process. In addition to the above, the other main method of primary data collection was chunk recordings from public media, particularly the feature programmes that use colloquial spoken language. Both public and private media programmes were recorded and transcribed to see the mixed discourse. In addition, the study used secondary data as well. The small lexical copra included in analyses as well as appendices in the studies conducted by Dissanayaka (2016/2005), Gunasekara (2008/1891) and Jayasekara (2008) were used as secondary data sources. The data analysis was also done qualitatively through content analysis.

Result and Discussion

Mixed compounds have occurred in abundance in the Sinhala language due to the influence of the English language apart from the original Sinhala compounds. This is a very considerable lexical influence on the Sinhala language resulting in contact of

Sinhala with the English language. As the lexical diffusion theory also explains, these contact-induced compounds have been gradually integrated into the Sinhala language in different ways. These newly formulated compounds can be categorised into different types. They are as follows[2]:

1. English-Sinhala mixed compounds
2. Sinhala -English mixed compounds
3. English-English compounds
4. Sinhala-Sinhala compounds (as English translations)
5. Words came into Sinhala as compounds but not as single words.
6. English single words have become compounds after contacting with Sinhala (Jayaseka, 2008: 125).

All these types of changes or additions in the Sinhala language due to the influence of English are deliberate structural changes as termed by Thomason (1999). The English items have been gradually assimilated into English and have naturalised in the colloquial Sinhala. Let us examine how they have happened in different processes.

English-Sinhala Mixed Compounds

Out of two words in these compounds, the first word is English and the second one is Sinhala. It is very significant to note that almost all these compounds are used only in the colloquial usage of the Sinhala language. Some of these compounds have been formed by Sinhalese speakers in order to explain the English meaning of the first word by using the Sinhala word. This also may be due to a lack of English knowledge to understand what exactly the particular English word means. The Sinhalese speakers use these types of compounds but this is very frequent among the Sinhala monolinguals who have not systematically studied the English language. Almost all the informants under the observation of this study were Sinhala monolinguals with a very poor knowledge of English, thus it convinced us to come into this general observation that must further be verified with other different types of samples in future studies.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound	English Word	Sinhala Compound
bag	/bæg mʌllə/	bat	/bæt piθθə/
baton	/bætən pʊllə/	board	/bɔ:d lællə/
blade	/bled θʌləjə/	cap	/kæp θɒppɪjə/
card	/ka:d pʌθə/	container	/kəntənər pettɪjə/

light /lɔɪt eɪljə/ rail /rel pi:lə/
 tape /teɪp pətɪlə/

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/mɔmə pole geniʒənə bæ:g-malləirila:/ (The bag which I take to the fair is torn.)

/vja:tə bæɪt pɪθθək genɔlla: ðennɔm/ (I will bring you a bat.)

/pɔlls ka:rəʒə bæɪtən pɔllen gæhɔvɔ/ (The policeman hit with the baton.)

/bɔ:d kəllə kədɪlɔ/ (The board has broken.)

/vja: langə bled θɔləʒək θɪʒenəwɔðʔ/ (Have you got a blade?)

/kæp θvppɪʒə da:gɔnnə,væssə enəvɔ/ (Wear the cap, it's going to rain.)

/ɔpe samurði ka:d pɔθə[ʒ] nəθɪvela:/ (Our Samurdi card is misplaced.)

/me ka:mərə lɔɪt eɪljə mɔðɪ/ (This room does not have enough light.)

/rel pi:lə udə mɔnussəjek nɪðɪ/ (A man is sleeping on the rail.)

/teɪp pətɪʒə kədɪlɔ/ (The tape is broken.)

One of the ways of forming compounds in Sinhala is using a noun as an adjective before another noun, and this has been followed with English words in colloquial Sinhala. In these compounds, an English noun has been used as an adjective before a Sinhala noun and ultimately it has become an English and Sinhala mixed compound in colloquial Sinhala usage.

