Cultural and core borrowings reclassified:
A corpus-based study of Sri Lankan English vocabulary

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ABSTRACT

World Englishes/ Varieties of English show variation from British English (BrE) through distinct linguistic processes that highlight their uniqueness. Borrowing is one such process that enhances the vocabulary of a distinct English variety used in a particular country due to the effect of the local languages. Literature on borrowing proposes that they can be classified as cultural and core borrowings. This classification encapsulates the reasons for borrowing words from a different language by its users. The term cultural borrowings denote words that are transferred from another language to fill a lexical gap, while the term core borrowings are words that already occur in the language. This paper, a part of an ongoing PhD study, explores whether this binary classification adequately accounts for the types of borrowings found in Sri Lankan English (SLE) recorded in the Sri Lankan component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-SL). The study first extracted a word list using a corpus analysis software, from which the borrowings were manually selected. This was followed by a Google search for the etymology of the words to ascertain the origin of the borrowings that could help to identify whether they filled a lexical gap or duplicated words that already exist. The data indicated that words were borrowed from Sinhala and Tamil, the two official languages of Sri Lanka, as well as other languages. Based on the analysis, this paper proposes that the binary categorization of core and cultural borrowings should be extended to four categories in order to capture the local and regional borrowings that exist within cultural borrowings, as well as to reflect the complexity of meanings identified within core borrowings.

KEYWORDS: *Borrowings, core borrowings, cultural borrowings, World Englishes, corpus linguistics*

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1 INTRODUCTION

SLE is considered a variety of English that has evolved from BrE as a result of being in close contact with the two official languages in the country, Sinhala, Tamil, and others, for over two hundred years. During this period, many words were borrowed from the languages in contact. This paper examines why words are borrowed from one or more languages, using SLE as a case study. It is based on an on-going PhD study and has used a selected sample of data from the main study. Borrowings are words copied or transferred from a donor language, linguistically integrated into the recipient language, and have gained widespread community acceptance. The study analyzes the phenomenon of borrowing within a framework of core and cultural borrowings (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Haspelmath, 2009). The analysis will be carried out using the written component of ICE-SL, a corpus of naturally occurring data. ICE-SL is a component of the International Research Project, 'International Corpus of English' (ICE), that promotes the study of different World Englishes that have developed across the world. The study will focus on the following research questions.

Research Questions

1. What type of words do people borrow from another language?
2. What are the reasons behind such borrowings?
3. Can the two-way classification of core and cultural borrowing adequately account for the reasons for borrowings?

1.1 Literature Review

Language contact invariably leads to the mixing of the languages that result in code switching, borrowing, language transfer, linguistic convergence, interference, language attrition, language death, pidginization, and creolization (Poplack, 2004). This study will investigate lexical borrowing that has taken place in SLE as a result of being in contact with Sinhala and Tamil. Borrowings are defined as words that have been copied or transferred from a donor language and subsequently integrated into the recipient language phonetically, syntactically, morphologically and adopted by multiple speakers (Poplack, et al. 1988; Poplack, 2004; Myers-Scotton, 2002; Haspelmath, 2009; Manfredi et al., 2015; Matras & Adamou, 2020). Languages were considered self-contained entities and their descriptions were based on this assumption in early analysis of borrowing. This led to terms such as recipient language and matrix language for the main language in use while donor language and embedded language were used to describe the second language from which words were borrowed. (Myers-Scotton, 1992; Haspelmath 2009). However, today there is acceptance that bilingual speakers have more than one linguistic repertoire at their disposal, which they use in appropriate situations as they do not completely switch off the linguistic systems in their mental lexicon (Matras & Adamou 2020).

Lexis is considered a defining feature in models that propose the developmental stages of World Englishes (Kachru, 1992;

Schneider, 2003: Bernaisch, 2015). Borrowing is posited as a lexical feature that becomes evident very early in this process (Schneider, 2003), with the settler community itself making use of the terms for topographical features, vegetation, cultural events and objects that the settlers' language is unable to name.

Examining the need or the reason for borrowing words from other languages has gained much attention although it cannot be readily explained. While early studies considered borrowings as "filling a lexical gap" to denote concepts or objects that are novel to a particular culture, it was later revealed that even existing concepts were expressed through borrowings (Myers Scotton 1992, p. 29). Haspelmath (2009) argues that in the event of widespread bilingualism in a community, it becomes more convenient to use a commonly understood word even though it is borrowed.

