

Awareness and Attitude of Undergraduates towards Sri Lankan English

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Abstract: This study examines dialects 1-3 based on the pronunciation of the back vowels in the typology of Sri Lankan English (SLE) assembled by Siromi Fernando across the /ɜ/ and /ou/, /ei/, /z/, /θ/, phonemes. The methodology included online questionnaires/interviews and voice recordings of 50 undergraduates, mean age 22 years, from diverse disciplines in universities/institutes in Sri Lanka and abroad. 05 of the participants were case studies. The findings identified a large undergraduate population declare that the variety of English they speak is either Standard British English or American English thus belonging to dialect 3. But analysis of the podcasts evidenced that in the selected pronunciation areas examined SLE characteristics are indicated. In the usage of identified morphological processes too they retained SLE characteristics. Analyzing the Likert scale measurements, it was clearly visible that both of the aforementioned factors distinctly differ according to the discipline the undergraduates follow. The attitude towards SLE in undergraduates especially from Sciences, was comparatively negative. Their belief of the inadequacy of SLE for communication with native speakers was the cause for their negativity. Further they lack awareness of SLE as a standard variety of English. On the contrary, the students who are from Social Sciences/Humanities were aware and proud to use SSLE. Conclusively, dialect 3 is becoming more powerful and influential among the Sri Lankan undergraduate populations. Moreover, it is recommended to create awareness on SLE as a standard variety in undergraduate English programs, especially for the undergraduates from a Science background.

Keywords: Sri Lankan English, Attitudes, Awareness, Undergraduates, Humanities.

INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Linguistic Background

World Englishes

“English has acquired unprecedented sociological and ideological dimensions. It is now well-recognized that in linguistic history no language has touched the lives of so many people, in so many cultures and continents, in so many functional roles, and with so much prestige, as has the English language since the 1930s. And, equally important, across cultures English has been successful in creating a class of people who have greater intellectual power in multiple spheres of language use” -Kachru [1].

English, being the third most spoken language in the world and the lingua-franca in many countries had given birth to several varieties of English around the world. According to Leith [2]: “English beyond Europe is associated with four centuries of Colonialism.” However, along with the colonial settlement, through religion, education and trade English widespread across the globe. According to Kachru [3], there are three circles on classifying English as a World language as shown in the figure-1 below.

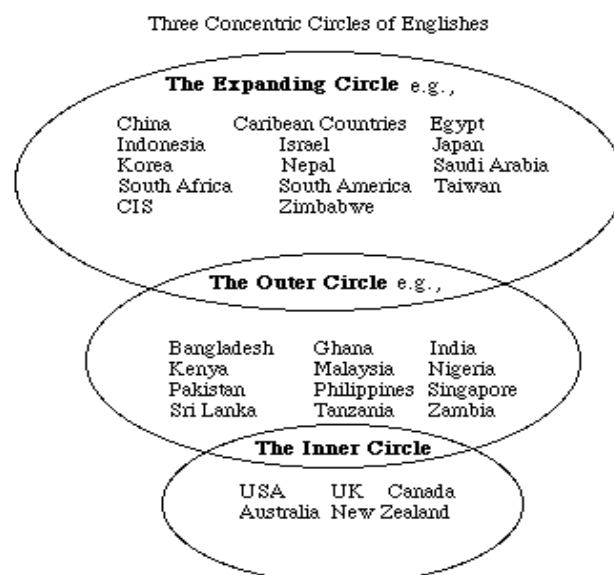


Fig-1: Kachru [3], Source: World-englishes-and-their-features.blogspot.com

According to Kachru [3], the countries where English is spoken as the native language belong to the circle 1. They are the norm-providing varieties of

English which have the traditional base. Such Varieties are: SBE (Standard British English), AE (American English), Australian English (AuE) etc. Belong to the Outer Circle are countries where English is spoken in non-native settings, yet the language is official in many public domains such as administration, media, legislation, education etc. Hence, English is considered a Second Language. Kachru names these varieties as the “norm developing”. Most of these countries had begun to use English as a consequence of Colonial Settlement. Such countries are Sri Lanka, India, Philippines, and Kenya etc. In the Expanding Circle are the countries that use English as a Foreign Language. They are norm-dependent varieties where English is spoken only for international communication purposes.

In this research paper, the varieties of English that are being discussed are the varieties that belong to Inner Circle, which are: SBE, AE and AuE. Yet, the foremost concern is on SSLE: Standard Sri Lankan English which belongs to the Expanding Circle.

Standard Sri Lankan English

Sri Lanka, which was invaded by British rulers, was under the rule of British Government for centuries. When working with British rulers, whose mother tongue was English, Sri Lankans, who were monologists earlier, had to learn English in order to function in fields such as administration, education, legislation etc. Herat [4] states “The English language was introduced to Sri Lanka in 1796 as a ‘gift’ from the colonialists”. However, even after the decolonization, by learning English, “huge numbers of these non-English using people acquired the kind of visibility that will not allow them any longer to be disregarded as they had been during the long period of colonial visitation” [5].

According to Meyler’s [6] definition, “Sri Lankan English is the language spoken by those Sri Lankans who speak English as their first language, and/or who are bilingual in English and Sinhala or Tamil.” On the other hand, Gunasekera [7] defines Sri Lankan English as “... the language used by Sri Lankans who chose to use English for whatever purpose in Sri Lanka.”

Nevertheless, it can be identified that the “Sri Lankan English” was born as a result of the “contact situation” which occurred between the donor language: Standard British English (SBE) and vernacular languages : Sinhala and Tamil (native languages in Sri Lanka. Therefore, in the context of Sri Lankan English influence of both donor language and the vernacular languages can be found. Moreover, the influential vernacular language was Sinhala. Yet, Sri Lankan English doesn’t deviate from the SBE though it has some distinct features with regard to phonology,

morphology, syntax etc. There are two main varieties of Sri Lankan English: Standard Sri Lankan English (SSLE) and non-standard varieties of Sri Lankan English.

Attitudes towards Other Varieties of English

The attitudes towards English highly differ from country to country especially depending on the three circles of World Englishes as mentioned above. In countries which belong to the Outer circle, learning English is considered as an advantage and rather a must to earn a prestigious position and even in daily routines. Yet, when considering a country that belongs to the Expanding Circle, they do not pay much attention to learn English since it’s a foreign language and their countries do have other second languages to learn. With regard to a country such as Italy which belongs to the Expanding Circle, they always tend to learn a language such as Spanish or French, yet the students pay little attention to learning English. For them, English is needed only for international communication purposes.

