

Adaptation and Naturalization in a Linguistic Area: Sinhala Focused Sentences

Author(s): James W. Gair

*Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* (1980), pp. 28-43

Please see “How to cite” in the online sidebar for full citation information.

Please contact BLS regarding any further use of this work. BLS retains copyright for both print and screen forms of the publication. BLS may be contacted via <http://linguistics.berkeley.edu/bls/>.

---

*The Annual Proceedings of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* is published online via [eLanguage](#), the Linguistic Society of America's digital publishing platform.

ADAPTATION AND NATURALIZATION IN A LINGUISTIC AREA:  
SINHALA FOCUSED SENTENCES

James W. Gair  
Cornell University

Murray Emeneau's (1956) paper "India as a Linguistic Area" has become a classic in that it set the direction for one of the dominant trends in South Asian Linguistic scholarship in the last two decades. It has led to a by now considerable body of scholarship aimed not only at further defining that area, but uncovering the processes involved in the formation of such areas. (Thus, for example, Southworth and Apte 1974, Masica 1976 and the references therein among numerous others.)

Sinhala (Sinhalese) as an Indo-Aryan language isolated from its sister languages and long in contact with South Dravidian, is especially interesting in this connection, since it not only exemplifies the processes involved, but points to the formation of subareas within the larger South Asian one. This paper focuses on one particular subsystem within Sinhala, the focused (or "cleft") sentence, which not only exemplifies the kind of syntactic borrowing that leads to a linguistic area, but also shows how internal processes may give the borrowing, once adapted, a unique character within that area.

Sinhala focused sentences, exemplified by the following non-interrogative and interrogative examples, are characterized by a special, emphatic, tensed form of the verb (EMPH), and commonly, though not invariably, rightward placement of the focused constituent (Sinhala is an SOV language):

- S1    gunāpaalə    yanne                    gaməṭə  
      Gunapala    go-PRES-EMPH    village-DAT  
      'It is to the village that Gunapala is going.'
- S2    siripaala    giyee                    kohaṭə    də  
      Siripala    go-PAST-EMPH    where-DAT    Q  
      'Where did Siripala go?'

Such sentences bear a striking formal and semantic resemblance to constructions with a nominal form of the verb in the major South Dravidian languages Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada (Lindholm 1972 and Schiffman 1979) as well as Telugu (Krishnamurti 1974), as exemplified by T1 and T2 from (Sri Lanka Jaffna) Tamil:<sup>1</sup>

T1. naan poonatu yaaLpaanattukku  
 I go-PAST-NOM Jaffna-DAT  
 'It was to Jaffna that I went.'

T2. cuppiramaniam ceyyiRatu enna  
 Subramaniyam do-PRES-NOM what  
 'What is it that Subramaniyam does?'

In contemporary colloquial Sinhala<sup>2</sup> the emphatic verb form has only one use outside focused sentences, as the form regularly occurring before nææ, the usual negator for verbal sentences, as in S3 and S4:

S3. miniha væða karanne nææ  
 man work do-PRES-EMPH nææ  
 'The fellow doesn't work.'

S4. mamæ giyee nææ  
 I go-PAST-EMPH nææ  
 'I didn't go.'

These two functions of EMPH are difficult to subsume under any single syntactic rule, and no syntactic study has done so, as far as I am aware. EMPH has thus been specialized to two uses, one of which is its function in focused sentences.

The verb form used in focused sentences seems to constitute an important difference between Sinhala and the Dravidian languages, since the latter utilize a nominal form of the verb derived by the addition of a pronominal form, generally third person neuter, to the attributive (i.e. "relative") participle. However, although the origin of the Sinhala form is not entirely clear, (contrast Geiger 1938, 134-135 with Paranavitana 1956 clviii) it did function earlier as a nominal form with a third person masculine/neuter ending, and derivation from the same participial sources as the Sinhala attributive (tensed) verb forms seems likely. Thus the resemblance between the Sinhala and the Dravidian constructions would have been even closer at an earlier stage.