1.1.1.1 Borrowing words: cultural borrowings and core borrowings

Borrowings can be categorized according to the way they are formed or reasons why they are used. This study will adopt the binary classification of cultural and core borrowings that are categorized according to a need they fulfill. Cultural borrowings denote concepts that are new to the language or culture, thereby filling a lexical gap. It is also noted that such borrowings enter the language abruptly but will be used again by speakers to indicate the same referent (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Haspelmath, 2009). Myers-Scotton (2002) argues that core borrowings on the other hand are words

that duplicate words that are already in existence in the recipient language. She also claims that core borrowings originate through the same process as code switched items, where it is possible for core borrowings to enter the language abruptly following their utterance by powerful speakers in the community which others then follow.

This use of core borrowings certainly does not fill a lexical gap for a new concept and seems to go beyond a lexical explanation. Haspelmath (2009) offers the possible explanation that when we speak or write we not only express an opinion but also convey "a social identity" (p.48) through the selection of our words. The reason that he posits is that we use core borrowings which are associated with a language of prestige. Thus, speakers use borrowings from a language recognized as prestigious in order to gain social acceptance or approval. Borrowing is also evident when there is widespread bilingualism in the community and the speakers are active bilinguals of two languages. There may also be communities that actively resist borrowing in order to preserve the native language of the community (Adamou and Breu, 2016).

Haspelmath (2009) has identified issues that arise in the term core borrowings. While the term can be mistaken for core vocabulary, it simply refers to borrowings which duplicate a meaning in the recipient language. More confusingly, it refers to words that are new while the actual item may not be new in that culture. In order to overcome this issue, he introduces three new terms when identifying borrowings

in the World Loanword Database (Haspelmeth, 2009): words as insertions reflecting cultural borrowings, replacement, and words of co-existence which reflect core borrowings (Haspelmath, 2009). However, the terms introduced do not adequately address the problem of classifying borrowings that can reveal the reason why words are borrowed.

The current research also faced the challenge of not successfully categorizing its borrowings according to terms provided by Myers Scotton (2002) or Haspelmath (2009).

In SLE, borrowings have been identified from its early stages of development since English was first used as an official language in Sri Lanka (SL). There were concepts, events, and items alien to the BrE lexicon. Studies have identified borrowings in different semantic fields conveying Sri Lankan culture and lifestyle (Gunesekera, 2005; Fernando, 2011; Vuorivirta, 2006; Rajashanthan, 2016). Senaratne (2009) proposes the emergence of a mixed code, dependent mostly on Sinhala structures, being used by urban bilinguals. While this study analyzes the structural properties of code mixing, it also probes the needs and psychological reasoning for the use of the mixed variety. Senaratne (2009) and Gunesekera (2005) see the use of Sinhala borrowings in English as an expression of a national identity and an in-group identity respectively. Fernando (2015) records the use of borrowings to describe cultural events in student writing. Today, SLE is regarded as a language of prestige while Sinhala and Tamil are the official

languages. The mother tongue influences are no longer frowned upon as previously done, but rather accepted as variety-defining features (Fernando, Gunesekera & Parakrama, 2010). However, it needs to be remembered that only certain features fall into this category while others are still considered errors. Today, SLE is posited as being a stabilized variety in Schneider's developmental model where the speakers overtly express their identity through the borrowings used in SLE (Ranaweera, 2007; Bernaisch, 2015).

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed methods approach to analyze borrowings in SLE in corpus data. The study uses corpus-based statistics extracted through wordlist frequencies for its quantitative analysis. Concordance lines, extracted through Key Word in Context (KWIC) feature as well as the Text feature in the corpus analysis software LancsBox, are analyzed qualitatively. The concordance lines of the selected words will be examined to visualize the context of the selected words to support the argument of the study.

The data for this research is based on (ICE-SL), a component of the compilation of texts for researchers to investigate varieties of English. This compilation of texts or corpus is designed according to the guidelines laid down for the ICE project. It comprises two sub corpora representing spoken and written genres. The current study focuses on the written corpus of ICE-SL, which comprises eight different genres representing student writing, letters (including e-mails), academic writing, popular writing,

reportage, instructional writing, persuasive writing, and creative writing.

According to the ICE project guidelines, the sample population consists of Sri Lankans who are 18 years of age and above and have received their education up to at least the secondary level in the medium of English. However, those considered highly representative of SLE are also included in the sample (Bernaisch, Mendis & Mukherjee, 2019).