Examples:

English Word	Mixed Compound in Sinhala	English Word	Mixed Compound in Sinhala
acid	<i>/æslɪd bɔ:θəʒəʒ/</i>	battery	<i>/bætəri kəllə/</i>
bus	<i>/bɔs rɔθəʒə/[4]</i>	coupon	<i>/ku:pən pɔθə/</i>
cheque	<i>/tʃek pɔθə/[5]</i>	cinema	<i>/sɪnəma:ʃə:lə:wə/</i>
eraser	<i>/ɪresər kəllə/</i>	fountain	<i>/fɔuntən pænə/[6]</i>

Ice	/ʌis væssə/	jubilee	/dʒubIII kʌnɔwə/
police	/pɒlɪs nʌlɑ:wə/	tennis	/tenIs pɪθθə /
vitamin	/vɪtəmin-peθI/[7]		

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/æsid bɔ:θələjə bɪmə perəIIIa:/ (The acid bottle has fallen down on the floor.)

/vɪrəb:sɔwe bætəri kəllə bæhælə/ (The battery of the watch has gone dead.)

/bʌs rʌθəjə kʌnəpɪtə perəIIIa:/ (The bus is turned into upside down.)

/mʌge ku:pən pʌθə næθɪwela:/ (My coupon has been misplaced.)

/Ire:sər kə:llə kəhe:ðə θɪbbe?/ (Where was the eraser kept?)

/mʌge: pʌuntən pænə ʌvθ ekək/ (My fountain pen is a new one.)

/me gæs va:jɔvə vɪsʌI/ (This gas is toxic.)

/ʌpi hɔstəl gɑ:sθɔ gewwe næ:/ (We didn't pay the hostel fee.)

/ʌis væssək mʌmə dækka/ (I saw an ice rain.)

/ʌpi dæj dʒubIII kʌnɔvə pʌhɔ unɑ: vɪθərəI/ (We just passed the Jubilee post.)

/ʌpɪtə pɒlɪs-nʌlɑ:və əhɔn næ:/ (We didn't hear the police whistle.)

/hʌmbʌnθɔtətə re:l pɑ:rə hʌð ənəvʌ/ (The rail-way is constructed to Hambantota.)

/tenIs pɪθθə kəheðə?/ (Where is the tennis racket?)

/dɒktə mʌtə vɪtəmin peθɪ ðɔnnʌ/ (The doctor gave me vitamin tablets.)

Another type of English-Sinhala mixed compound consists of two words with the latter part Sinhala and the initial part English. The reason for the usage of these compounds may be the ease of usage or the difficulty of translating the whole compound. The English words of these compounds have become adjectives for Sinhalese words.

Examples:

English Compound	Sinhala Compound	English Compound	Sinhala Compound
asbestos-sheet	<i>/æsbæstɔ:s-θlɦɦdɔwə/</i>	canvas-linen	<i>/kænvəs-reði/kænnəs-reði⁵/</i>
coral-island	<i>/kɔrəl-ðu:pəθə/</i>	demy-paper	<i>/dɪmɑi-kədəðɑ:sɪ/</i>
drawing-book	<i>/drɔ:wɪŋ-pvθə/</i>	Fahrenheit-degree	<i>/pæɪənhaid⁹-uɪ[ə]kə/</i>
log-book	<i>/lɔg-pvθə/</i>	pass-book	<i>/pɑ:s-pvθə/</i>
note-book	<i>/nɔ:t-pvθə/</i>	supreme-court	<i>/sʊprɪh-ʊsɑ:wɪʃə/¹⁰</i>

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/æsbæstɔ:s-θlɦɦdɔwə hɔləŋgətə bɪmə vətɔnɦ/ (The asbestos sheet fell down due to the wind.)

/kænvəs-reði mɪlə ɦdɔɪ/ (Canvas linen is less expensive.)

/ɦpɪ gɪʃə sɦɪje kɔrəl-ðu:pəθə bɦɦɦnnə gɪʃɑ:/ (We went to see the coral-island last week.)

/pvθɑ:tə dɪmɑi-kədəðɑ:sɪ ðekɦk gennə/ (Bring two demy-papers for my son.)