I have been unable to find such constructions in any other Indo-Aryan language, and this lack, together with the unmistakable resemblance to Dravidian, justifies the conclusion that the construction was a syntactic borrowing from Dravidian (probably Tamil-Malayalam given the geographical and historical circumstances). It thus affords another instance of the frequently noted Dravidian influence upon the language (See Gair 1976, De Silva 1979 esp. pp. 211ff and associated references).

The probable date of borrowing is not yet clear. Sinhala affords a virtually continuous written record from the second or third century B.C., but evidence up to the twelfth century is inscriptional, with the exception of the Dhampiyā Atuvā Gātapadaya, a glossary on the Dhammapada commentary. Although I have not as yet made an exhaustive investigation of this evidence, a general survey shows that it is not of such a nature as to include the discourse conditions conducive to the kind of construction under consideration. Evidence from the 8th to 10th century Sigiri Graffiti, in poetry, but often more conversational in tone, is somewhat inconclusive. Sentences with the nominal forerunner of the EMPH form are much in evidence (Paranavitana 1956 clxiii), but it is difficult to identify any of them conclusively with the focused construction, despite some examples that can be interpreted as pointing to the existence of that construction in some form (see Gair 1980 for details). By the twelfth century Amāvatura of Gurulugōmi, the oldest surviving extended prose text, the construction is quite clearly present, as exemplified by Ama 1:

Ama 1. sokaśalya            buduhu udurāpiyannaṭa            nissaha  
sorrow-thorns    Buddha pluck-out-NOM-DAT(=INF) suitable  
  
yi    sitannaṭa    ya    utsaha upanne  
COMP thinker-DAT COP effort born-EMPH (Ñāṇaloka p. 282)

'It is to him who thinks 'The Buddha is suitable to pluck out the thorns of sorrow' that effort is born.'

In present-day Sinhala, however, the focusing construction interacts with a number of other grammatical phenomena so as to constitute an important and intricate subsystem in the grammar, and that subsystem clearly had not yet developed by the time of Amāvatura. Before proceeding, we must briefly characterize the present focusing subsystem.

Sinhala focused sentences, also referred to as "cleft" or "emphatic" sentences, have been treated in various ways in recent syntactic studies (chiefly Gair 1970, Fernando 1973, De Abrew 1980). For present purposes, however, we can characterize them on the basis of a number of largely surface features, given as 1-6 below. It is important to note that we are concerned here primarily with focus as a syntactic phenomenon, leaving the semantic aspects for later treatment.

1. The emphatic verb form (except in the use before nax alluded to above) indicates that the focus of the sentence is some sub-

stretch that does not include the verb. Put otherwise, the following situation, where FOC is the focus and CONST is some constituent, requires the emphatic verb form (assuming for simplicity's sake that the basic SOV order underlies focused sentences with rightward placement occurring subsequently).<sup>3</sup>

[<sub>S</sub> X [<sub>FOC</sub> CONST] Y V ] (X and Y may be null)

The non-focused declarative sentence S5 may be compared with the focused sentences S6-S8, in which the focus is underlined. (SIMPLE is the tensed finite verb form most commonly occurring in independent sentences. Colloquial Sinhala does not show gender-number agreement in such forms.):

- S5. ee davasvala gunapaala vaḍuvæḍa keruva  
 those day-PL-GEN Gunapala carpentry do-PAST-SIMPLE  
 'Gunapala did carpentry those days.'
- S6. ee davasvala gunapaala keruve vaḍuvæḍa  
 those day-PL-GEN Gunapala do-PAST-EMPH carpentry  
 'It was carpentry that Gunapala did those days.'
- S7. ee davasvala vaḍuvæḍa keruve gunapaala  
 those day-PL-GEN carpentry do-PAST-EMPH Gunapala  
 'It was Gunapala who did carpentry those days.'
- S8. gunapaala vaḍuvæḍa keruve ee davasvala  
 Gunapala carpentry do-PAST-EMPH those day-PL-GEN