The data collection for the current study was carried out by using the software LancsBox developed by the Lancaster University. From 200 files in the corpus of 475,547 tokens or words, 35,093 types in the form of a wordlist were extracted and searched manually for borrowings. All non-BrE words except some proper nouns (names of people, places, organizations and publications) were selected based on the researcher's bilingual awareness. An independent rater repeated the process following the same selection criteria for reliability. The KWIC feature that shows the node word (selected word) in the concordance line was used in verifying the use and the meaning of the word in context. As the words presented in the word list are decontextualized single words, the KWIC search provided a valuable mechanism to gain a deeper and qualitative understanding of the selected words (McEnery and Hardie, 2012). KWIC searches were also used to remove code switches, names of publications and organizations from the list.

Data presented here examined the frequency of the selected words in

selecting 10 words above a cut off of three occurrences in four categories of borrowing. In many instances, the most frequent words in each category were selected. The etymology of the word was verified through a Google search.

3 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis, the following categories are proposed to accommodate the complexities that challenged the dual classification of borrowings by Myers-Scotton (2002).

1. **Local-cultural borrowings** which denote concepts and items alien to BrE and found in the SL local languages, Sinhala and Tamil (Table 01).

2. **Regional-cultural borrowings** which denote concepts and items alien to BrE but found in South Asian languages such as Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi (Table 02).

3. **Core borrowings** which denote the exact meaning available in BrE (Table 03).

4. **Core-extension borrowings** which denote words with a more nuanced meaning in Sinhala and Tamil than in the word available in BrE (Table 04).

The first two groups of borrowings refer to the classic definition of "filling a lexical gap" in the literature under the term "cultural borrowing" (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Myers-Scotton, 1992; Haspelmath 2009). Cultural borrowings are used as a convenient linguistic feature available in a language community where

most speakers are bilinguals (Haspelmath, 2009). However, after assigning the label cultural borrowing, this study found that two distinct groups could be identified within it. In one group, the borrowings were directly connected to concepts and items that are a part of the local experience of SL, whereas in the second, words showed their origin according to the word and the concept or object it referred to as originating from languages in the South Asian region.

Ten words from the four categories are selected for discussion. While words with high frequencies are selected initially, words with a cut-off of three occurrences set the selection limit. The frequency of the borrowing and word origin will also be presented. A qualitative analysis of the words will follow this by analyzing their contextual occurrences observed in concordance lines or full texts. The most frequent/significant words from each category will be selected to provide examples of concordance lines due to space restrictions. Concordance lines provide the co-text of the selected words and are not complete sentences.

Local-cultural borrowings will be discussed first.

3.1 Local-cultural Borrowings

Local-cultural borrowings	Absolute Frequency	Word origin[1]
1. Sri Lankan (adjective derived from Sri Lanka)	228	Sanskrit +English suffix
2. Sinhala (the majority language and race in SL)	202	Sanskrit
3. Yala[2] (one of the agricultural seasons)	25	Sinhala (no match)*[3]
4. Lokuhamuduruwo (an informal term of address for the high priest)	12	Sinhala
5. Giraya (arecanut-slicer)	12	Sinhala
6. Grama niladhari (administrative	10	Sinhala (a compou

[1] Word origin was ascertained through Google searches. However, searches for some words did not yield results. The researchers' expertise was used in such cases. These words are indicated as 'no match'.
[2] There are two words with the same English spelling. However, agricultural season is pronounced <yala> while the National Park is pronounced as <Yaala>.
[3] When no match was found from the Google search "no match" is indicated. Researchers' knowledge was used in such cases.

officer at divisional level)		nd)
7. Poya[4] (full moon day)	7	Sinhala
8. Milla (type of local tree)	4	Sinhala
9. Ampattar/ 10. Ampattars (a Tamil caste)	4/1	Tamil SL
10. veddas (native inhabitants of SL)	3	Sinhala

Table 01: Local-cultural Borrowings

The first two local-cultural borrowings have a frequency of over 200 occurrences showing the widespread use of the terms as they refer to the adjective relating to the people of the country and the main language. The word with the third highest frequency, Yala, with 25 occurrences, refers to the agricultural season highlighting its importance. However, Yala has also occurred as the name of one of the main national parks of SL.

The words in this category are mostly from Sinhala, even though the most frequent terms currently relevant to SL originated from Sanskrit. However, the word Tamil was categorized in the next group as it is used in the Asian region too. These borrowings and their accompanying texts reflect Sri Lankan life, both past and present. They refer to the languages used, religions and their practices, agriculture, castes and administration.

