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Robert Englebretson and Carol Genetti, Editors

Dedication

This volume is dedicated to Oshan Fernando and Nissanka S. Wickremasinghe.

Contents

Abbreviations

1	First person		HES	Hesitation particle
2	Second person		IMP	Imperative
3	Third person		IMPF	Inperfective
A	Animal		INAN	Inanimate
ABL	Ablative		IND	Indefinite
ACC	Accusative		INF	Infinitive
ADJ	Adjective		INST	Instrumental
AGENT	Agent		INVOL	Involitive
ANIM	Animate		LOC	Locative
ASS	Assertive		M	Masculine
AUX	Auxiliary		NEG	Negative
CAUS	Causative		NOM	Nominalizer
CL	Classifier		NPST	Non-past
COMP	Complementizer		p	Plural
CONC	Concessive		PRED	Predicate
COND	Conditional		PRES	Present
CONJ	Conjunction		PRT	Particle
CONV	Converb		PRTMP	Prior temporal (verb form)
DAT	Dative		PROX	Proximal
DEF	Definite		PST	Past
DEM	Demonstrative		PL	Plural
DIST	Distal		PPL	Participle
EMPH	Emphatic		Q	Question particle
EPIST	Epistemic		QUOT	Quotative
EQ	Equative		REDUP	Reduplicative
EX	Existential		REFL	Reflexive
F	Feminine		REL	Relative
FOC	Focus		s	Singular
FUT	Future		SG	Singular
GEN	Genitive/Possessive		VIS	Visual
GOAL	Goal		VOL	Volitive

Preface

Robert Englebretson, Rice University

Carol Genetti, UCSB

The 12 working papers in this volume comprise original student research on specific aspects of spoken colloquial Sinhala. These papers were originally presented at the Workshop on Sinhala Linguistics, held June 3-4, 2005 at the University of California Santa Barbara. This conference, organized by graduate students at UCSB, represented the culmination and collaboration of two courses in field methods during the 2004-2005 academic year, one led by Carol Genetti at UCSB, and the other led by Robert Englebretson at Rice University. The workshop gave Rice and UCSB field methods students the opportunity to interact with one another, to publicly present their original research, and to receive invaluable feedback from John Paolillo (Indiana University) who also gave the keynote address.

Since each of the papers in this volume focuses on a specific aspect of Sinhala grammar, we shall begin by presenting a brief general overview of Sinhala for the benefit of readers who may be unfamiliar with this language and its background. For a more thorough grammatical description, see Gair and Paolillo (1997) *inter alia*.

Sinhala (also referred to as Singhala, Singhalese, and Sinhalese) is spoken natively by approximately 13 million speakers, primarily in the country of Sri Lanka. It is a member of the Indo-Aryan language family, and is genetically related to Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, and the other New Indo-Aryan languages. The exact position of Sinhala within Indo-Aryan has been a matter of debate (see Masica 1999:446-463). According to Gair and Paolillo (1997:1) together with Dhivehi (Maldivian), it forms a separate branch within Indo-Aryan.

Sinhala is one of two national languages of Sri Lanka, the other being Tamil, a member of the Dravidian language family. The ethnic Tamil and Sinhalese have been in close contact for over two millennia, so Sinhala language structures have developed under the influence of Tamil language contact. Gair and Paolillo (1997:2) note that Tamil influence is especially evident in Sinhala syntax, citing the left-branching structure of the language and the pervasive focused sentence constructions.

Sinhala is composed of two quite distinct varieties, the formal written variety and the colloquial spoken variety. The two varieties differ markedly in their core grammatical structures. They exist in a diglossic relationship (De Silva 1974, 1976, Gair 1968, 1986, 1992, Paolillo 1991, 1997). Complex codeswitching and code mixing of Sinhala and English is also common among educated Sinhalese (cf. Abeywickrama 2004). The current volume focuses exclusively on colloquial Sinhala, especially on a dialect spoken just to the west of the capital city of Colombo, as represented in the speech of our two Field Methods language consultants.

Each paper in this volume brings to fruition a specific research project undertaken by individual Field Methods students at Rice and UCSB. These contributions address aspects of colloquial Sinhala at all levels of linguistic structure—from phonetics to discourse and everything in between. Due to the close theoretical affinity between Rice and UCSB Linguistics, and the emphasis which each department places on primary data, these papers are unified in presenting an approach based on functional, cognitive, and typological perspectives. Taken

together, this volume offers an overview of relevant theoretical issues in functional linguistics as observed in colloquial Sinhala.

We shall now turn to a brief summary of each of the papers. Contributions in this volume are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name; however, for purposes of the present summary, we will discuss them topically, in terms of the general subfield of linguistics which they represent.

