Productive Strategies of Generating Neologisms in Sri Lankan Print Media

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Introduction and Review of Literature

Language reflects how society perceives the world. The evolution in language reveals the changes and development of society today. With the evolution and advancement of lifestyle, culture and technology we require glossaries of new words for expressing ourselves. Languages certainly adjust with such growth in society, and English, especially, is spoken widely all over the world and subjected to frequent changes. English survives the expansions in the modern society by frequent addition of new vocabulary to meet its requirements. Formation of such new vocabulary is called neologisms.

Neologisms

Neologisms are the elements specified in morphology of a language making the language live and efficient rather than dead (Behera & Mishra, 2013). They are derivatives newly coined when the society requires new vocabulary to exchange ideas. Yule (2006) defines neologism as a new word in a language. With the recent advancements in the society a massive flux of newly coined words could be observed to avoid disruption of the continuous exchange of ideas. The term *neologism* originated in the early 19th century from the French word *néologisme* (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2019) and is defined as "a new word or expression or a new meaning of a word". Newmark (1988) says that neologisms can be defined as newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense. These words could take longer periods to become standardized by adding into dictionaries. Therefore, a neologism could also be defined as a word in use but not recorded in general dictionaries.

"The most salient type of neologism is a word which is new in its form and which refers to a concept which is new" (Mair, 2006). These new words mean that the new concept should be either borrowed from another language or formed according to the rules of word-formation

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processes. Neologism is also a change or transfer of meaning of an already established word. They always come from an anonymous origin and tend to appear at first in informal style. Crystal (as cited in Pacea, 2009) often uses the term coinage as synonymous with neologism.

Strategies of Forming New Words

Exploring the formation of new words is a constructive way of familiarizing ourselves not only with the way the language evolves and the new words we are likely to encounter but can also help us to understand the way the words we already know have evolved and developed.

When languages are subjected to continuous evolution, use of new words and new uses of old words according to the needs of the users is unavoidable. When new words are formed, the users can very quickly understand them and accept the use of different forms of that new word as there is a lot of regularity in the word formation processes in our languages. Yule (2006) introduces 09 processes and a special process namely "Multiple Processes" by which new words are created. The nine processes are: coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, clipping, backformation, conversion, acronyms and derivation. According to his explanation, the most productive word formation strategy is derivation. Through derivation new vocabulary is formed using a large number of small English word units. These small units are called "affixes". Borrowing and compounding are described as the most common sources of generating new words. Compounding is considered a commonly used process in languages such as German and English where the words are well documented but less common in languages such as French and Spanish. Coinage is introduced as one of the least common processes of word formation in English.

"Speakers of a language may create new words based on the existing ones, including the addition and subtraction of phonetic (or orthographic) material. These processes could also be defined as the ways in which new complex words are built on the basis of other words or morphemes" (Plag, 2002, p. 12). Plag (2002) discusses word formation processes in English using affixation, derivation without affixation (under which he discusses conversion, prosodic morphology, abbreviations and acronyms) and compounding. He identifies compounding as "the most productive type of word formation process in English, but the most controversial one in terms of its linguistic analysis".

Words can be formed or expanded by various morphological processes possible in a language. There are certain specific word formation or morphological processes which convert a morpheme into a word in a language. Murray (1995) states that new words can enter English in only two general ways: either they are borrowed from another language or they are created from elements that already exist in English. There are many patterns of word formation processes used to coin new words such as affixation, compounding, reduplication, conversion, borrowing, acronym, clipping, blending, onomatopoeia and antonomasia.

Use of Vocabulary in Print Media

Both print and electronic media, have contributed greatly to the introduction and widespread use of English neologisms in various fields. We encounter neologisms in English almost every day through news on television or reading the daily news from newspapers or magazines. For example, Winterval: the unpalatable making of a modern myth (The Guardian, Nov 08th 2011), Obamamania, Barack Obama is unlikely to get a better chance to run for president (The Economist, Oct 26th 2006) Textalyzer (Texting and Driving? Watch Out for the Textalyzer (The Newyork Times April 27, 2016). How Najibnomics has enhanced the country's economy (New Straits Times October 25, 2017). After 'Terroristan', India has a new phrase to describe Pakistan (The Times of India March 09, 2018).

According to Moe (2014), a newspaper headline summarizes the entire article using a few texts. These headlines use a "unique and unusual pattern of grammar" along with a special set of vocabulary.