According to the research done by Bernaisch & Koch [8] “*Indian speakers of English have a positive attitude towards their local variety, which is attitudinal evidence for the status of IndE as a variety in its own right.*” Moreover, the users of English Singapore too does have a positive attitude towards speaking in Standard Singaporean English as identifies by Tan and Tan [9] in their research: “*The results show that there is a clear appreciation of the value of Standard English*”. Hence, it can be understood that most of the countries that belong to the Outer Circle has a positive attitude towards their authentic standard varieties of English.

However, in the countries where English is considered as a Foreign Language, the attitude differs. For them, learning English is not a must unless for international communication. According to García [10], Spain which belongs to the Expanding Circle, is on a growing trend of learning English.

The role that English plays in Spain is not far from the ones played in other European countries. English has unquestionably become the main vehicle of communication or lingua franca among speakers who do not share a common tongue. Consequently, different trends have emerged among scholars as regards the international role of English.

Considering about the attitudes the Chinese students too have towards English is positive according to researchers. Though China too belongs to the expanding circle, they are in need of learning English for their international communication. As identified by Miao and Muthanna [11] in their research there are several factors that lead Chinese undergraduates and postgraduates to learn English:

The participants, furthermore, expressed their complete readiness to join post-graduate programs wherein only the English Medium Learning strategy is implemented. In addition to the factors identified in the literature, the current article also recognized new factors that led the participants to conceiving positive attitudes: maintaining a global friendship, obtaining a leadership position, and acquainting with international scholars.

Therefore, it can be summarized that the attitude towards English highly differs from the countries which belong to the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle where the users of English in countries that belong Outer Circle consider learning English is essential for their livelihood whereas in the countries that belong to Expanding Circle, the speakers of English consider learning English only for international communication purposes.

Attitudes towards Sri Lankan English

Throughout the centuries where English is established as a second language in Sri Lanka, the attitudes towards English had evolved with several socio-cognitive factors such as ethno-nationalistic movements, schools of religious beliefs, resistance to language, dehegemonization and ethnic lineage.

English was selected as the official language in Sri Lanka after it was declared as a British Colony. Then group of locals were provided with an education in English by the rulers for them to act as interpreters. This leads to the formulation of westernized English Elite in Sri Lanka. As a consequence, a gap was created between the Westernized English elites and the Sinhala/Tamil speaking masses and English was identified as a class and social indicator. Moreover, English became a weapon of subjugation, oppression and frustration for the non-educated masses as they couldn't achieve social mobility as they lack knowledge of English.

However, even after centuries, this attitude remained and a pinnacle of it reached in 1970s with the

emergence of the “Kaduwa” Syndrome: an antagonistic movement against English. This was a result of the social inequality happened due to the lack of the knowledge in language. Many of the youth were educated in English as a second language. So they faced difficulties in handling their English, though they were armed with university degrees. Thus, they started to consider English as a weapon which indicates power in Sri Lankan Society and which is a social indicator between the upper class and the lower class. However, Widyalanakara [12] recognizes, there is a “reemergence of the term Kaduwa” where the undergraduates consider it with “an affinity towards English”.

Though the “Kaduwa” is considered a derogatory term by the Sinhalese majority, according to Gunesequera [7] in the Tamil Community “English is admired as the language of professionalism and upward mobility and is learnt with enthusiasm by the Tamil Speakers.” Moreover, she exemplifies in Sri Lanka “The gap between those who know English and those who do not know English denotes the gap between the haves and the have-nots.” Furthermore, in her study Gunesequera [7] had identified that there is a “bias towards British English, particularly in Colombo.” Simultaneously, her findings also suggest that there is a “growing acceptance and awareness of Sri Lankan English mostly tied up with the growing bilingualism.”

Theoretical Background

The research paper: “When is a “hall” a “hole”?: Issues and Guidelines in Sri Lankan English Pronunciation” by Siromi Fernando [7] is considered as the theoretical background for this research. Her paper “attempts to define features of Standard SLE, as well as other SLE dialects”. In her article, the main attention had been paid to the pronunciation of four back vowels: /ɔ/, /ɔ:/, /o/ and /o:/. Based on the differences in pronunciation in those back vowels, the author had identified four dialects spoken by the Sri Lankan English users. The distinct features of these four dialects can be stated as follows:

Table 1: Typology of SLE based on the pronunciation of back rounded vowels [13]

Dialect 1	Dialect 2	Dialect 3	Dialect 4
Considered as the “ standard variety ” of Sri Lankan English.			Considered as the “ non-standard variety ” of Sri Lankan English.
No complete consistency to distinguish dialect 1 and dialect 2 but speakers are confident of its identity.	Used by highly educated people who are quite familiar with English and who are in high ranking positions. Yet they use English as a second language in public domains. i.e. higher education, employment		Use less English in the public domains.

Pronunciation of back rounded vowels Ability : /ə'bil.ə.ti / Obtain : /əb'tem / Suspend : /sə'spend/	Ability : /æbiliti/ Obtain : /ɔbte:n/ Suspend : /s'spend/	Norm is SBE, AE or even AuE	Not a powerful dialect and the users are open to learn the correct dialects.
Pronunciation is more close to SBE.		Increasingly powerful dialect.	

In my research, focus had been paid on dialects 1-3 as identified by Fernando. Since the dialect 4: the non-standard variety of SLE, requires a broader scope of study which diverts the central attention that has to be paid on SSLE dialects, this research does not cover studies on the dialect 4.

However, from the dialects 1-3, the foremost observation is directed at dialect 3: where the norm is considered as either SBE, AE or AuE. This study examines the increasing power and the influence of dialect 3 among Sri Lankan undergraduates.

METHODOLOGY

Overview of the Instruments Used

Online questionnaires and podcasts were used as two instruments to conduct this research. Online questionnaires were sent to participants in order to gain information on their morphological and syntactical

awareness on SSLE along with their attitudes. Simultaneously, every participant was asked to record five sentences given on a podcast to investigate whether their pronunciation aligns with the variety of English that they claim to speak.