The contribution by Carlos Nash (UCSB) deals specifically with Sinhala phonetics and phonology. The basic phonemic inventory of Sinhala (cf. Gair and Paolillo 1997:3-4) comprises 27 consonants and 12 vowels. The consonant inventory includes a contrast among dental and retroflex obstruents, as well as a typologically-rare series of prenasalized stops. Vowel length is phonemic, and thus the 12 distinct vocalic phonemes consist of six pairs of long and short vowels. There is additionally a complex interaction among syllable types, weights, and stress, which is the general topic of Nash's paper, with particular focus on stress in Sinhala verbs. Nash explores the role of intensity and duration as the key acoustic parameters in determining syllable stress, and provides an equation to model these findings. He then develops a constraint-based phonological account based on the acoustic results and presents them within the framework of Optimality Theory.

Five of the papers in the volume address Sinhala morphology and word classes. The contributions by Garland, Henderson, and Jany address aspects of nominal morphology, while those by Hilpert and Taylor concern Sinhala verbs. Sinhala nominal morphology includes the marking of definiteness, number, and case, and is generally organized based on animacy. Sinhala verb morphology is particularly complex (cf. Gair and Paolillo 1997:23-28). Verb roots fall into several inflectional classes. There are simple, causative, and involitive root forms for each class. Each root form can take a myriad of TAM and participial suffixes. In addition to main verbs, there is also a unique grammatical category of quasi-verbs which function as the predicates of clauses but which generally do not inflect with the typical Sinhala verb morphology.

Jennifer Garland (UCSB) explores the complex expression of Sinhala nominal morphology (definiteness, number, and case-marking) as combinations of affixes, clitics, and postpositions. She demonstrates that the traditional morphological typology of synthesis and fusion does not adequately account for the observed levels of structure. Garland claims that the Sinhala system is best accounted for by recognizing the interdependence of 'phonological word' and 'grammatical word' boundaries.

Mara Henderson (UCSB) also deals with Sinhala nouns, examining the morphosyntax and semantics of 'specific-general noun sequences' (SGNs); namely, constructions consisting of a specific head noun followed by a general classificatory noun, e.g. *kehel geḍi* 'bananas' (lit. 'banana fruit'). Henderson argues that nominal classification in Sinhala lies on the typological continuum between lexico-grammatical (classifiers and measure terms) and lexical (gender/noun-class markers). Sinhala SGNs do not fit neatly into one type or the other, and they sometimes display mismatches based on semantics and morphology; thus, Henderson suggests Sinhala may illustrate a type of classification system not previously described in the literature.

Carmen Jany's (UCSB) contribution takes on the thorny issue of the interaction between grammatical relations and case-marking of Sinhala nouns. Jany illustrates that morphological case in Sinhala is not directly assigned simply based on S, A, and O roles; rather, a conspiracy of lexical and semantic factors co-occur to contribute to the case-marking of a nominal argument.

These factors include definiteness of the argument, volitivity of the verb, and in some cases even the semantics of the entire clause.

Chris Taylor (Rice) analyzes the functions of the Sinhala conjunctive participle—the form of the verb usually marked by the suffix -*la*. Taylor shows that this inflectional verb form indicates perfect aspect in some contexts, but in other contexts it functions as a prototypical South-Asian converb (cf. Haspelmath and König 1995, Genetti 2005 *inter alia*). Taylor argues that these two seemingly disparate functions are actually semantically related based on event construal, and that 'event sequencing' and 'recapitulation' provide the basis for a unified account of this multifunctional verb form.

Martin Hilpert (Rice) addresses the question of auxiliaries in Sinhala. Based on grammaticization theory (Hopper and Traugott 1993), Hilpert identifies several Sinhala forms which are typically good candidates for auxiliation cross-linguistically—the development of a word from a lexical source to a grammatical auxiliary. Using synchronic distributional evidence, Hilpert concludes that a number of forms exist in Sinhala which are justifiable as auxiliaries on morphological, syntactic, and semantic grounds. He also concludes that the category of quasi-verb (Gair and Paolillo 1997:26) can be fruitfully analyzed as consisting of two sub-classes: epistemic elements and stance elements.

You-Jing Lin (UCSB) presents a Cognitive Linguistic analysis of Sinhala spatial postpositions. Namely, she provides a case-study of how Sinhala uses vertical postpositions to encode horizontal spatial relationships. Lin presents the results of an experiment which was devised to assess the extent in which horizontal relationships among objects are conceived of in vertical terms. She then proposes an analysis based on image schemas, and discusses the role of perspective (the 'route perspective' versus the 'survey perspective') which appears to motivate when this transformation can take place, and when this transformation is blocked.