/drɔ:wɪŋ-pvθə kɔhɛðə?/ (Where is the drawing book?)

Some English words which do not appear as compounds in English have become compounds in Sinhala usage. These are highly technical terms and the most probably used by people who are aware of these technical terms and whose career is related to a specific field. These mixed compounds have been created by the Sinhalese speakers and have been assimilated into both formal and colloquial usages. As the primary data informants are Sinhala monolinguals, it can be guessed that the original words are not very familiar to these Sinhala speakers as they are technical terms and this unfamiliarity may be the reason for emerging the new compounds in this type.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound
Acidity	<i>/æsɪd-gɦθɦɪʃə/</i>
Communism	<i>/kɔmɦʃɦnɦs-wɑ:ðəʃə/</i>
Liberalism	<i>/ɦɦbərəɦl-wɑ:ðəʃə/</i>

Marxism /ma:ks- wa:ðəjə/

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/æsid-gəθijə tʃek kərəla bəllənnə/ (Check the acidity.)

/kəmiʝənɪs-wa:ðəjə ðənəwa:ðəjən idvə nə:/ (Communism has no room in capitalism.)

/həmə rətəmə nəvəlləbərəl wa:ðəjətə əhəwələ:/ (All countries have been captured by neo-liberalism.)

/ma:ks- wa:ðəjə θa:mə vələŋgəi/ (Marxism is still valid.)

In order to form a personal noun using a Sinhala inanimate material noun, the usual way is to add the word /ka:rəjə/ to the inanimate material nouns in traditional Sinhala. /wədɪkka:rəjə/, /səpəθəθə ka:rəjə/ and /kəllɪsəmə ka:rəjə/ are a few examples. The same formation has been applied to English words as well through 'analogy' in order to form compounds in the English-Sinhala mixed discourse. Analogy is concerned with similarities between observable properties and the relation between a material property and a function of that property (Kumar, 2019, p. 824).

Examples:

/pəllɪs- ka:rəjə/ (policeman)

/prɪnsɪpəl- ka:rəjə/ (principal)

/sɜ:r- ka:rəjə/ (sir/teacher)

/mədʒɪk- ka:rəjə/ (magician)

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/pəllɪs- ka:rəjə əpɪvə dækələ./ (The policeman saw us.)

/prɪnsɪpəl- ka:rəjə ənəvə./ (The principal is coming.)

/sɜ:r- ka:rəjə tə mə:və pennə bæ./ (The teacher hates me.)

/kəluðə mədʒɪk- ka:rəjə?/ (Who is the magician?)

In the above examples /prɪnsɪpəl- ka:rəjə/ (principal) and /sɜ:r- ka:rəjə/ (sir/teacher) connote derogation. Semantically these mixed compounds are more derogatory in colloquial Sinhala.

Also, English-Sinhala mixed compound nouns are formed by adding /ka:rəjə/ to country names in order to introduce the citizens belonging to that particular country.

Examples:

/æmərIkən- ka:rəjə/

/iŋgri:sI- ka:rəjə/

/dʒəməŋ- ka:rəjə/

/dʒʌpʌn- ka:rəjə/[11]

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/æmərIkən-ka:rəjə[12]ʌpe ɾətə ʌllənəvə/ (Americans invade our country.)

/mɪnɪhə hʊðə iŋgri:sI-ka:rəjə/ (He knows English well/ He is a good Englishman.)

/dʒə:məŋ-ka:rəjə i:je glja:/ (The German person went yesterday.)

When using compounds such as */iŋgri:sI- ka:rəjə/*, it does not denote only the citizens of that country but those who can speak English and English teachers too are represented by this compound in Sinhala usage.