Two separate questionnaires were sent to the Sri Lankan undergraduates and for the Sri Lankan undergraduates who are studying off-shore. The second questionnaire differed from the first questionnaire only from the questions asked regarding their education background and from the question asked on their attitude towards varieties of English they speak. However, in both of the questionnaires, the participant's name has to be asked in order to match their questionnaire answers with the podcast they sent. Generally, in both questionnaires, there were 15 questions which addressed the following areas.

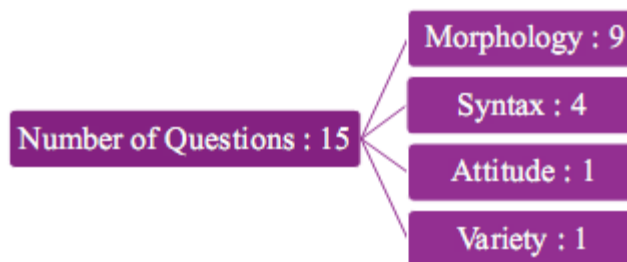


Fig-2: Genre division in questionnaires

Introduction to the Methodology

Though it had been several decades since the introduction of SLE as a standard variety, it was questionable for the researcher whether the Sri Lankan population was clearly aware of SSLE. Nonetheless, how the attitude of Sri Lankans towards SSLE had changed along with the globalization was needed to be examined. Hence, with a selected group of population, this research was carried out with the objective of investigating the awareness and attitudes of Sri Lankan Undergraduates towards Sri Lankan English (SLE).

This research serves both as a critical evaluation and an attitudinal survey. The study of back vowels done by Fernando [7] to investigate the dialects of SSLE was extended to morphology and syntax, in this research. Through the questions asked, participants'

awareness on SSLE Morphology and Syntax were checked. Moreover, to determine the phonological usage of dialect 1-3, phonemes /ei/, /z/, /θ/, /ʒ/ and /oʊ/ were examined.

Questions on SSLE Morphology

With regard to Morphology, questions were being set covering four main distinct features of SSLE morphology as identified by Guneseckera [7] The four distinct features were Direct Borrowing, Use of Expressions, Compounding, Duplication and Use of the tag "no". These four distinct features of SSLE Morphology were examined through the following questions.

Direct Borrowing

The following question was asked on direct borrowing.

Which would be your most frequently used term to name the following traditional sweet?

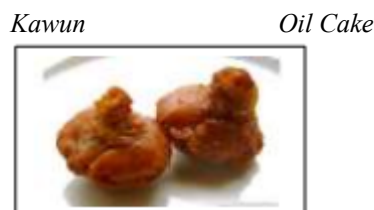


Fig-3: The traditional sweet Kawun/ Oil Cake; Source: kavumkokis.com

Use of Expressions

Gunsekera [7] states “Sri Lankan English has borrowed heavily from Sinhalese and Tamil for expressions of love, hate, disgust, annoyance; in short, for all the emotions.”

Hence, the usage of the expressions “Aaw Aww”, “Ayyo”, “Apoi”, “Aney” and “Sin Men” were checked from the following question.

Table 2: Do you use these expressions in informal speech with fellow Sri Lankans?

Expression	Yes	No
Aaw Aww		
Ayyo		
Apoi		
Aney		
Sin Men		

Use of the tag “No”

The tag “No” in Sri Lankan English is not only used when asking questions, but also when a clarification or an emphasis are needed, it is being said.

Gunsekera [7] states that “it is a transfer from Sinhala ‘nee’ and ‘needa”. The frequency of the usage of this distinct feature of SSLE morphology was examined through the following question in the questionnaire.

How often would you use the tag ‘no’ a shown in the following example?

Ex: ‘You are in the university, no?’

1 Never	2	3	4	5 Always

Compounds

In SLE Compounds, a borrowing from a Sinhalese or Tamil compounds with an English word [7]. Sometimes this can be a compound between two English words as well. Though the correct usage is

mentioning “red”, as a direct translation from Sinhala, the SSLE users are used to state it as “red colour”. Hence, the following question was asked from the undergraduates to determine with which word/phrase they are more familiar with.

Out of the following ways, which would you use when you are asked to label a colour?

Red

Red colour



Duplication

Another distinct feature of SSLE Morphology is Duplication where the adjectives or nouns are repeated

to provide more emphasis [7]. Thus, following question was asked from the undergraduates to recognize whether they are familiar with duplication in English.

Out of the following, which is the most familiar statement for you?

Hot hoppers

Hot hot hoppers

Questions on SSLE Syntax

SSLE English Syntax differs from SBE Syntax especially with regard to the word order. As

Gunsekera [7] identifies “In Sri Lankan English, the basic rules of English syntax are followed with some variation, particularly found in speech.” However,

there are distinct differences between the speech and writing on SSLE.

In order to determine the frequency of usage in SSLE Syntax, four questions were asked from undergraduates that covers the following features of SSLE Syntax.

Topicalization

Among the following, which would you use in informal speech?

- Very busy, I am. I am very busy

Pronoun Deletion

As Gunsekera [7] states, "In colloquial Sinhala, the verb alone is sufficient for the question formation, with the question tag". Hence, this had influenced the users of SSLE where they tend to delete

When talking to peers, what would you prefer out of the following?

- So how? How are you?

Overuse of Prepositions

Though overuse of prepositions was considered as an error earlier, now gradually it had been

Is the following example correct or wrong? Ex: She did not sit for the exam.

- Correct Wrong

In the above sentence: "She did not sit for the exam", the sentence is correct even without the use of the preposition "for", yet in the modern context, SSLE users heavily uses it as "sit for the exam."

Use of Double Comparatives

Though not used in formal writing, in SSLE speech, double comparatives are being used. According

Is the following example correct or wrong?
Ex: the performance was much worse than I thought.

- Correct Wrong

Test on SSLE Phonology

SSLE phonology differs from SBE phonology with regard to many phonemes since some sounds available in SBE are not familiar with the Sri Lankan English users whose first language is either Sinhala or Tamil. As far as the SLE users are bilingual, "the phonology of Sinhala/Tamil has influenced SSLE" [7].