Valerie Sultan (UCSB) explores the information-structuring function of adverbial clauses in Sinhala focus constructions. Focus constructions are highly grammaticalized in Sinhala and occur frequently in our discourse data. While focus constructions are generally regarded in the typological literature as being a means of profiling referents of noun phrases, the Sinhala focus construction can also be used to profile propositions expressed by adverbial clauses. Sultan demonstrates that the conditions under which adverbial clauses are focused are the same as those under which noun phrases are focused; focused elements are those which refer to entities or events that are either new in the discourse or contradictory to the supposed beliefs of the hearer. This paper thus presents an overview of both adverbial clauses and focus constructions in Sinhala, then examines features of focused adverbial clauses in detail.

Each of the four remaining papers in the volume explicitly addresses a classic issue in linguistic typology relevant to the role of meaning in shaping grammar. The construction types addressed in these four contributions are: locationals, causatives, relative clauses, and object complements. While each of these general construction types has indeed already received substantial treatment in cross-linguistic typological literature, to our knowledge these are the first published papers to explore them within colloquial Sinhala specifically. The results of these four contributions support the larger typological findings presented in previous research, and provide a successful investigation of general typological principles as observed at work in colloquial Sinhala.

Salomé Gutierrez (UCSB) presents a study of Sinhala existential and possessive clauses, describing each as a subtype of locational constructions. Following Lyons (1968) and Clark

(1978), Gutierrez demonstrates the relatedness of the syntax and semantics of these Sinhala construction types, which thus supports the validity of the previous cross-linguistic observations.

Danielle Mathieu-Reeves (Rice) examines Sinhala causative constructions in terms of the inverse relation between grammatical complexity and semantic directness. She finds that grammatical simplicity corresponds with semantic directness, while greater complexity corresponds with semantic indirectness. Her contribution therefore serves to support Haiman's (1983) 'complexity continuum', and to demonstrate how this general iconic principle is manifest in Sinhala specifically.

Ben Walker (Rice) provides a comprehensive description of Sinhala relative clauses in terms of traditional relative clause typology (cf. Keenan 1985). Sinhala relative clauses are pre-head, are indicated by special relative verb forms, and the relativized noun phrase is gapped. Walker examines the role of case marking to disambiguate the gapped NP. He also observes that Sinhala relativizes on all positions of the 'accessibility hierarchy' (Keenan and Comrie 1977, 1979).

Ben Wheeler (Rice) uses a corpus of textual and elicited data to investigate Givón's (1980) 'binding hierarchy' for complementation. Wheeler finds that in general, Sinhala conforms to the binding hierarchy as expected: CTP's which are verbs of utterance, cognition or epistemicity tend to take less-integrated clausal complements, while implicative or modal CTP's tend to take complements that are more tightly bound into the main clause. Interestingly, while the general predictions of the binding hierarchy are confirmed, Wheeler also finds a few instances of complements which do not occur as expected. Wheeler's contribution thus provides strong empirical support for the binding hierarchy, and affirms that the hierarchy should be understood as a general typological tendency rather than as an absolute universal.

Three additional papers were presented at the workshop which are not included in this volume. Anne-Marie Hartenstein (Rice) raised the question of subjecthood in Sinhala; she outlined the results of traditional morphological and syntactic tests, in order to assess whether the grammatical category 'subject' is relevant for Sinhala grammar. Priya Abeywickrama (UCLA), who is herself a native speaker of Sinhala, discussed the language repertoires of Sinhala-English bilinguals, which she situated in terms of codeswitching and code mixing. A version of her talk also appears as Abeywickrama 2004. Finally, in his keynote address, John Paolillo (Indiana University) brought together the divergent subdisciplines of computational and field linguistics, using an electronic corpus of Sinhala texts to explore the distribution of phonemic and grammatical categories. We would like to acknowledge the unique and important contributions of each of these three talks, and we regret that they are not able to be published in this working papers volume alongside the other papers.

This volume and the workshop on which it is based owe their success to a number of individuals and institutions. First, we would like to thank each of the student participants for their contributions, and for their interest and hard work throughout the field methods courses. We especially recognize the UCSB graduate students who organized the workshop in the midst of final exams, and those who hosted the visiting students from Rice. We especially wish to thank John Paolillo for his excellent keynote, and for his expertise in Sinhala linguistics which he graciously contributed in the discussion of the student papers. Each of the contributions to this volume has benefited immensely from his input, and we appreciate his willingness to engage students in discussion during and after the workshop.

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