The traditional way of forming material nouns through adjectives in Sinhala is adding /ekə/ to qualitative nouns are demonstrated below. Some proper nouns also have followed the same method to form compounds. In traditional Sinhala, /sʊðʊ ekə/, /mʌhʌθə ekə/, /kʌlʊ ekə/ and /me:ekə (me:kə)/, /vʲə ekə/(ɔ:kə) are some examples. As this is an easy way to decline nouns, the same has been analogised to English words in Sinhala. This is a very popular declension among all the Sinhala speakers irrespective of educational differences.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound
bus	<i>/bʌs ekə/</i>
bag	<i>/bæg ekə/</i>
belt	<i>/belt ekə/</i>

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/mɔtə bɔs ekə ɔllə ɡɔnnə bæɾɪʊnə:/ (I was unable to catch the bus.)

/vja:ge bæɡ ekə lɔssənɔl/ (Your bag is beautiful.)

/bɛlt ekə ða:ɡannə/ (Fasten the belt.)

These kinds of compounds are also formed with words that contain several units in the same expression. The lexical items which are used in colloquial Sinhala with the helping word */ekə/* are the most common usage among Sinhalese speakers. As has already been mentioned, this is an analogy that has been made by the speech community of the Sinhala language.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound
table-cloth	<i>/te:bəl-klɔ:θ ekə/</i>
union-place	<i>/jɔnɪjən-pleis ekə/</i>
paper-plate	<i>/pɛpə-pleit ekə/</i>
biscuit-packet	<i>/biskət-pækət ekə/</i>
armor-street	<i>/a:mər-stri:t ekə/</i>
Ice-cream-cup	<i>/ɔIskri:m-kɔp ekə/</i>

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/te:bəl klɔ:θ ekə ða:nnə/ (Put the table-cloth.)

/vja: jɔnɪjən ples ekə ðɔnnəvəðə/ (Do you know the Union place?)

/biskət pækət ekə kɔɔnnə/ (Open the biscuit-packet.)

/a:mər stri:t ekə lɔɡə bɔ:mbəjɔk pɔpɔrəl/ (A bomb has exploded near the Armor-street.)

/ɔIskri:m kɔp ekə bɪmə vɛtɔnɔ/ (The ice-cream-cup fell down.)

There are some compounds in Sinhala that have been formed by adding a word explaining the status of a profession after the name of that certain profession[13].

Following the same pattern, the words taken from English also have been added to Sinhalese words to show the status and ultimately they have become English-Sinhala mixed compounds in colloquial Sinhala.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound
Driver	<i>/drʌIvə[14] mʌhʌθθəjʌ/</i>
Nurse	<i>/nɜ:s nɔ:nʌ/</i>
Police	<i>/pʊlɪs rɑ:ləhɑ:mI/</i>

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/drʌIvə mʌhʌθθəjʌ be:rʊnʌ/ (The driver escaped.)

/nɜ:s nɔ:nʌ kə: gʌhʌnəvʌ/ (The nurse shouts.)

Sinhala-English Mixed Compounds

The compounds in the colloquial Sinhala language contain several kinds as has already been pointed out, and this is another category that shows mixed discourse. The initial word is Sinhala, whereas the second word is English in these compounds. Almost all these compounds portray a special characteristic; the initial words of these compounds are Sinhalese adjectives and the second words are English nouns. Even though the function of these initial words in the mixed discourse is an adjective, sometimes they are used as plural nouns in the Sinhala language.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound
Omelette	<i>/bɪθθərə vmlət/</i>
Cutlet	<i>/ma:lʊ kʌtlət/</i>
Jam	<i>/ʌnna:sɪ dʒæm/</i>
Sauce	<i>/θʌkka:lɪ sɔ:s/</i>
Vase	<i>/mʌl wɑ:s/</i>

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/matə bIθθəɾə vmlət ekək ða:nnə/ (Make an egg omelet for me.)

/ʌpI ma:lu kʌtlət haðəmu/ (Let's prepare fish cutlet today.)

/ʌnna:sI dʒæm ekə rʌsʌj/ (Pineapple jam is delicious.)

English-English Compounds

Other compounds in modern Sinhala have directly been borrowed from English as they are, and those compounds are of several kinds. Apart from one category of compounds, all the others are originally compounds in the English language.