Crystal (1987) stated that in the modern era the newspaper and magazine publishing will encompass a wider variety of linguistically distinctive devices than any other domain of language study.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance to investigate the evolution of language in Sri Lankan print media in an era where readers are exposed to a mass collection of new words with several advancements in the society.

Studies on the use of neologisms and limitations

Although there is a recent development in the research related to the use of vocabulary in Sri Lankan English with several arguments between scholars and researchers, studies on the use of new vocabulary in print media of Sri Lanka are relatively limited despite the very limited number of studies in the area.

Gamage (2015) in her study '"Hoos" and Hurrahs in Jumbo vs. Betel Final' explored how word formation has become an important process in the growth and expansion of the English vocabulary in Sri Lankan print media. The researcher finds out affixation as the most frequently used morphological process in forming new words in Sri Lankan English newspaper editorials and the morphological processes that have been used for decades are still being used in the formation of neologisms.

Liu & Liu (2014) carries out a study focusing on internet neologisms. They examine the characteristics of words unique to the internet context and their patterns of formation". According to their results, the most frequently occurring word formation process is compounding. Subsequently, blending, affixation, old words with new meaning, acronyms, conversion and clipping.

According to Behera & Mishra (2013) new words are coined "demonstrating that new words and phrases are far more about redesigning than actual configuration" (page 25). The processes illustrated through this study are: compounding, shortening, clipping, blending, affixation, backformation, conversion, borrowing, calquing and reduplication.

Rets (2016) attempts teaching the identified neologisms in the classroom with the purpose of improving communicative and cultural competence of the English learners.

Aim of the study

At present, it is evidenced that print media in Sri Lanka uses a wide variety of new vocabulary in newspapers specially maintaining the interest and the curiosity of its readership. It could also be argued that many Sri Lankans who peruse English newspapers daily tend to use such new word or neologisms in their writing and conversation knowingly or unknowingly. Moreover,

journalists in Sri Lanka tend to use many neologisms in their newspaper articles to expand their vocabulary and the use of such vocabulary in news headings is an attempt to transmit the focus of the news more realistically with a touch of local flavor. Irrespective of the knowledge of morphological characteristics of forming new words, this linguistic divergence in the language used by the Sri Lankan print media is a crucial move made transferring the newspapers more reader friendly. Based on the gaps of the research identified, the scholars and researchers in Linguistics should carryout studies on these different changes of language in Sri Lankan Mass Media. Therefore, this study investigates the productive strategies of generating neologisms in Sri Lankan print media. The study is expected to help uncover some unique Sri Lankan neologisms revealing to what extent, and how these neologisms are formed when used in local news article headings.

Research Methodology

Methodological Approach

This is a study that employs the content analysis method which is associated with qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007). The data collected for this study is "textual" and a "latent level analysis" is employed, because the researcher is concerned with the deeper-level of the data analyzing and interpreting the underlying meaning in depth.

The Sample

The number of English daily newspapers available for Sri Lankan readership is around 12. Due to time limitations neologisms were gathered after a careful observation of all local news article headings of the selected weekly newspaper 'Daily Mirror'. The data collection lasted for a period of one month beginning from 1st September to 30th September 2017.

Analysis of Data

Content analysis follows a very generalized sequence of coding for themes, looking for patterns, making interpretations, and building theory (Ellis and Barkhuizen, as cited in Dornyei, 2007).

Gathered neologisms were analyzed to determine the various patterns of word-formation processes that are employed to form new words. The researcher identified the various word formation processes used in the formation of neologisms using the processes explained by Yule (2006), and gave a structural description of them based on the findings. Firstly, the selected words or phrases were classified into the various word formation processes. Secondly, the processes were analyzed to determine the productive processes used in the forming of neologisms in Sri Lankan print media using Microsoft Excel.

In addition, the meanings of each word or phrase were recorded for the awareness of the reader.

Findings

36 neologisms classified under five word formation processes were gathered after a careful observation of all local news article headings of the weekly newspaper 'Daily Mirror'. The news articles covered various fields including social, economic, sports and politics.

Word formation processes the neologisms belong to

According to Yule (2006), there are nearly nine word formation processes in English: coinage, Borrowing (loanwords), compounding, blending, clipping, backformation, conversion, acronyms and derivation. Table 1 below shows the morphological processes the collected neologisms belong according to the above classification introduced by Yule (2006).