1. Say the Truth
2. Go there leisurely, not when busy
3. Think Positive because the game is on.

Especially with regard to speech, SSLE Syntax highly uses Topicalization, where the main topic of the sentence is brought forward, with the verb phrase following it [7]. Under this feature, the conventional subject-verb-object sentence structure of SBE is reversed. Thus, the following question was constructed to identify whether Topicalization is used by Sri Lankan Undergraduates.

the pronoun and uses only the verb only to ask a question.

Therefore, to determine whether the Sri Lankan undergraduates use Pronoun Deletion in their SSLE usage, following question was asked.

a part of SSLE [7]. [26] To identify whether the undergraduates do consider this is an error or not, following question was constructed.

to Gunsekera [7], "The use of double comparatives seems to be a growing trend in many varieties of English."

Hence, the following sentence with the double comparative "much worse" was given to the undergraduates to determine whether they understand that as correct or wrong.

Hence, the test done with regard to phonology can be considered as an appropriate instrument to determine to which variety of English a particular user of English belongs to. Therefore, the following five Sentences were given to the participants to send as podcasts which were constructed to examine the selected phonemes /i/, /z/, /θ/, /ʒ/ and /oo/.

4. It is **great** to **measure**.
5. It is a **pleasure** to travel in the **boat** wearing a blue **coat**, **with** my friends, while having **dessert**.

The aforementioned phonemes were examined through the following words.

Table 3: Instrument to determine the variety of English used by participants

/ʒ/	/ou/	/ei/	/z/	/θ/
Leisure	Coat	Say	Busy	Think
Measure	Go	Game	Positive	Truth
Pleasure	Boat	Great	Dessert	With

According to the study done by Gunasekera (2005)^[29], in SSLE phonology, most of the times, the diphthong /ei/ in SBE is pronounced as /ee/. Simultaneously, /ou/ in SBE is pronounced in SSLE as /oo/. The palatal fricative /ʒ/ in SBE is not being used in SSLE pronunciation, yet it is replaced by “j”. In most of the words where /z/ is the SBE phoneme pronounced, /s/ is pronounced in SSLE. Another distinct feature of the consonant pronunciation in SSLE is the unavailability of the dental fricative /θ/, where it is replaced with the dental stop /t/.

Thus, the podcasts retained were an effective instrument to determine whether the variety of English the participant speaks is SSLE, SBE, AE or other varieties of English.

Question on Attitudes

In both of the questionnaires prepared, at the end, a question was asked on the attitude of the

Finally, are you proud of the variety of English you speak? Whether it is ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ Please explain why.

For the Sri Lankan undergraduates who are studying overseas, the question on the attitude differed.

What is your attitude towards Sri Lankan English compared to the variety of English you speak? Though you can claim that you speak SLE, please compare it with the variety of English that is spoken in your country.

.....

Population

The undergraduate population who participated in the survey was 50. Among them, 40 undergraduates are from the Sri Lankan Universities and Institutes while 10 are Sri Lankan undergraduates studying off-shore. The mean age of the undergraduates was 22. Five of the participants were considered as case

participant towards the variety of English he/she speaks. This was an open ended question where the participant could express his/her ideas freely. For the undergraduates who are studying in Sri Lanka, the following question was asked as the final question in the questionnaire.

They were asked to compare the variety they speak along with SSLE as shown below.

studies. The population who participated in the survey can be illustrated through the following divisions.

Division According to the Universities (Sri Lankan Undergraduates)

Sri Lankan participants who participated in this survey are mainly from 5 state universities and few of the private institutes.

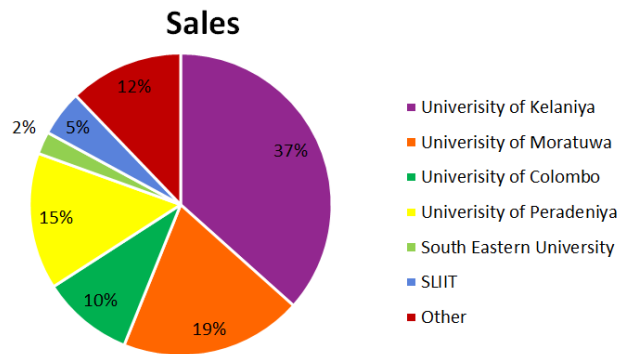


Fig-3: University Basis of Sri Lankan Participants

Country Basis of the Off-Shore Sri Lankan Undergraduates

The 10 participants who belong to this category were basically from three countries; which are:

The United States of America, The United Kingdom and Australia.

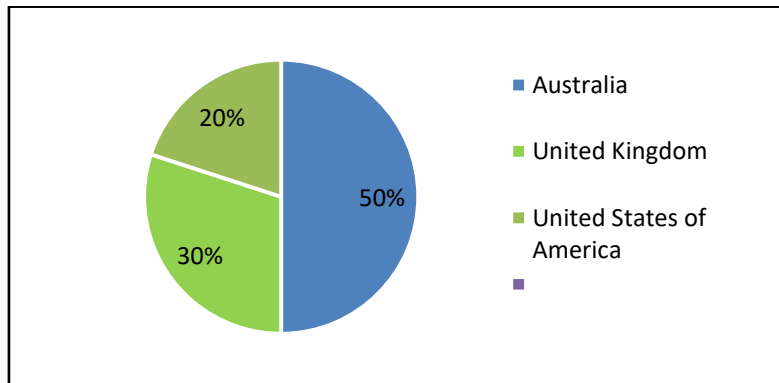


Fig-4: Country Basis of Sri Lankan Off-Shore undergraduates

Division According to Gender

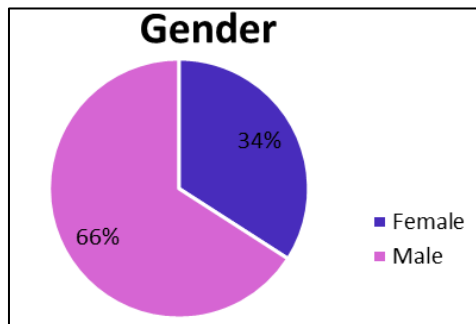


Fig-5: Gender Division of participants

Division according to Academic Discipline

The participants of this survey were from multi-disciplinary academic backgrounds ranging from

Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, IT, Commerce and Management to Arts. They can be categorized as follows.