A wide spectrum of social activities is depicted in the concordance lines of the word Sri Lankan. Social values, economy, ayurvedic healthcare system, publications, past conflict and peace talks, official languages, education systems that include free education and university education, the depreciating rupee, and migrant workers are the aspects reflected in the concordance lines of this frequent borrowing.

(1) Chetty (1934) lists more than 65 <Sri Lankan> Tamil castes in his book, W2A-018.txt

(2) the free education given by <Sri Lankan> universities. W1A-013.txt

(3) of ceasefire talks in Geneva between the <Lankan> Government and the LTTE is a positive … W2C-006.txt

The word Sinhala occurs with Sinhala-medium schools, Buddhists, Christians depicting the present SL, while Sinhala kings, kingdoms, language policy in 1956 reflect historic events.

(4) the Kandyan Convention (Udarata Givisuma). This ended <Sinhala> Independence after over 2358 years W2B-009.txt

The next section presents the second category of borrowings and their semantic significance.

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[4] Pronounced <pooya>

3.2 Regional-cultural Borrowings

Regional-cultural borrowing	Frequency	Word origin
11. Tamil (language as well as the second largest ethnic group)	328	Tamil
12.Kapha (phlem)	41	Sanskrit
13. Ayurveda (an ancient medicinal practice in the country)	34	Sanskrit
14. Hindu (the main religion of the Tamil people)	20	Sanskrit/ Persian
15. Verandah (partly enclosed corridor, along the outside of a building)	18	Portuguese / Hindi
16. Thera (Buddhist priest)	13	Pali
17. Sari (a dress worn by Asian women)	13	Hindi/ Prakrit
18. guna (qualities according to Ayurveda)	11	Sanskrit
19. sangha (Buddhist clergy)	9	Sanskrit/ Pali
20. Kachcheri (earlier Government Agent's office, now the District secretary's office)	7	Tamil

Table 02: Regional-cultural Borrowings

The word Tamil has the highest number of occurrences in the regional-cultural borrowings, referring to the language and the second largest ethnic group in SL while item 14 is their main religion. The second and third highest frequencies are recorded in words referring to the traditional medicinal practice in SL, Ayurveda, with its roots in India. Eight of the borrowings in this section record more than 10 occurrences.

The word origins of the borrowings in this section are from languages in the region or from the languages of former colonizers. Ayurveda and many other related words are from Sanskrit. Kapha and guna presented here are two instances of the many words that are connected with Ayurveda. Furthermore, most Sanskrit words are followed by a gloss as they are not commonly understood words.

The concordances of the word Tamil reflect the language people speak, publications, dictionaries, newspapers and Tamil literature. Tamil medium schools and Tamil speaking areas occur in the corpus while it is seen as the language of a minority group in SL. A few concordances highlight its affiliations to

India. It also occurs with kings and inscriptions referring to the past.

(4) Shops blared <Indian> Tamil film songs on loudspeakers W1A-016.txt

(5) <Tamil inscriptions> have been discovered in various parts W2A-009.txt

(7) In Sri Lanka <Ayurveda> has been practiced from ancient time. W1A-003.txt

(8) The manda (sluggish) <guna> of <Kapha> has a tendency to inhibit or 'buffer' W2D-017.txt

(9) The present <Kachcheri> building was formerly a Dutch Hospital, W2B-004.txt

These Regional-cultural borrowings and the concordances refer to administration at district level, the ayurvedic system, Buddhist practices, philosophy and dress which are a part of SL culture today. The borrowings and the practices they denote are associated with the Asian region.

The next section presents the core borrowings identified in the corpus and their semantic significance.

3.3 Core Borrowings

Core borrowing	Frequency	Word origin
21. Mawatha (road, lane)	63	Sinhala
22. Amma (mother)	19	Malyalam / Tamil/ Sinhala

23. deha paramanu (body cells)	8	Sanskrit
24. appochchi (father)	7	Sinhala /Tamil
25. thaththi (father)	7	Sinhala
26. seeya <siiya> (grandfather)	4	Sinhala (song title)
27. appa (father)	4	Tamil
28. sapta dhatu (sevenfold structural components in Ayurveda)	3	Sanskrit
29. Bala (type of fish/ body resistance to disease)	3	Sinhala
30. Para <paara> (road)	3	Sinhala

Table 03: Core borrowings

In comparison with the other two groups, the frequencies of the borrowings in this group are lower. Four of the borrowings denote kinship terms with one-to-one meanings in SLE and BrE. Items 3, 8 and 9 once again denote terms from Ayurveda. Item 9 is polysemous. The word with the highest frequency, Mawatha, occurred in addresses and was preceded by names of illustrious persons in the past.