Compounds Formed with Two English Nouns

Examples:

Wall-paper Call-centre

Role-plug Clock-tower

Bath-room Bus-stand

Hand-book Bus-halt

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/ɔjʌ ða:l θIjenə wɔ:l pepə ekə hʌrI næ/ (The wallpaper that you have applied is not good.)

/mʌmə kɔ:l sentə ekəkə wədə kəla:/ (I worked in a call centre.)

/rɔ:l plʌg ekək ða:l ɔ:kə ellannə/ (Put a role-plug and hang it.)

/kɒk tʌwə ekə ga:wɪŋ wʌmətə hærennə/ (Turn left from the clock tower.)

Compounds formed with an Adjective and Noun

Short-leave Half-day

Black-money White board

High-way

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/mAməʃɔ:t li:w ða:la: a:wA/ (I came having a short leave.)

/ha:f de vja: enəwA ðə?/ (Are you coming on a half day?)

/mInIhA lAgə blæk mAnIθIjenəwA/ (He has illegally earned money.)

Compounds formed with a present participle and a noun

Driving-seat[15] Dining-room

Starting[16]-salary Washing-machine

Parking-facility[17] Boarding-house

Waiting-room

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/mAmə hItIje drAIwIn-si:t ekə lAgə/ (I was near the driving seat.)

/dAIInIn-ru:m eke pa:tə wenəs kərəmʊ/ (Let's change the colour of the dining room.)

/Ista:tIn sələI ekə rʊpIjAl ðəhA ða:hAI/ (The starting salary is Rs. 10,000.)

/ʌpitə wʊʃIn-mæʃIn ekəkɔ:n næ/ (We don't need a washing-machine.)

Compounds Formed with an English Noun and a Gerund

The first words of these compounds are used as adjectives for the gerund.

Examples:

Hand-writing Home-coming

Alms-giving Fast-driving

Prize-giving

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/vja:ge hænd-rAIIn lAssənAI/ (Your hand-writing is beautiful.)

/hɔ:m-kAMIn kAvə ðəðə?/ (When is the homecoming?)

/a:ms-glVIn ekətə vja: enəwAðə/ (Are you coming for the alms-giving?)

Compounds formed with a Past Participle and a Noun

fried[18]-rice dried[19]-fish
retired-principal printed-materials
sregistered-owner

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/ʌpI rætə fraid rʌIs kʌmʊ / (Let's have fried-rice for dinner.)

/me drʌI flf ki:jə ðə/ (How much is this dried-fish?)

/eja: ritʌjɜ:d prɪnsɪpəl kenek/ (He is a retired-principal.)

English-English Compounds Used in Sinhala

A vast difference in cultural backgrounds could be observable between English and Sinhala cultures which makes some concepts incomprehensible to each other. Particularly, some cultural events cannot be seen in English culture but during the colonial period, they had to talk about them in English. As there have not been these concepts in the English culture, they had to introduce new terms for them. Also, some places had to be named in English during that period. Through these efforts, some indigenous compounds were formed, and they are unique to Sri Lanka. These compounds also can be introduced as a part of Sri Lankan English colloquy. Now they have become almost Sinhala words after being used for years by Sinhalese. This is how foreign lexeme gradually diffuse to native languages as Thomason points out (Thomason, 1999).

Examples:

Lake-house	Tower-hall
tea-maker	wood-apple
Elephant[20]-pass	Cinnamon-gardens
Kandy-road	paddy-board

It is interesting to note that most of the English words which are commonly used in Sinhala have been given Sinhala terms by Sinhalese scholars and lexicographers, but some of the above examples do not have such loan translations in Sinhala. Therefore, even in formal usage apart from colloquialism, the same English words are used. *Lake-house* is one such example that does not have a separate Sinhala term in formal usage. Hence, this compound is not only used in colloquial Sinhala but also in written formal Sinhala.

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/le:k hʌʊs sʌbɑ:pəθIʌs kərə la/ (The chairman of Lake-house has been sacked.)

/mʌmə drɑ:mʌ ekək bəlʌnnə tʌvə hɔ:l jʌnəvʌ/ (I am going to tower-hall to watch a drama.)

