

Morphological Features Revealed in Sri Lankan English Newspaper Articles Promoting a Unique Variety of World Englishes

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Language is a dynamic means of communication that is highly responsive to the sociolinguistic and cultural fads of the day, and the social structure. The morphological operations used in the English language are a reflection of those linguistic events. In actuality, the morphological procedures used in Sri Lankan English newspaper articles (press) are a distinctive expression of Sri Lankan socio-linguistic identity. Through the analysis of morphological techniques used in common Sri Lankan newspaper articles, the survey aims to identify the effective expression of those socio-linguistic phenomena. The articles that appeared in the local English-language newspapers “The Island”, “Sunday Observer” and “The Daily News” between 09th May and 25th August 2022 are investigated for the present study. Further, a qualitative research methodology is used to conduct a content analysis. According to Gunasekera (2005), “the most productive morphological processes in Sri Lankan English are borrowing, compounding, and affixation” (p. 143). This has been used as the theoretical framework of this study. Gunasekera’s work has been adopted by many researchers who conduct various studies within this field. The present study finds that morphological processes used by Sri Lankan writers share several distinctive identifying characteristics, including the direct and indirect influence of loan words taken from regional languages, relativity to the socio-cultural context of Sri Lanka, hybridization, narrowing of the root concept, and sense of strong emphasis. Accordingly, clipping, borrowing, acronyms and compounds are identified as the most significant and commonly used morphological processes in the English newspaper genre in Sri Lanka. Conclusively, it is evident that Sri Lankan English newspapers are clearly metamorphosing Sri Lankan English into a unique wide assortment of world Englishes.

Keywords: Diversity, Morphological processes, Newspaper articles, Sri Lankan English