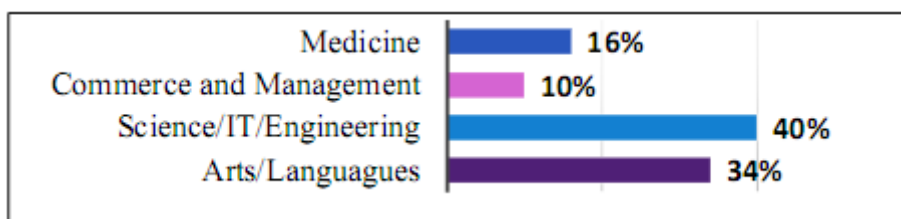


Fig-6: Academic Discipline of participants

FINDINGS

Variety of English

For the online questionnaire, the percentage of variety of Englishes

undergraduates had claimed to speak are as follows.

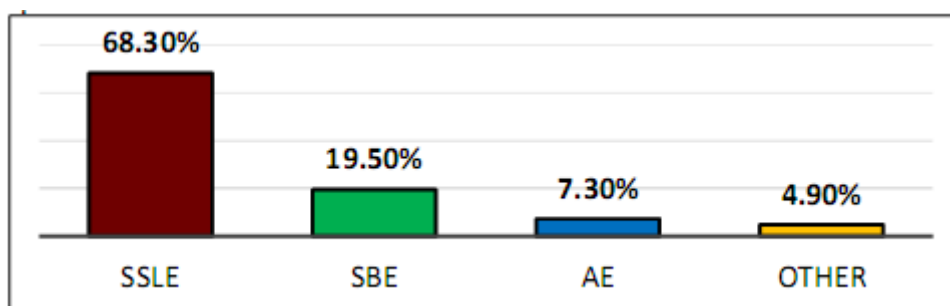


Fig-7: Percentage of variety of Englishes undergraduates had claimed to speak

Though a majority of the undergraduates claim that they use SSLE the considerable factor is that there is a percentage of 31.7% who claims that they speak SBE, AE or other varieties. To determine whether this 31.7% actually does use other World English varieties, podcasts appeared to be an effective instrument.

Analysis on the Awareness on SSLE Morphology

Direct Borrowing

For the question asked on Direct Borrowing, answers of the participants can be analyzed as follows.

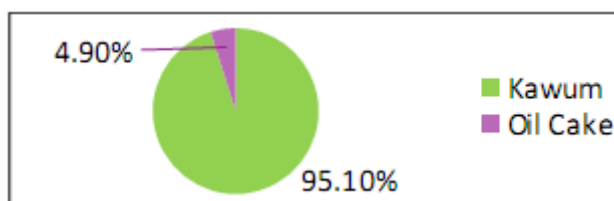


Fig-8: Use of direct borrowing

Though 37.1% of the participants had claimed that they do not speak SSLE, in the above figure it is clearly evident that they use the direct borrowing from the Sinhalese term for the traditional sweet “Kawum” without being aware that has an English term named as “Oil Cake”. As 95.10% of the undergraduates use a direct borrowing with regard to their morphological usage, it can be considered that almost all of them are SSLE users though some of them had claimed they

either speak SBE, AE or other varieties due to the lack of awareness as SSLE as a standard variety.

Use of Expressions

For the question constructed on Use of Expressions with regard to five expressions, the answers given by the participants can be illustrated as follows.

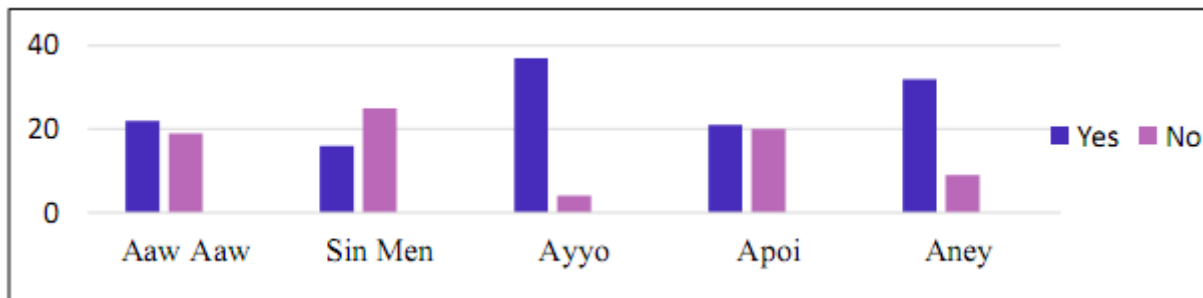


Fig-9: Use of selected Expressions

Figure 9 uncovers that most of the undergraduates tend to use Sinhalese expressions such as “*ayyo*”, “*Aney*” and “*Aww Aww*” in their speech with their peers. Hence, it is evident that their vocabulary is embedded with distinct characteristics of Sri Lankan English Morphology though they claim to

speak other varieties of World Englishes due to lack of awareness towards SSLE.

Use of the Tag “No”

For the question asked on Use of the Tag “no”, answers of the participants can be analyzed as follows.

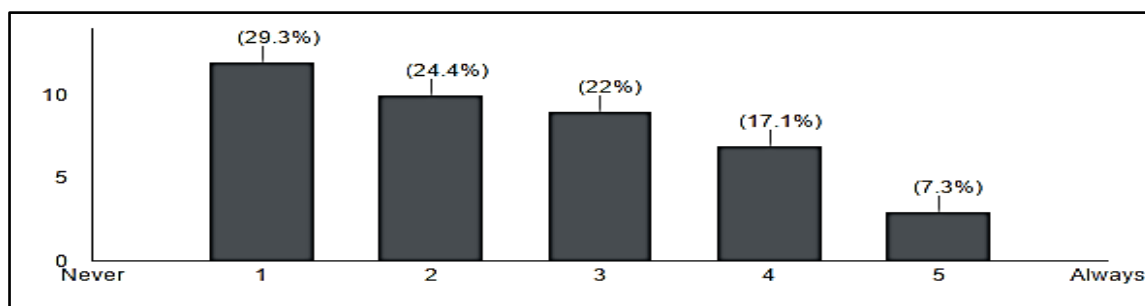


Fig-10: Use of the Tag “no”

Though 29.3% of the undergraduates claim that they never use the tag “no” and only 7.3% of the undergraduates state that they always use the tag “no”, it is noticeable that in between there are undergraduates who use the tag “no” in their speech sometimes. Once more this proves that though 31.7% of the undergraduate population claim that they do not speak SSLE, their speech consists of the distinct characteristics of SSLE.