2. There are a number of focus-marking forms, including -yi 'emphatic' tamaa or tamay 'emphatic', 'certainly', lu 'reportative', 'it seems', which only occur at the end of the focus. It follows from 1 above that when one of these has as its scope some stretch not including the verb, then the verb will be in the emphatic form:<sup>4</sup>

- S9. mama ganne meekey  
 I take this-one-yi(emphatic)  
 'I'll take this one.'
- S10. gunapaala dæn karanne vaḍuvæḍa tamay  
 Gunapala now do-PRES-EMPH carpentry tamay(emphatic)  
 'It is most certainly carpentry that Gunapala is doing now.'

- S11. gunəpaalə kəranne vaduvə də lu  
 Gunapala do-PRES-EMPH carpentry it-seems  
 'They say that it's carpentry that Gunapala is  
 doing now.'

Syntactic focus in Sinhala might thus be defined as that stretch on which one of the focus marking forms either appears or could appear without a change in verb form (as it could, for example, in the examples S6-S8 under 1.)<sup>5</sup>

3. Placement of the focused constituent to the right of the verb is common, but not invariable, as shown by S12:

- S12. dənu yanne  
 now-yi go-PRES-EMPH  
 '(I'm) going right now.'

The conditions under which rightward placement does or does not occur are not entirely clear, but involve considerations of both semantics and surface form which we need not define more narrowly here. It is important to note, however, that common but not invariant rightward positioning of the focused constituent is also true of Tamil and Malayalam (Lindholm 1972).<sup>6</sup>

4. Focusing intersects with interrogative formation in two ways:

a) the interrogative marker də (referred to here as Q) used in forming yes-no questions is a focus marking form in the sense of 2 above. Thus compare S13 in which the questioned constituent is not a substretch that includes the verb, with S14, in which it is:

- S13. gunəpaalə hetə enəva də  
 Gunapala tomorrow come-PRES-SIMPLE Q  
 'Is Gunapala coming tomorrow?'

- S14. gunəpaalə enne hetə də  
 Gunapala come-PRES-EMPH tomorrow Q  
 'Is it tomorrow that Gunapala is coming?'

b) Sinhala WH questions require the cooccurrence of a WH form and də (Q). WH forms are characteristically focused, and thus də commonly occurs following them with the verb marked with EMPH, as in S15 and S16.

- S15. oyaa gamətə yanne kohomə də  
 you village-DAT go-PRES-EMPH how Q  
 'How do you go to the village?'
- S16. ee dawasvələ gunəpaalə keruve monəva də?  
 Those day-PL-GEN Gunapala do-PAST-EMPH what-PL Q  
 'What did Gunapala do those days?'

The association of WH form with də is so strong that some widely used dictionaries (Carter 1924, De Zoysa 1964) give WH forms together with də as units: kohomədə 'how', koheedə 'where', etc. The focusing of WH forms has only a semi-obligatory character, however, since there are two classes of exceptions: First, Quantifier WH forms such as kiiyak 'how many-indef', koccarə 'how much', may occur focused or unfocused, with a difference in meaning, as in S17 and S18:

- S17. gunəpaalə koccarə gatta də?  
 Gunapala how-much take-PAST-SIMPLE Q  
 'How much did Gunapala take?'
- S18. gunəpaalə koccarə də gatte?  
 Gunapala how-much Q take-PAST-EMPH  
 'How much was it that Gunapala took?'

Secondly, other WH forms may occur unfocused, and hence separated from də, under two semantically related conditions: as object complements of verbs such as dannəva 'know', teerenəva 'understand' when negated, and in independent "dubious questions" i.e., roughly 'what on earth', 'how the hell', 'can it be that...', as in S19 and S20:

- S19. miniha monəva karənavə də danne nəəə  
 man what-PL do-PRES-SIMPLE Q know-EMPH nəəə  
 'I don't know what the fellow's doing.'
- S20. miniha monəva karənavə də  
 man what-PL do-PRES Q  
 'What(on earth) is the fellow doing?'