Table 1: Classification of Neologisms into Respective Word Formation

Word Formation Process	Neologisms
Loan Words	Sil redda , Beedi, Color Lights, Kapu mahattayas, Basnayake Nilame, Kasippu, Sangha, Arahant, Polos roti, Yahapalanaya, Sammelan, Sari pota, Jihadists, Lunch sheets, Grama Niladharis, Pindapathe, Lunch packets, Kattadi keliya, Mahanayake, Dezinformatsiya

Compounds	Sil redi judgement, Beedi consumption, Sil redi shroud, Sil redi saga, Sil redi case, Yahapalana Politicians
Clippings	Mobike, Undergrads, Semis
Acronyms	JO, BN
Derivations	Defund, Anti –SAITM protests, Non –performing, Framers, Whitners

As shown in table 1, majority of the words belong to the morphological process loanwords. This process is considered as one of the most common sources of forming new words in English (Yule, 2006). The process happens by taking over words from other languages into the borrowed language. In this study it was observed that many of the words borrowed are from Sinhala and very a few words from languages such as Hindi, Russian, and Sanskrit.

"In the SLE compound *'ash plantain'*, the morphemes in the Sinhala compound *alu kesel* are substituted with the two English translation equivalents *'ash'* and *'plantain'*. Vocabulary items of this type are called loan translations" (Fernando, 2012, p. 174).

Haugen (as cited in Fernando, 2012) explains that, the users of a language sometimes may blend a part or the complete word unit with a part of a foreign word in coining loanblends.

When examining the collected loanwords with reference to the above classifications, they can be further categorized as loan translations and loanblends (Figure 1). Loan translations are simply direct translations of the elements of the words into the foreign language. For example, *lunch sheets, lunch packets* and *color lights*. The Sinhala compounds, *Bath Othana Kola* and *Bath Mula* (meaning *meal wrappers* and *lunch pack/ packed lunch* respectively in English) are substituted with lunch sheets (the sheets which are heavily used domestically as well as by the meal providers to wrap lunch, so that it is easier to carry) and lunch packets. The English compound *traffic lights* is directly translated as *colour lights*, substituting the word *traffic* with *colour*.

Grama Niladharis and Kapu mahattayas are the two loanblends identified from the collected data (Figure 1). In these two nouns, the Sinhala stem is blended with the English regular plural suffix / - s /.
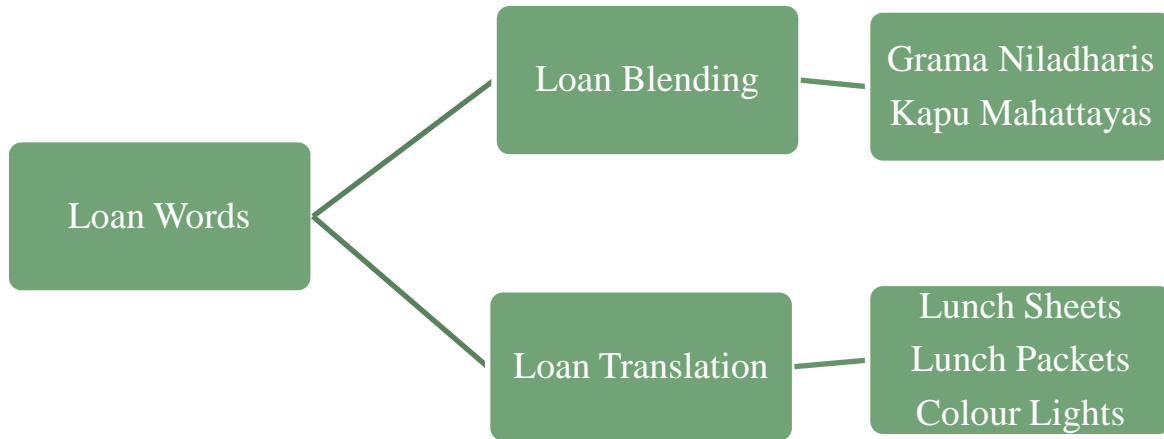

Figure 1: Loan Translations & Loanblends

Table 2: Hybrid Compounds Presenting the Languages the Words Are Imported

Hybrid Compounds	Languages the Words Imported from
Sil redi judgement	Sinhala + English
Beedi consumption	Sinhala + English
Sil redi shroud	Sinhala + English
Sil redi saga	Sinhala + English
Sil redi case	Sinhala + English
Yahapalana Politicians	Sinhala + English

Another significant observation was the neologisms belonging to the category of compounds (Table 1) one of the most common and productive processes of forming new words. All the compounds were hybrid compounds "blending two or more stems from different languages" (Fernando, 2012, 173). The identified hybrid compounds in this study were formed using words imported from Sinhala and English, the first word from Sinhala and the second word from English (Table 2) and they all were related to politics.

