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### **Can Redda be worn by men? A review of *A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English***

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Sri Lankan English (SLE) is regarded as a newly Institutionalized variety of English, with its unique, phonological, morphological, syntactic features capable of representing the unique socio-cultural and linguistic circumstances of the Sri Lankan speech community. Language codification is regarded as one of the most significant aspects in the institutionalization process of world Englishes, and Michael Meyler's *A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English* (2007) is one of the most elaborate codification attempts of SLE where the lexical items in the dictionary are perceived as the standard usages of SLE, since codification is misconstrued as an attempt in legitimizing a language variety as the standard. However given the codifiers position as an "outsider" (Meyler 2007, p. x), where it could be assumed that he essentially lacks comprehensive knowledge on the socio-cultural, political and linguistic facets of the Sri Lankan speech community, the credibility of the codification process is challenged. Therefore, utilizing theoretical methodologies of reflexivity and positionality, this study attempts at offering the perspective of an insider, who is familiar with the socio-cultural, political and linguistic facets of the Sri Lankan community, on the codified vocabulary of SLE in *A Dictionary of SLE*. The study provides a subjective insider perspective on, the accuracy of the meaning and recorded usages, possible alterations to the meaning and alternative usages, and the insider's ability to provide a more nuanced understanding of the lexical entries as a socially, politically, economically and linguistically situated researcher. The study establishes the ability of the insider to comprehend and critically reflect on the socio-cultural, political and linguistic undertones of the SLE lexical items through the analysis of words including, *baila*, *devil dance*, *betel tray*, *pandan*, *redda* and *pirith*, where it was identified that the codifier has been privy only to the denotative meaning of the lexical items. The study ultimately attempts at contributing to the discourse on Sri Lankan English which highlight the need for "active broadening of the standard to include the greatest variety possible" (Parakrama, 1995).

**Key words:** *A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English*, Insider Perspective,  
Language Codification, Sri Lankan English, the Standard.