5. Focusing intersects with negation in two ways. First, the negative nəəə, the usual negative in verbal sentences, has itself an EMPH form nətte, used in the same 'focus elsewhere' condition described for verbs in 1 above.

- S21. gunāpaalā kāranne nāette vaḍuvāḍā  
 Gunapala do-PRES-EMPH n -EMPH carpentry  
 'It's carpentry that Gunapala doesn't do.'

Secondly, the negative form novey (or its dialectal variants such as nevi, nemee) is a focus-marking form in the sense of 3 above and thus serves as a 'narrow focus' negator, as in S22:

- S22. gunāpaalā kāranne vaḍuvāḍā novey  
 Gunapala do-PRES-EMPH carpentry novey  
 'It's not carpentry that Gunapala does.'

The difference between nāā and novey in function is clearly shown in sentences in which they cooccur, as in S23:

- S23. gunāpaalā kāranne nāette vaḍuvāḍā novey  
 Gunapala do-PRES-EMPH nāā-EMPH carpentry novey  
 'It isn't carpentry that Gunapala doesn't do.'

Nāā also serves as an existential negator and novey as the negator in nominal equational sentences, as in S24 and S25:

- S24. ee kaḍee pot nāā  
 that shop-GEN book-PL nāā  
 'There are no books in that shop.'
- S25. eekā potak novey  
 that-one book-INDEF novey  
 'That one is not a book.'

This is reminiscent of the distinction found in the Dravidian languages, as exemplified by the Jaffna Tamil distinction between allay (=novey) and illay (=nāā), a distinction that is paralleled in Malayalam and Telugu as well, though apparently lost in other Tamil dialects. It is tempting to look for Dravidian influence here as well, though the structure is complicated by the existence of clearly Indo-Aryan parallels.<sup>7</sup> The retention of the distinction in Jaffna Tamil could equally well be an example of influence in the other direction; i.e., of Sinhala on Sri Lanka Tamil.

6. The focusing system has been extended to sentences with non-verbal predicators. Some, like nāā mentioned in 5 have emphatic forms. Adjectives occurring as predicators in focused sentences mark "focus elsewhere" by occurring without the -yi that is

obligatory on adjectives that are vowel-final (as most are) in non-focused sentences:

S26. meekə hoṅday  
 this-one good-yi  
 'This one is good.'

S27. hoṅdə meekə  
 good this-one  
 'Is it this one that is good?'

The characteristics given above as 1-6 clearly define a complex focusing subsystem with a kind of centrality in the grammar of the language in that it intersects crucially with a number of other grammatical phenomena. Sinhala focusing has been treated in various ways in recent syntactic studies (especially Gair 1970, Fernando 1973 and De Abrew 1980) and presents a number of as yet unresolved problems, but it is clear that no treatment of Sinhala syntax can deal with such basic processes as negation or yes-no and WH question formation without also dealing with focusing.

Returning now to the historical development: It was noted above that the present system had not evolved by the 12th century, although the focusing construction was clearly present. For example, WH forms then occurred with and without da (=da=Q) and the semi-obligatory focusing of them did not apply as shown in Ama 2 and Ama 3 from Amāvatura. Note the occurrence of person number agreement rather than EMPH:

Ama 2. mohu koyāṭa yeti  
 these-people where-DAT go-PRES-3sg  
 'Where are these people going?' (Kōdagōḍa Nāṅāloka 136)

Ama 3. dæn paviji væ kumaṭa kiyam da  
 now ordained become what-DAT say-PRES-1 sg Q  
 'Why would I say it now that I am a monk?'  
 (Kōdagōḍa Nāṅāloka 76)