Generally, derivations are identified as one of the most common word formation processes in producing new English words. In this study five derivations were identified; three words with prefixes and two words with suffixes (Table 3).

Table 3: Derivations Presenting the Identified Prefixes and		
Derivations	Prefix	Suffix
Defund	De	-
Anti –SAITM protests	Anti	-
Non –performing	Non	-
Framers	-	-ers
Whitners	-	-ers

In addition, new words were produced using clippings and acronyms. When analyzing the use of clippings in Sri Lankan print media, it was observed that the three examples were English words but unique to Sri Lankan context (Table 1). Neologisms from coinage, blending, backformation and conversion were not identified.

Productive strategies used in the forming of neologisms in Sri Lankan print media

The 36 neologisms classified under the five identified word formation processes or strategies reveal an extensive use of loanwords while compounds and derivations are used in moderate numbers in creating neologisms in Sri Lankan print media. In contrast, clippings and acronyms were limited in numbers. The percentage of the use of each process in generating neologisms in Sri Lankan print media is presented in the chart below (Chart 1). Higher percentages reveal higher productivity levels of the processes.

According to the chart, the most productive strategy used in Sri Lankan print media to generate neologisms is Loanwords with the highest percentage 56%. Out of the total of 20 loanwords, 02 were loanblends and 03 were loan translations amounting to 6% and 8% in the sample.

Compounding and derivation are the other common strategies of forming neologisms in local news articles amounting to 17% and 14% respectively. The three clippings and the two

acronyms amounted to 8% and 6% respectively presenting them to be less productive processes in using neologisms in local news headings.
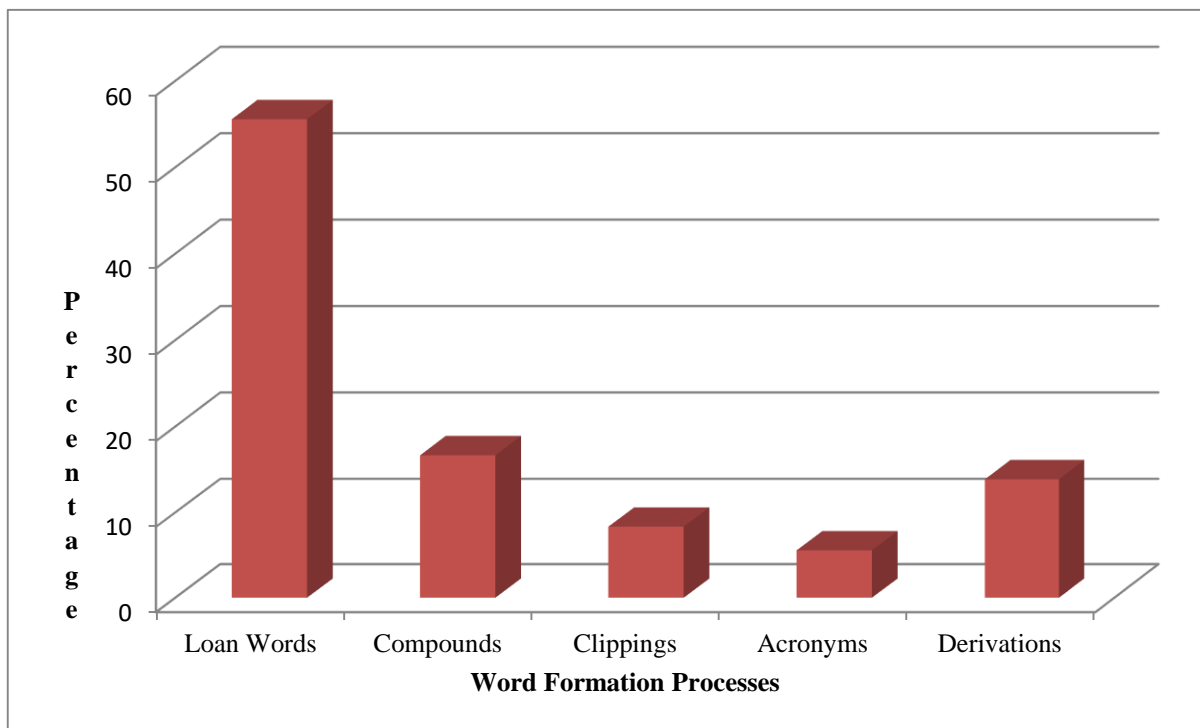

Chart 1: Word Formation Processes Used in Sri Lankan Print Media Generating

Meanings of the Identified Neologisms

The meanings of the collected neologisms in relation to the facts of the news articles are tabled below for the awareness of the readers.