/ti:mekə vekənsI ekək θIjənəvʌ/ (A vacancy is available for the post of tea-maker.)

Sinhala-Sinhala Compounds as Direct English Translations

These compounds are also new formations in Sinhala that do not appear as English compounds but as direct translations from English usage. Most of these Sinhalese terms have been introduced by Sinhalese scholars to enrich Sinhala vocabulary[21]. The most significant fact is, that even though there are Sinhalese terms, the original English compound is used in most circumstances in modern colloquial Sinhala. It seems that using these Sinhalese-translated compounds is quite fictitious and unfamiliar for most Sinhalese in their colloquial usage, but scholars use them in formal writing. For instance, *good morning* has been translated into Sinhala as /sɒbə ʊðesənək/, even though people who meet in the morning do not often greet by saying /sɒbə ʊðesənək/ in Sinhalese language. The original English compound *good morning is commonly used* to greet[22]. This does not reflect a social class representation or educated and uneducated differences. What is important here is that Sinhala as a living language has been enriched by expanding its vocabulary at least into dictionaries through this lexical influence. The original English compounds in this category are popular in colloquial language whereas, English influenced Sinhala compounds are used in literary language. In a way, this has become a positive influence on the Sinhala language apart from popular criticism. Scholars who studied the contact phenomenon of languages also have given productive thoughts while formulating theories on this matter. The classic examples are '*The Languages in Contact*' by Uriel Weinreich and the studies by Einar Haugen.

There are no unadulterated nations, cultures or languages in the world today. Borrowings have become very useful in strengthening the language, enriching its vocabulary and acquiring ideas without difficulty for people (Thilakasena,1997). Obviously, these newly occurred compounds due to English influence are used even in formal usage, but they have not become a significant fact. This has become a trend in colloquial Sinhala usage.

Examples:

English Compound	Sinhala Translation
electric-torch	/wɪðʊlɪ pʌnðəmə/
fountain-pen	/ʊɪpʌθ pænə/
table-spoon	/mesə hændə/
post[23]-card	/θæpæl pəθə/
volley-ball	/ʌθ pʌnðʊ/
money-order	/mʌðl ænəʊmə/
type-writer	/jʌθʊɪɪjənəjə/
good-morning	/sʊbə ʊðesənʌk/
Foot[24]-board	/pa: pʊwəɾʊvə/ (Jayasekara, 2008,p.138)

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

As it is very rare to see that these Sinhala translations are used in colloquial Sinhala, examples in practice were not found in the research but some of the original English compounds are used in colloquial Sinhala mixed discourse. Therefore, utterances are given below with those original English compounds from colloquial Sinhala. Also, it further strengthens the influence of English on the colloquial Sinhala. Even though there are newly introduced Sinhalese terms, they are not as familiar as the original English terms.

/pɔ:s ka:d tɪkə ʌðemə jʌvʌnnə ɔ:nə/ (Post-cards ought to be sent today itself.)

/mʌmə a:səmə kri:da:wə wɒlɪ bɔ:l/ (My favourite sport is volley-ball.)

/ðæŋ tʌɪp rʌltə pɑ:wɪftʃɪ kəɾʌnnə næ/ (Type-writers are not used nowadays.)

English Words Using as Compounds in Sinhala

The English words of this category are not used as single words in Sinhala but as a part of the compound they are used. This does not mean that they are not used at all as single words in Sinhala, but popularly they have come into practice as compounds. Some of them also have well-established Sinhalese usage with their continuous application in colloquial usage [25].

Example:

English Word	Sinhala Compound	English Word	Sinhala Compound
air	air-mail	ash	ash-tray
salt	table-salt	fish	gold-fish
wife	mid-wife	tooth	tooth-brush

birth	birth-day	tea	tea-party, tea-maker
fox	fox-tail	long	long-jump
short	short-hand	horse	horse-power
book	book-keeping	head	head-master
go	go-cart	spare	spare-parts
mail	mail-bag[26]		

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

Only a few utterances are given below with the above compounds to understand how these compounds are used in colloquial Sinhala.