Most of the words are from either Sinhala or Tamil, while the word amma (mother)

is shared by both languages and shows a regional origin.

It is noted that while some words carry a gloss in these borrowed words, others do not, implying reader familiarity. The exact meaning of these words are available in BrE. The kinship terms occur mostly in social letters, novels and short stories indicating their occurrence in semi-formal genres.

(10) 'Will I also be married like that, <Amma>?' Her mother smiles and strokes her hair. W2F-014.txt

(11) 'I called the office. Jegan and your <Appa> should be here soon.' W2F-005.txt

(12) No.75, Sir Baron Jayathillake <Mawatha>, Colombo 01 W2D-003.txt

The next section presents the core-extension borrowings. These words take on an additional meaning to the translated word in BrE and their semantic significance.

3.4 Core-extension Borrowings

Core-extension Borrowings	Frequency	Word origin
31. Maha (Big/main)	18	Sanskrit
32.1 akka/akki (elder sister)	9/8	Sinhala /Tamil
33. Punchi Amma/ ammi/ with name (mother's younger sister)	6	Sinhala
34. Loku thathta/ loku Amma/ Loku akka (Mother's elder brother, Mother's elder sister)	3	Sinhala
35.1 Bappa/ bappi (uncle/mother's younger brother)	2/2	Sinhala (no match)
36.1 nanda/nenda (father's sister/any older female person/ elder sister)	3/1	Sinhala
37.1 mahatma (gentleman)	4	Sinhala
37.2 Sudu Mahathmaya (foreigner)	1	Sinhala
37.3 Arachchi Mahatmayas (A type of village headman)	1	Sinhala
37.4 Ischol Mahatmaya (schoolteacher)	1	Sinhala
38. deva/devas (God/ Gods)	2/1	Sanskrit
39. nangi (younger sister)	3	Sinhala
40.malli (younger brother)	3	Sinhala (no match)

Table 04: Core-extension Borrowings

Similar to core borrowings, the frequencies of core-extension borrowings

are fewer than in the first two categories. Seven of the items in this category refer to kinship terms.

Most words are from Sinhala, while akka is shared by both Sinhala and Tamil. Words used in the Asian region are evident too, such as maha and deva. These borrowings, which reflect views and practices of the country, have a more nuanced meaning than its translated word in BrE. The kinship terms found in Sinhala/Tamil are more diverse and have specific terms that are subsumed under a more general term in BrE.

The words Maha and mahatmaya are polysemous in the compounds they form. The translated meaning refers to only one of the different meanings they denote which may have prompted the adoption of the borrowing.

(13) and first a workshop is held for <Maha Sangha>. (honorary title for priests) W2C-015.txt

(14) grain in the atuwa from yala to <maha>. (main agricultural season) W2F-017.txt

(15) ' 'What school did you attend?'   ' <Maha Vidyalaya>, Tanamalwila.' (title used in schools denoting central) W2F-020.txt

(16) the <Sudu Mathmaya> (5) was excusing him as a first offender and that he should not dare step into the estate ever again. (5) <Sudu Mahathmaya>- White Gentleman. (foreigner) W2F-003.txt

(17) but they could not have refused the much respected <Ishcol Mahatmaya> (teacher) W2F-003.txt

4 CONCLUSIONS

According to the literature, borrowings are classified into a cultural-core binary (Myers-Scotton, 2002; Haspelmath, 2009). However, the data in the ICE-SL corpus highlight the need for a more nuanced categorization which this study has attempted to provide.

The study suggests that while some of these words are cultural concepts or items in the immediate or the current local context, others are borrowed from language sources that have been in direct contact in a historical context. Several factors can account for this contact. Sinhala and Tamil are two languages that originated from India although they belong to the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian language families, respectively. Arriving in Sri Lanka through two different processes they have existed together for centuries. The gradual and lasting influence can be seen through "linguistic areas" that develop through the long term contact situations of languages that have existed side by side in the same cultural context (Coperahewa, 2007). Sanskrit and Pali have had a significant influence on the local languages for centuries. While Sinhala and Tamil have had an impact on each other, they now exert their influence on the third language, English. Senaratne (2009) asserts that as Sinhala borrowed words from languages such as "Pali, Sanskrit, Portuguese [and] Dutch" these words are borrowed again by SLE (p. 56).