Compounds

For the question asked on Compounds in, answers given by participants can be shown as in the figure 11. Though a majority of the participants do not use the word “colour” after the name of a colour, 24% of the participants are familiar with it.

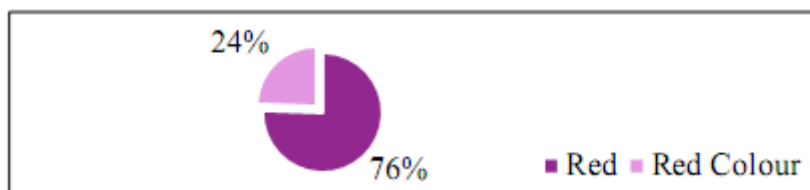


Fig-11: Compounds

Duplication

For the question asked on Duplication in, answers given by participants can be shown as below.

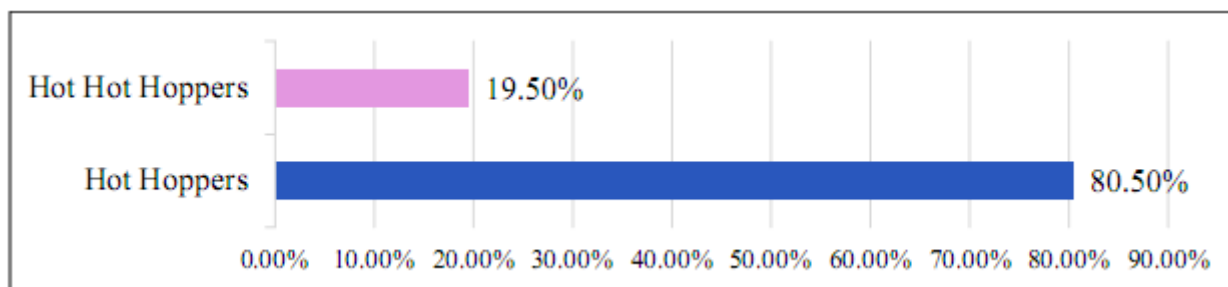


Fig-12: morphological process

Analyzing the above figure, it can be considered that 19.50% of the undergraduates are familiar with the morphological process Duplication in SSLE.

Summary of the Analysis on Morphology

After examining the data, the frequency of using the distinct characteristics of SSLE Morphology by the Sri Lankan Undergraduates can be illustrated as follows.

Table 3: Using the distinct characteristics of SSLE Morphology

Morphological Process	Frequency in Usage
Direct Borrowing	Very High
Use of Expressions	High
Use of the Tag "No"	Average
Compounding	Low
Duplication	Low

Analysis on the Awareness on SSLE Syntax Topicalization

For the question constructed on Topicalization, answers of the participants are analyzed as follows.

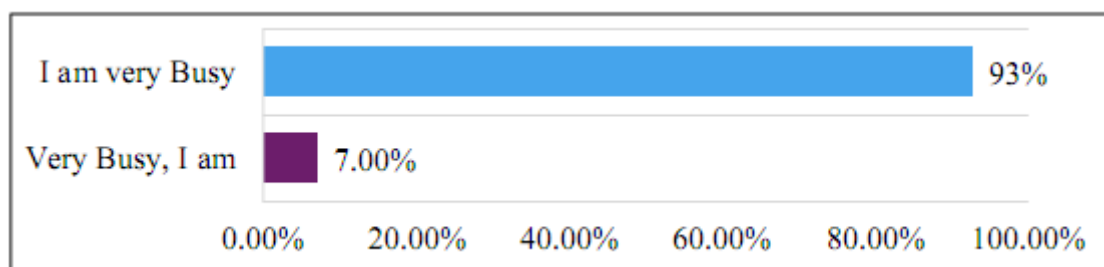


Fig-13: Topicalization

After examining the above chart, it is clear that the undergraduates are not very familiar with the SSLE syntactic feature: Topicalization.

Pronoun Deletion

For the question on Pronoun Deletion, answers of the participants can be illustrated as follows.

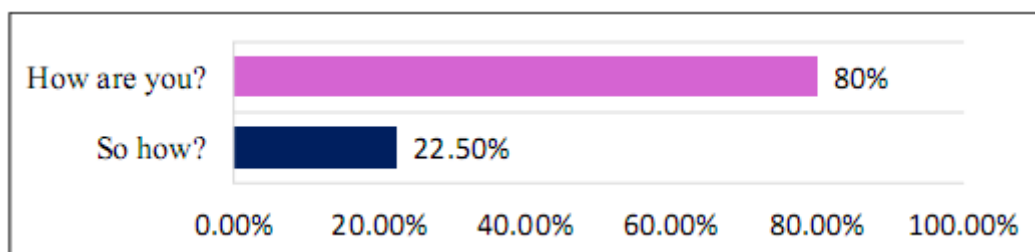


Fig-14: Pronoun Deletion

The above figure depicts that a considerable number of undergraduates are familiar with pronoun

deletion in their English Usage and as a percentage that is 22.5%.

Overuse of Prepositions

For the question on Pronoun Deletion, the answers given by the participants can be summarized as it is shown in the figure 15.

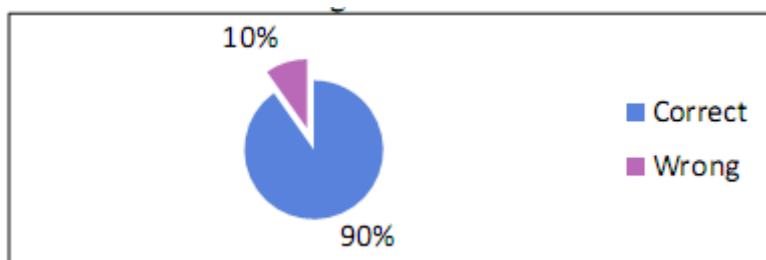


Fig-15: Pronoun Deletion summarized

However, though the sentence given in the questionnaire consists of the overuse of the preposition “for”, only 10% of the undergraduates could recognize that since they are familiar with the usage “sit for the exam” as it is said in the context of SLE. This shows that though 31.7% of the undergraduates do claim that they do not speak SSLE, they have the distinct syntactic features of SLE embed in their speech and writing and

the reason why they claim to speak other varieties of Englishes is because of their lack of awareness towards SLE.