Table 4: Meanings of the Identified

Neologisms	Meaning
Sil redi judgement	The judgement given on being found guilty to the charge of criminal misappropriation of public fund to distribute 'sil cloth' for laymen during an election campaign
Beedi consumption	Consumption of sticks of illicit cigarettes
Sil redi shroud	'Sil cloth' that cloaked the unlawful edict given by the President using millions of public fund

Sil redi saga	The story of the 'sil cloth' that cloaked the unlawful edict given by the President using millions of public fund
Sil redi case	The story of the 'sil cloth' that cloaked the unlawful edict given by the President using millions of public fund
Sil Redda	A piece of cloth used by laymen when observing the eight precepts
Kapu mahattayas	Lay priests
Basnayake Nilame	Office of the chief lay custodian of a temple
Kasippu	Illicit liquor
Sangha	The Buddhist priests
Arahant	People far advanced along the path of Enlightenment, but who may not have reached full Buddhahood
Polos roti	A flat bread made of flour and jack fruit
Yahapalanaya	Good governance government
Sammelan	Conference
Sari pota	Long fall of the sari or osari
Jihadists	is an Arabic word which literally means striving or struggling, especially with a praiseworthy aim
Lunch sheets	Meal wrappers
Grama Niladharis	Village officers
Pindapathe	Monks walking one behind the other asking bystanders to donate
Lunch packets	Lunch pack
Kattadi keliya	The Minister of Health revealed that the Prime Minister himself had ordered him to go abroad for surgery because there had been rumors that someone has engaged in exorcism to curse him. As a result of this Black Magic the Ministers have the privilege of going abroad for medicine with funds of the public
Mahanayake	Chief priest of the Buddhist temple
Dezinformatsiya	Disinformation in Russian
Color Lights	Traffic lights
Beedi	illicit cigarettes
Yahapalana politicians	The politicians from the good governance party
Mobike	Motor bike

Undergrads	Undergraduates
Semis	Semi finals
JO	Joint Opposition
BN	Basnayaka Nilame
Defund	Slash annual funding
Anti –SAITM protests	Protests against SAITM
Non –performing	to not to work or function well completely
Framers	The committee who drafted the new constitution
Whitners	Whitening cream

Study Limitations

This study had a few limitations. First and foremost, out of several English daily newspapers available for Sri Lankan readership only one was selected due to time constraints. Moreover, the time duration of data collection was limited to one month. Because of this, the number of neologisms gathered for the study was greatly restricted. This limits the generalizability of the study findings. Second, the neologisms were gathered only from news article headings. Obviously, more neologisms would have been collected after a careful observation of all local news articles yielding more insight into use of word formation processes in Sri Lankan print media.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that the most productive strategy used in news headings of Sri Lankan print media to generate neologisms is loanwords. According to Yule (2006) this process is not the most productive but one of the most common processes of producing new words in English. Loan Translations and loanblends were also found to be two strategies used in forming neologisms in print media. Derivation, the process generally accepted as the most productive strategy of forming new words in English was found to be one of the most common processes together with compounding. All the identified compounds were hybrid compounds where a word in Sinhala merged with a word in English.

The significant observation of this study was the heavy use of Sri Lankan English vocabulary in print media of the country. "Sri Lankan English (SLE) is the language spoken and understood by those Sri Lankans who speak English as their first language, and/or who are bilingual in English and Sinhala or Tamil" (Meyler, 2007 p, x). Gunesekera (2005) defines Sri Lankan English as the variety of English used only by Sri Lankans for any purpose within the country.

Therefore, the identified loanwords and compounds the print media transmit the focus of the news more realistically blending English with the local languages maintaining the human interest which is the key influence for the choice of such vocabulary.

While this study revealed that clippings and acronyms are less productive processes of forming new words, in general they are accepted as productive processes. As this study focused only on headings of local news articles, studies that focus on other areas of Sri Lankan print media are necessary to explore the actual productive processes used in generating neologisms in Sri Lankan print media. Finally, due to time constraints this study is limited to one local English newspaper. Similar studies using other local English newspapers and comparative studies to explore the variations in the use of vocabulary in Sri Lankan newspapers from the past until now may shed more light on the use of neologisms in print media of Sri Lanka.

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