Furthermore, available evidence from the Dravidian languages mentioned shows that the full system does not apply in any of them. For example, the nearest Tamil equivalents to the Sinhala focus-marking forms, though called "clitics-of focus" by Lindholm (1972) are not such in the sense defined for Sinhala since they do not obligate clefting, as illustrated by T4 and T5 with taan 'emphatic' and -aa 'question' (note the verbal agreement):

- T4. avartaan naaLaykku koLumpukku pooRaar  
 he-emphatic tomorrow-DAT Colombo-DAT go-PRES-3sgMASC  
 'He is going to Colombo tomorrow.'
- T5. avaraa naaLaykku koLumpukku pooRaar  
 he-Q tomorrow-Dat Colombo-DAT go-PRES-3sgMASC  
 'Is it he who is going to Colombo tomorrow?'

Of the characteristics given for Sinhala, the only ones shared by the Dravidian languages as a whole are those with which we began, i.e., verb marking and rightward placement. We may thus safely assume that the original borrowing was limited to these features, with, of course, associated semantics.

There are, however, at least two interesting and apparently parallel developments in Sinhala and specific Dravidian languages. In Kannada, the interrogative clitic -aa, like Sinhala da, requires obligatory clefting (Schiffman 1979, pp. 103 and 129-130), as in K1:

- K1. avnaa naaLe uurg hoogoodu  
 He-Q tomorrow town-DAT go-PRES-NOM-NEUT  
 'Is it he who is going to town tomorrow?'  
 (Schiffman p. 133)

Also, the Malayalam emphatic and copula aaNu behaves much like Sinhala yi as a focus-marking form. In fact, aaNu must occur on the focused constituent if tanne 'emphatic' does not (Lindholm 1971) whereas Sinhala yi like the other focus-marking forms is optional. In this respect, Malayalam is like Literary Sinhala, which reflects an earlier stage in which a copula was required in both equational sentences and focused sentences. I have elsewhere suggested that this parallel helps to explain the origin of the colloquial Sinhala emphatic focus marker yi.<sup>8</sup>

It is clear, then, that Sinhala has elaborated the focusing construction in an intricate and interesting way. The detailed history of that elaboration remains to be worked out on the basis of the written evidence, but its general result is clear and may be summed up as a "lowering of the semantic threshold of syntactic focusing". This lowering has two interconnected aspects: The focusing of specific kinds of forms and a widened set of conditions under which focusing, or clefting, is called for. We will examine these two briefly.

The syntactic and semantic aspects of focus (often with different meanings of the term) have been much discussed in recent linguistic work. For present purposes, however, we need only

note that in its semantic aspect, "focus" has commonly been paired with "presupposition", as in Chomsky 1971 and in much subsequent work by him and others, that is: as one term of a presupposition-focus semantic structure.

Now, it seems clear enough that forms like negated, questioned and reported constituents of a sentence are very likely to be opposed as focus to the remainder as presupposition; and thus to involve, perhaps to varying degrees, a kind of inherent focus. Something like this underlies Lindholm's remark in relation to Tamil and Malayalam that "emphasis and interrogation essentially involve focus quite independently of the cleft formation process" (1972, 301).

In Sinhala, this is given explicit syntactic recognition through the obligatory or semi-obligatory clefting of such forms. That is, their occurrence is sufficient to trigger clefting, without any additional degree of focus or emphasis being necessary. Note that Kannada has gone part way in the same direction in its obligatory clefting for questioned constituents, as opposed to Tamil where the interrogative clitic *-aa* may occur without it as in T5 earlier or T6. Compare S28 which is focused and note that unfocused S29 is ungrammatical:

- T6.    avar   naaLaykkaa           koLumpukku   pooRaar  
       he     tomorrow-DAT-Q   Colombo-DAT   go-PRES-3sg-MASC  
       'Is it tomorrow that he is going to Colombo?'
- S28.   eyaa heṭṭa           da kolambetta           yanne  
       he     tomorrow Q   Colombo-DAT   go-PRES-EMPH  
       'Is it tomorrow that he is going to Colombo?'
- S29.   \*eyaa heṭṭa           da kolambetta           yanawa  
       he     tomorrow Q   Colombo-DAT   go-PRES-SIMPLE