Use of Double Comparatives

For the question on Use of Double Comparatives, answers of the participants can be summarized as below.

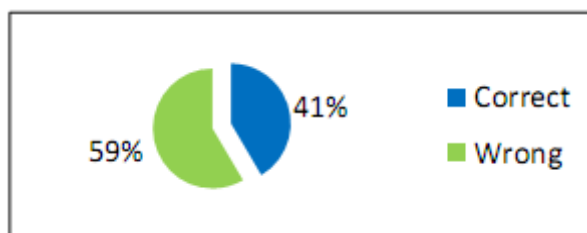


Fig-16: Use of Double Comparatives

With regard to Double Comparatives, only 59% of the undergraduate population considered it as wrong whereas 41% claimed that it is correct. Though the sentence given consist of a double comparative, which is “much worse”, it is clearly evident that a considerable amount of undergraduates do believe it as correct since they are familiar with the syntactic usage of Double Comparatives in SLE.

Summary of the Analysis on Syntax

After examining the data, the frequency of using the distinct characteristics of SSLE Syntax by the Sri Lankan Undergraduates can be illustrated as follows.

Morphological Process	Frequency in Usage
<i>Topicalization</i>	Very Low
<i>Pronoun Deletion</i>	Low
<i>Overuse of Preposition</i>	Very High
<i>Use of Double Comparatives</i>	Average

Analysis on the Attitudes towards SSLE

The answers which were given by the participants on the question asked on attitudes were selectively grouped in to three categories. Few examples from all the three categories and a summary of each category are given below.

Category 1: Undergraduates who claim to speak SSLE

Attitudes towards SSLE by the undergraduates who claim to speak SSLE and who are from academic disciplines which is not Arts, are grouped in this category.

Table 5: Attitudes of undergraduates who claim to speak SSLE

Student Number	Question: Are you proud of the variety of English you speak?	Faculty and the University
1	"No I am not. Because I want to talk like a native speaker but I am not that fluent"	Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya
2	"No. There's nothing to be proud. Because everyone around me uses English."	Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya
3	"No. Sri Lankan English is not natural enough"	Faculty of Science, South Eastern University

All the three of the aforementioned attitudes towards SSLE claims that none of those users are proud of using SLE. However, the second student seems to lack the awareness of varieties of English since she generalizes "Speaking English" rather than commenting about varieties.

Category 2: Undergraduates who claim to speak SBE/AE

Attitudes of undergraduates who claim to speak SBE/AE are grouped in this category. A noticeable factor was that none of the undergraduates who are from Arts background claimed that they speak other varieties of World English except for SSLE.

Table 6: Attitudes of undergraduates who claim to speak SBE/AE

Student Number	Variety	Question: Are you proud of the variety of English you speak?	Faculty and the University
1	SBE	"Some what yes, because I speak another foreign language than my mother tongue, but depending on the grammar and the pronunciations I use I'm not really proud because they aren't perfect."	Faculty of Engineering, Austen Institute of Management
2	AE	"Yes, why because we use English which is not our native language."	Faculty of Commerce and Management, University of Kelaniya
3	SBE	"Yes. If not I wouldn't be speaking."	Faculty of IT, University of Moratuwa

In contrast to the undergraduates who belonged to the category 1, the undergraduates who are in the category 2 are proud of the variety of English they speak; which is either SBE or AE since they think they speak a language of another country. With reference to the third undergraduate who claims to speak SBE, it is evident that he thinks he can use only SBE to speak in English. This clearly shows he lacks the awareness of World Englishes and SSLE.

Category 3: Undergraduates who claim to speak SSLE from the Art Faculties

Attitudes towards SSLE by the undergraduates who claim to speak SSLE and who are from the art faculties: Social Sciences and Humanities, are grouped in this category.

Table 7: undergraduates who speak SSLE and who are from the Art Faculties

Student Number	Question: Are you proud of the variety of English you speak?	Faculty and the University
1	"Yes. Speaking standard "British English" is impossible as we (Sri Lankans) are not native speakers. Language like English throughout many years has created many varieties and Sri Lankan English is the variety of English many of us here do speak. Yet majority of people don't admit it. Thus in my opinion if one is able to express himself clearly I don't mind the variety which he speaks"	Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo
2	"Yes. I feel more comfortable not being guided by one single standard in my usage of English. it provides the opportunity to create a new standard unique to us as a country."	Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kelaniya
3	"Yes, because it has its own unique flavor, and it gives me a sense of security - a "Sri Lankanness"	Faculty of Humanities, University of Kelaniya

In contrast to the undergraduates who belong to the category 1 and who were not proud of speaking SSLE, in category 3 all the undergraduates were proud of speaking SSLE. They stated that they take pride in speaking English according to the Sri Lankan standards since it has authenticity.

Summary of Attitudes

After investigating the data, the attitudes of the Sri Lankan undergraduates towards the varieties of English they speak can be summarized as below.

Table 8: Attitudes of undergraduates towards the varieties of English they speak

Category	Variety	Academic Discipline	Awareness	Attitude
1	SSLE	Science, Medicine	Lack of awareness on SSLE	Not Proud of Speaking SSLE
2	SBE/ AE	Science, Commerce and Management	Lack of awareness on SSLE	Proud of speaking SBE/AE
3	SSLE	Arts: Social Sciences and Humanities	Good.	Proud of Speaking SSLE

The above figure clearly shows that many of the undergraduates who participated in this survey and who are from academic backgrounds which is not Arts, lack the awareness on SSLE as a standard variety. The other noticeable fact is that even the minor amount of the undergraduates who claim to speak SSLE from academic backgrounds which is not Arts are not proud of the speaking SSLE and they do not feel confident to use SSLE.

depending on their academic background, their country of studying and the variety of English they speak. Summary of all the five case studies are as follows:

Case Study 1: Claims to speak SBE

The following case study was chosen to present an undergraduate who claims to speak SBE due to the lack of awareness he has on SSLE as a standard variety and world Englishes.