Many scholars have highlighted the influence of Asian languages on the SLE lexis (Gunesekera, 2005, Fernando, 2011/12; Vuorivirta 2006; Mendis & Rambukwella 2021). In the study by Bernaisch (2015), words from local languages in both SL and other South Asian regions are considered Pan South Asian (PSA) lexemes and posits them as one of the variety defining features of its lexis. According to the current study, the words mirror the shared experiences of the countries in the region with regard to religion, food, dress, traditional medicine, and buildings. The regional-cultural borrowings complement the studies mentioned above and extend the understanding of the different types of borrowed lexis in SLE.

This study proposes that along with core and cultural borrowings, the two new categories, local cultural borrowings and core-extension borrowings help define the variety with regard to borrowed lexis found in SLE.

Thus, the borrowings evident in the data indicate its historic background depicting overlapping sources: Sinhala and Tamil are seen as the current local languages although Tamil was once the language of the invaders: Dutch and Portuguese remain as the languages of the colonizers; Sanskrit, Pali, Malayalam and Telugu can be considered the areal languages while at the same time they need to be recognized as the source languages of Sinhala and Tamil; Sanskrit, Pali and Arabic are still accessed through religious and medical practices. As such, the influence of the areal languages in the region has influenced the country's main languages

many centuries ago, which resurface today in SLE, which in turn is in contact with Sinhala and Tamil.

Core borrowings, on the other hand, already exist in the recipient language and the user is motivated to use a borrowed word. The prestige of the donor language is identified as one possible reason for this linguistic behavior while the need to identify oneself with the donor language is considered another possible reason. Regarding SLE, Sinhala and Tamil are the mother tongue of some of the speakers in addition to being the two official languages of the nation, while the prestige connected with English as a lingua franca remains uncontested. Perhaps psycholinguistic factors play a role in the use of core and core-extension borrowings. Further research into this area will provide new insights into SLE.

What is seen in the borrowings presented under core extension is a more nuanced meaning than what is conveyed in the translated word. Most of the words in this category referred to the special kinship terms or system found in both Sinhala and Tamil. Within the kinship terms, the core borrowings show one-to-one relationship with English and Sinhala or Tamil, while the borrowings for members of the extended family contain a more elaborate set of words that is not matched in BrE. A similar set of Tamil kinship terms are reported by Rajashanthan (2016). The words in this category can be considered as words connected to the identity of the speakers. Thus, core borrowings and core extension borrowings probably fulfill a psychological need. While these are not replaced by English words in day-to-day

speech it is now evident according to the data that even in writing, a more distant mode of communication, the users have not replaced these terms. It is also noted that the words occur in genres such as social letters, novels and short stories.

This also proves that according to Schneider's (2003) Evolutionary cycle of New Englishes, that SLE users are confident of their language variety and feel confident enough to stamp their local identity on it, and in doing so, further establish their variety.

In answer to the Research Questions, the findings in the study indicate that people borrow words that are in most instances not available in the recipient language but readily available in the contact languages that are in use in the community. These words fall into four categories. In the first category of 'local cultural borrowings', the users borrow words to fill a lexical gap in the recipient language to talk of concepts, items and events in the immediate local surroundings. In the second category, 'regional-cultural borrowings', the users borrow words from a regional context for events, concepts, and items common in the national and regional contexts. Here again the borrowings fill a lexical gap. In the third category, core borrowings duplicate a word available in the recipient language, indicating a local identity. In the fourth category, core-extension borrowings, the words denote a nuanced meaning of the word, not available in the recipient language. The third and fourth categories have several words denoting kinship terms. These categories indicate the users'

wish to indicate their national identity in the variety of English they use, SLE.

In conclusion, this study affirms that the local cultural borrowings denote typical local (Sri Lankan) experiences while the regional-cultural borrowings move further afield in terms of time and space. They characterize historical legacies as well as common cultural experiences from the region (South Asian region). The core borrowings indicate the desire for local identity in particular spheres that are common world-wide. Core-extension borrowings suggest a local interpretation of a common experience that becomes significant through a local perspective embedded in the local culture. As such, the extension suggested in this study through a four-way classification is better able to account for the types and reasons for borrowings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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