/eja: me:l ða:nnə, Ikmənətə ei/ (Send by air-mail, you will receive soon.)

/gold flf ləssənə ma:luwek/ (Gold-fish is a beautiful fish.)

/signəl tu:θ brʌf θIjənəwə ðə/ (Is signal tooth brush available?)

/mʌmə bə:θ ðe: pɑ:tIjəkətə jʌnəvə/ (I am going for a birthday party.)

/ mʌmə lə:ŋ dʒʌmp wəlln ekə ʌʌn θIjənəvə/ (I have won the first place in the long jump.)

/hə:s pʌwə ðəhʌjə me:kətə mʌðI/ (Ten horsepower is not sufficient for this job.)

Single English Words Functioning as Compounds in Sinhala

This is also a mixed compound type formed through single English words. These words may not be compounds in English, but they have become compounds after coming into Sinhala. The first word is English and the second word is to demonstrate the English word in the Sinhala context. The initial English word also is not in the original nature in the Sinhala usage. They have been *Sinhalised*[27] in applied Sinhala. Probably, these compounds may be used in both colloquial and formal written Sinhala.

Examples:

English Word	Sinhala Compound	English Word	Sinhala Compound
<u>asbestos</u>	<u>/æsbætɔ:s θʌhʌdʊ/</u>	bolt	<u>/bɔ:lt ænə/</u>
<u>braille</u>	<u>/brɛl ʌkʊʊ/</u>	cabin	<u>/kæbɪn kɑ:mərəjə/</u>
<u>commission</u>	<u>/kɒmɪʃən sɑ:bɑ:və/</u>	foolscap	<u>/fʊlskæp kʌdʌðɑ:sɪ/</u>
<u>helmet</u>	<u>/hɛlmət θʊppɪjə/</u>	Ilmenite	<u>/ɪlmənʌɪt væɪl/</u>
<u>invoice</u>	<u>/ɪnvɔɪs pʌθrəjə/</u>	ribbon	<u>/rɪbən pʌtɪjə/</u>

Realisations in Colloquial Sinhala Utterances

/wʌhʌletə æsbætɔ:s θʌhʌdʊ ðɑ:mʊ/ (Let's put asbestos sheets to the roof.)

/matə bɔ:lt ænə pʌhʌk ðennə/ (Give me five bolts.)

/mɪnɪhʌtə hʊðətə brɛ:lʌkʊʊ ɪjʌnnə pʊlʊwʌn/ (He can write braille letters well.)

/kæbɪn kɑ:mərəjə pɪrɪsɪðʊ kʌɪɪnnə/ (Clean the cabin.)

Conclusion

Among many types of lexical influences in Sinhala, due to contact with the English language, this article establishes that the compound formation in colloquial Sinhala language has an inordinate impact from English lexical influence which has now almost become a natural settlement. This effect has led to changes in the traditional lexical formation processes prescribed in traditional Sinhalese grammar (There are five major traditional types of compounds in Sinhala which are different from these new mixed compounds[28].) while creating complicated structural changes in this unique South Asian language in two ways; In a way, it enriches the vocabulary of this language, on the other hand, it has formed many types of strange and traditionally accommodating compounds in the Sinhala language. As these mixed compounds are fundamentally different from traditional Sinhala compounds, they can also be designated as mixed compounds in the Spoken Sinhala language. As the study confirmed the data with several cross sections while validating with secondary data as well, the above compounds can be considered as naturalised lexical items in the colloquial Sinhala language. However, this study further suggests conducting similar kinds of studies with different cross-sectional samples to verify the current findings, specifically in the contexts where mixed discourse is used in purely natural setups.

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Endnotes

[1] This study utilises both media discourse and natural data as data sources.

[2] As the present study recognised the same categories in our data, this guideline has been used to plot new data as well.

[3] /ka:d-pʌθə/ is not frequently used in colloquial Sinhala and it is more towards formal usages.

[4] /bʌs rʌθəjə/ is also not common usage in colloquial Sinhala even though is used in formal Sinhala.