Case Studies

From the 50 participants who participated in the survey, 5 were selectively taken as case studies

Table 9: Case Study 1- Analysis

Variety	Academic Discipline	Current Residency	Pronunciation	Attitude	Awareness
SBE	Commerce & Management Faculty	Sri Lanka University of Colombo)	Retained SSLE, especially in /ɜ/, /oʊ/, /z/ and /ei/.	Proud of the thought of speaking SBE	Lack of awareness on world Englishes and SSLE as a variety

His attitude on speaking SBE upon the question “Are you proud of the variety of English you speak” was;

understand what others say in English we should be proud of the variety of English we speak.”

“Yes. Language's main task is communication each other and English language is doing the task international level. There are differences in accents and vocabularies from country to another. But still if we are able to convey a message to another in English and

Case Study 2: Claims to speak SSLE

The following case study was chosen to present an undergraduate who claims to speak SSLE and who has a good awareness on world Englishes. Furthermore, his pronunciation reflected an SBE accent, which shows that he is an user of Dialect 3 according to the Dialects identifies by Fernando [13].

Table 10: Case Study 2- Analysis

Variety	Academic Discipline	Current Residency	Pronunciation (Dialect 3)	Attitude	Awareness
SSLE	Faculty of IT	Sri Lanka (SLIIT)	Some pronunciation remained closer to SBE; especially in phonemes such as /ɜ/, /oʊ/, /z/ and /ei/.	Proud of SSLE since doesn't have to imitate singular models of Englishes.	Impressive awareness on the variety of Englishes

His attitude on speaking SSLE upon the question “Are you Proud of the variety of English you speak” was;
“I may not speak with the standard British accent but yes, I’m proud of my own variety with a Sri Lankan touch and I do not think that we should try to acquire that accent. As long as I speak grammatically correct, that’s all what matters.”

Case Study 3: Claims to speak SSLE

The following case study was chosen to present an undergraduate who claims to speak SSLE and who has a good awareness on world Englishes. Moreover, her pronunciation too were more towards SBE accent, which shows that she is an user of Dialect 3 according to the Dialects identifies by Fernando [13].

Table 11: Case Study 3- Analysis

Variety	Academic Discipline	Current Residency	Pronunciation (Dialect 3)	Attitude	Awareness
SSLE	Faculty of Arts	Sri Lanka University of Colombo	Some pronunciation closer to SBE	Proud not having to acquire an accent.	Impressive awareness on the variety of Englishes.

Her attitude on speaking SSLE upon the question “Are you Proud of the variety of English you speak” was;
“When it comes to the process of communication, I don’t personally think that we should try to imitate the so-called singular model of British or American English. What is important is making sense to the other party.”

Case Study 4: Claims to speak AuE

The following case study was chosen to present an undergraduate who claims to speak AuE and who studies in Australia.

Table 12: Case Study 4- Analysis

Variety	Academic Discipline	Current Residency	Pronunciation	Attitude	Awareness
AuE	Faculty of Engineering	Australia (University of Wollongong)	Acquired in AuE accent yet some words had SSLE pronunciations	AuE is relatively advanced compared to SLE.	Slight awareness on SSLE as a standard variety.

His attitude on speaking AuE upon the question “What is your attitude towards Sri Lankan English compared to the variety of English you speak?” was;
“AuE is relatively advanced compared to SLE”

Case Study 5: Claims to speak SBE

The following case study was chosen to present an undergraduate who claims to speak SBE and who studies in the United Kingdom.

Table 13: Case Study 5- Analysis

Variety	Academic Discipline	Current Residency	Pronunciation	Attitude	Awareness
SBE	Faculty of Law	The UK (University of Southampton)	SBE accent is acquired	Negative attitude towards SSLE and considers SBE is the used variety.	Awareness on SBE yet lacking awareness of SSLE as a standard variety.

Her attitude on speaking SBE upon the question “What is your attitude towards Sri Lankan English compared to the variety of English you speak?” was;
SLE is pretty standard with no specific accent. Simple to comprehend. But British English differs in the sense that it has a unique accent, pronunciation, different usage of the vocabulary which is quite distinct with

varied interpretation of words and phrases not to mention the beauty of different dialects that is unique to specific counties or cities in the UK.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

There were several limitations as identified by the researcher while carrying out the research. They are;

- The research scope couldn't cover dialect 4: Non-Standard Variety of Sri Lankan English. Hence, this research can be considered as a preliminary study done for a longer research.
- Some of the podcasts had an acquired accent and since the participants were aware that the podcasts were for a survey they were reluctant to send podcasts at first and later it seems they had tried to acquire an accent while recording.
- Only one question could be asked in the survey on the attitudes towards SSLE hence the research needs future extensive explorations on the attitudes towards SSLE.
- Information on the participants' socio-economical and secondary school backgrounds are limited. If those were known, it could have been easier for the researcher to link these variables to their attitudes and awareness towards SSLE.
- The ESL programs the participants' follow in their universities were not known to the researcher unless they were from University of Kelaniya. If that was known, the cause behind lack of the awareness on SSLE in Sri Lankan undergraduates could have been appropriately investigated.

Though 31.7% of the undergraduates claimed that they speak other varieties of World Englishes, from the above analysis of the questions answered by the participants it was evident that most of them had claimed they do not speak SSLE since they are not aware of it as a Standard variety. It can be proved from the following attitude statement of one undergraduate.

If by SSLE you mean broken English, I don't really mind because someone is at least trying to communicate!

The aforementioned statement shows that the speaker lacks awareness of SSLE as a standard variety and for him SSLE is the non-standard variety which some refer to as "Broken English". Hence, it is noticeable that though SSLE had been considered as a standard variety for decades, the population still lacks awareness on SSLE as a standard variety and they are still reluctant to use SSLE in national and international contexts.

After analyzing the aforementioned findings, it can be concluded that the Dialect 3 is becoming more powerful and influential among the Sri Lankan undergraduate populations where the norm is either SBE, AE or even AuE. Though most of them consider that SSLE is the variety of English they speak, it was evident that they have a tendency to follow pronunciations of SBE, AE or even AuE to adapt and move forward with the trends of globalization.

Moreover, with regard to the attitudes of undergraduates towards SSLE, it can be recommended to introduce SSLE as the standard usage in undergraduate English programs to increase their awareness and the confidence in using SSLE especially for the academic disciplines that do not have a Social Sciences or humanities background.

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