The pragmatic and discourse conditions under which syntactic focusing is appropriate in Sinhala are relatively wide. Focusing in Sinhala declarative sentences generally relates to what Chafe has called "focus of contrast" (Chafe 1976, 37-38). The degree of contrast required for syntactic focusing to occur, however, is less than that in Tamil (or for that matter, English). This is illustrated strikingly in segments of dialogues like the following, from a recent trilingual text designed to teach Tamil to Sinhala speakers. These have the virtue of keeping discourse and pragmatic conditions as constant as possible since they were designed for that purpose (Gair, Suseendira Rajah and Karunatillake, in press). Focusing in Sinhala is indicated by +FOC:

(Tamil) Q. yaIpaaNattukku ovvoru naaLum pileen  
Jaffna-Dat every day-EMPH plane(s)

irukka  
be-PRES-3-NEUT-Q

A. illay. tihkal, putan, veLLi kiLamayililay  
no. Monday Wednesday Friday day-PL-LOC

mattum pileen irukku  
only plane(s) be-PRES-NEUT

(Sinhala) Q. yaapaneeta davasagaane aasyatraa tiyena da  
Jaffna-DAT daily plane-PL be-PRES-SIMPLE Q

+FOC A. naana. saṇḍuda, badaada, sikuraada vitaraya  
no Monday Wednesday Friday only

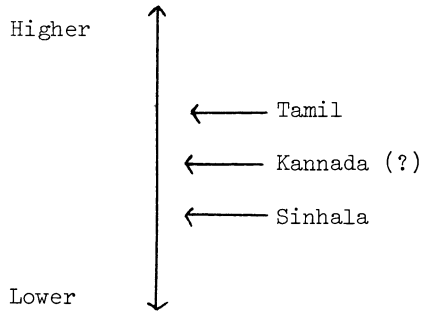
aasyatraa tiyenne  
plane-PL be-PRES-EMPH

(English) Q. Are there planes from here to Jaffna every day?

A. No. There are planes only on Monday, Wednesday  
and Friday.

Examples such as this could be easily multiplied.

The lowering of the threshold of focusing has thus resulted in both a wider range of forms for which focusing is required and a relatively high frequency of focused sentences in discourse. Cross-language comparison here also leads to the interesting implication that while syntactic focus, as reflected in processes such as Sinhala focusing or clefting, may be a binary all-or-none phenomenon, the semantic focus associated with it may be gradient, i.e., scalar. Viewed from this perspective, what I have here called "threshold of focus", represents different points of intersection of syntactic focusing with the semantic focusing scale. We will reserve this point for treatment elsewhere, but it may be impressionistically illustrated by a diagram like the following, in which the vertical line represents strength of semantic focus and the arrows the point of intersection with syntactic focusing, i.e., in this case the degree of focus required to trigger clefting:



The term "adaptation" has been used in historical linguistics to refer to the process by which borrowed material is adapted to the structure of the borrowing language, generally with reference to phonology (thus Hockett 1958, 417ff.) but it is easily extended to other levels of structure. Thus any syntactic borrowing or calque that makes use of native morphological material exhibits adaptation. The Sinhala borrowing of the focusing construction and its subsequent history goes beyond mere adaptation, however, to illustrate a process for which I have suggested the term, "naturalization" (on the analogy of immigration and naturalization) by which a borrowed form enters into the grammar of the borrowing language in an intimate way, participating in its rule structures and even, as in this case, serving as a model for further internal change. The Sinhala instance of naturalization we have examined has important implications for linguistic area studies. If we were to look only at the relevant linguistic characteristics of Sinhala and the Dravidian languages, without considering the known cultural-historical facts and the evidence of the northern Indo-Aryan languages, we might erroneously assume that the greater elaboration of the focusing construction in Sinhala and its centrality in the grammar points to borrowing from Sinhala into the other languages, a conclusion that is of course obviously contravened by the other evidence alluded to. In short, we should remember the lesson that anthropologists learned long ago that greater frequency or complexity, and in this case integration in the grammar, does not necessarily mean greater age or source of borrowing, but that it may be the result of naturalization or its cultural analogues, and we should proceed with the same careful attention to evidence and detail that has always distinguished the work of Murray Emeneau.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank several of my colleagues, particularly Leonard Babby, John Bowers, Wayne Harbert and Barbara Lust for a number of helpful discussions on matters dealt with in this paper, and Milan Rodrigo for her help in dealing with Sinhala examples, particularly from earlier texts. A paper covering much of the same material but from a different perspective was presented earlier as Gair, 1980.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Examples from Tamil are from Sri Lanka Jaffna Tamil, since that is the variety for which I have the fullest data, as reflected in Gair, Suseendira Rajah and Karunatillake, in press. Examples from other Dravidian languages are from the sources cited.

<sup>2</sup>Sinhala is a diglossic language with sharply distinct written and spoken varieties. (Gair 1968, Da Silva 1979, esp. pp. 39-42 and associated references). This paper deals only with the colloquial spoken variety unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup>This bracketing says in effect that some constituent is the focus of the sentences. While this is amply justified by the facts presented, showing Sinhala focusing as a quite clear-cut phenomenon with identifiable syntactic aspects, it does sidestep the difficult question of the precise nature of focus as a node or constituent when CONST is also one. This problem is intimately connected with how one derives focused sentences and it is by no means restricted to Sinhala. It has received considerable attention in the literature without, as far as I know, receiving any thoroughly convincing solution. In any event, it is not necessary to settle it for purposes of this paper, despite its important theoretical implications.

<sup>4</sup>There are also forms expressing various kinds of "emphasis", such as m, 'emphatic', nan 'topicalizer', -(u)t 'also', which are not focus-marking forms in the strict sense used here. There is also "focus by intonational prominence", as pointed out by

De Abrew 1980, but it also differs from the focus dealt with here, particularly in the range of discourse conditions under which it is appropriate. It is important to distinguish focus in Sinhala from topicalizing and various sorts of emphasis, a subject of work in progress to be dealt with elsewhere.

<sup>5</sup>This definition is essentially unchanged from Gair 1970, p. 49, in which the focus was "a form followed by any of these [focus-marking forms], or to which any of them may be added (without being removed from another form elsewhere in the clause)". That definition presumed the non-change in verb form here made explicit. It quite properly allows for focus in non-focused sentences, as in straightforward questions, in which da will follow a non-EMPH verb: daen yanawa da 'now go-PRES-SIMPLE da' = 'Are (you) going now?', but in this paper we need deal only with focus in focused sentences, i.e., when the verb is not included in the focus.

<sup>6</sup>Some of the factors affecting rightward placement are sketched in Gair 1980, but further investigation is necessary. Judging from Lindholm's statements, the conditions for rightward placement (or lack of it) are different in Tamil/Malayalam from those in Sinhala, though it is optional in all of them.

<sup>7</sup>The difficulties of deciding between syntactic inter-language convergence and internal development within Indo-Aryan in relation to the existence of two negatives is well summarized in B. Lakshmi Bai's paper, 'A Note on Syntactic Convergence between Dravidian and Indo-Aryan Languages', presented at the Second International Conference on South Asian Languages and Linguistics at Hyderabad, January 9-11, 1980.

There is also a negative prefix no- which occurs with (generally non-finite) verb forms. It may occur on the EMPH form, but since its effect will be that of the verb plus the emphatic form of naa, it does not affect the argument here. It is interesting though that it can co-occur with naa, resulting in a double negation of the verb both syntactically and semantically. For details, see De Abrew 1980.