[5] /fɛk pʌθə/ is usually used in formal Sinhala but not in colloquial Sinhala.

[6] /ʌuntən/ is pronounced by most of the colloquial Sinhala speakers as /pʌuntən/.

[7] These words were derived from the book "*Sinhala Vagmalava Kerehi Ingrisi Balapema*" by Anada Jayasekara.

[8] /kænvəs-reði/ has become /kænnəs-reði/ in colloquial Sinhala usage due to euphony among English non-educated speakers.

[9] English /f/ has regularly become /p/ when it is pronounced by most Sinhalese and this example shows the practical application, even though the Sinhalese alphabet contains a letter to represent this English sound. Some Sinhalese speakers can pronounce this original English pronunciation, but the prominent usage is not /f/ but /p/ in colloquial Sinhala.

[10] These words have been derived from the book, *Sinhala Vagmalava Kerehi Ingrisi Balapema* by Anada Jayasekara.

[11] The initial part of all these compounds is not the original English usage. Some of them have been adapted into Sinhalese euphony.

[12] /æmərikən- ka:rəj/ is singular but it has a broad meaning in this Sinhala colloquial sentence to represent all Americans. This is common in other examples too in this category.

[13] /gɔrɒ θɔma:/ is an example from Sinhala compounds.

[14] This word has realised among rural Sinhalese as /dʌIvər/

[15] English *seat* is pronounced in colloquial Sinhala as *sheet* by most of the non-English educated speakers.

[16] *Starting* is pronounced as /ista:tin/ with an initial vowel sound in colloquial Sinhala by non-English educated people as this pronunciation type is new to Sinhala speakers.

[17] *The facility* is sometimes pronounced as /pæsiliti/ by non-English educated Sinhalese speakers (These comments with reference to pronunciation are included here to indicate that there are different lexical realisations based on some sociolinguistic factors though this paper is not about phonological features).

[18] *Fried rice* is sometimes pronounced in colloquial Sinhala as *paid rais*. Phoneme /f/ is generally substituted with the closed voiceless stop /p/ by Sinhala monolingual speakers.

[19] *Dried fish* is used as *dry-fish* in colloquial Sinhala by Sinhala monolinguals.

[20] *Elephant* is pronounced in colloquial Sinhala as *ellpənt* by most speakers, particularly Sinhala monolinguals.

[21] Please refer to the English–Sinhala dictionary by Sucharitha Gamlath (*INGRISI SINHALA MAHA SHABDAKOSHAYA*).

[22] There had not been a greeting system saying /sʊbə ʊðesənək/ in the Sinhala culture. Therefore, this Sinhala translation is an artificial usage among Sinhalese, but using the English greeting ‘*good morning*’ is quite natural. This does not mean that there are no greetings at all in the Sinhala tradition. When traditional Sinhalese meet each other, they inquire about weal and woe in different ways. However, the term ‘*good morning*’ has become Sinhalese by now and it is used by everybody irrespective of educational or social class differences in Sinhala society. Because of the unfamiliarity of such greetings, some people just use ‘*morning*’ when they see others in the morning, without thinking of the meaning and this shows the rigid English cultural influence as this English greeting has become naturalised. We observe the usage of this greeting in the selected sample.

[23] *Post-card* is sometimes pronounced as /po:s ka:d/ in colloquial Sinhala by dropping out ‘t’.

[24] Here also *foot-board* is sometimes pronounced in colloquial Sinhala as /pʊt bɔ:d/ or /pʊd bɔ:d/.

[25] This is what we have introduced as Sinhalese in this study.

[26] Some of these words were derived from the book *Sinhala Vagmalava Kerehi Ingrisi Balapema* by Anada Jayasekara.

[27] Sinhalese means, adopting the words in accordance with Sinhalese’s speech organ potentials to be used easily in the context of Sinhala language usage and this is a newly added term by us into this research work.

[28] See ‘SINHALA BHASHA VYAKARANAYA’ by W. S. Karunathilaka, pp. 246-261.