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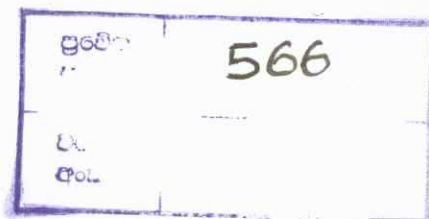
**ENGLISH BORROWINGS IN JAFFNA TAMIL
FROM 1993 TO 2006**

T. KARUNAKARAN



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**FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA.**



Abstract

This study looks specifically at the language contact of two of the world's most visible languages and details of the resultant language change when words from English are borrowed into Tamil. Borrowed words, or loan words were collected in Jaffna in June, 2007. The loan words were then analyzed for phonological, morphosyntactic, semantic, and sociolinguistic factors. The frequency of English loan words was found to have increased in Tamil in the past decade, particularly in the realms of technology and communication, culture and entertainment, and politics. The borrowings are consequently spoken and understood by younger interlocutors and speakers. Socioeconomic, cultural, political, and geographical factors may make two languages co-exist and inevitably the languages influence each other.

Though borrowing is found to be a major aspect of language change, the term itself is a misnomer: it implies replacement, whereas no such condition is required between languages. The element borrowed from one language into another is not returned, as it never left the source language. Some languages borrow more than others and borrow more from certain languages than others. Over the centuries, many languages acted as donor languages for Tamil, i.e. Sanskrit and Sinhala from the South Asian region and Portuguese, Dutch and English from Europe.

The shift of Tamil toward English, accelerating through globalization, began in language contact situations with lexical borrowing from English to Tamil in translation. Potential

connotation and semantic limitation in the existing Tamil lexicon was the reason behind direct lexical borrowing from English. The external factors such as language policy in education and foreign investment in economic expansion are expediting the English-over-Tamil choice in language use. The analysis on the real world events e.g. the current affairs that surround the Tamil discourse communities in Jaffna suggests that language choice does not happen in a vacuum, nor does it follow idealistic prescription. True to description and relevance, the analysis accepts younger speakers' rights to their language choice in face-to-face communication.