<sup>8</sup>i.e., in Gair 1980. Briefly, the colloquial development involved loss of the obligatory copula in both focused and nominal equation sentences, leaving it as an optional focus marker.

<sup>9</sup>Gair, 1980. Note that just as adaptation may be used on other than the phonological level, so naturalization is not restricted to the syntactic. One thinks for example, of those cases of phonological borrowing in which the result is not a "co-existent system", but increased symmetry in the borrowing system, and, in morphology, the productivity of borrowed affixes such as -ize in English.

## REFERENCES

- Carter, Rev. Charles. 1924. A Sinhalese-English Dictionary. New Printing, M. D. Gunasena, Colombo, 1965.
- Chafe, Wallace L. 1976. "Givenness, Contrastiveness, Definiteness, Subjects, Topics, and Point of View" in Charles N. Li, ed., Subject and Topic, pp. 27-55. Academic Press, New York.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1971. "Deep Structure, Surface Structure, and Semantic Interpretation". In Danny D. Steinberg and Leon A. Jakobovits, eds. Semantics: An Interdisciplinary Reader in Philosophy, Linguistics and Psychology. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- De Abrew, Kamal K. 1980. The Syntax and Semantics of Negation in Sinhala. Cornell University Dissertation.
- De Silva, M. W. S. 1979. Sinhalese and Other Island Languages in South Asia. Gunter Narr Verlag, Tübingen.
- De Zoysa, A. P. 1964. Dharmasamaya Sinhala Sabda Kosaya, Dharmasamaya Press, Colombo (3 Vols.)
- Emeneau, Murray. 1956. "India as a Linguistic Area", Language 32.3-16.
- Fernando, Madra Siromani. 1973. The Syntax of Complex Sentences in Sinhalese. University of London Dissertation.
- Gair, James W. 1967. "Colloquial Sinhalese Grammatical Categories and Parts of Speech". Indian Linguistics 27.32-45.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1968. "Sinhalese Diglossia". Anthropological Linguistics 10.8, 1-15.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 1970. Colloquial Sinhalese Clause Structures. The Hague Mouton.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1976. "The Verb in Sinhala, with some Preliminary Remarks on Dravidianization". International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics 5, 2 (June 1976) pp. 259-273.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1980. "Sinhala Focused Sentences -- Naturalization of a Calque." Paper presented at the Second International Conference on South Asian Languages and Linguistics, Hyderabad, India.
- Gair, James W., S. Suseendira Rajah and W. S. Karunatillake. In press. Spoken [Sri Lanka Jaffna] Tamil. Sri Lanka University Extension Services Press.
- Geiger, Wilhelm. 1938. A Grammar of the Sinhalese Language. Royal Asiatic Society, Colombo.
- George, K. M. 1971. Malayalam Grammar and Reader. National Book Stall. Kottayam, India.
- Gurulugōmi. 1967. Amāvatura. ed. Kōdāgoḍa Nāṇaloka Sthavirayan Vahansē. Gunasena, Colombo.
- Hockett, Charles F. 1958. A Course in Modern Linguistics. Macmillan, New York.
- Krishnamurti, Bh. 1974. Topicalization/Verb Inversion Transformation. In a Generative Grammatical Sketch of Telegu. Mime.
- Lindholm, James M. 1972. "Cleft Sentences in Tamil and Malayalam" in V. I. Subramoniam and Elias Valentine, eds., Proceedings of the First All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists. Trivandrum, India.
- Masica, Colin C. Defining a Linguistic Area: South Asia. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Paranavitana, Senarat. 1956. Sigiri Graffiti. (2 Vols.) Oxford.
- Schiffman, Harold. 1979. A Reference Grammar of Kannada. Office of Education Report, HEW, Washington D. C.
- Southworth, Franklin C. and Mahadeo Apte, eds. 1974. Contact and Convergence in South Asian Languages. International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics, Special Issue. Ernakulam, India.