



**The Use of Substitute 'One' in the Two Selected Sri Lankan English Novels;
*The Jam Fruit Tree and Theravada Man***

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the use of substitute 'one' in two selected Sri Lankan English novels: *The Jam Fruit Tree* and *Theravada Man*. The primary objectives of the study are to examine the types of 'one' used in the two selected Sri Lankan English novels and discover the most used type of 'one'. Essentially, two Sri Lankan novels that incorporate Sri Lankan English vocabulary were chosen as the samples for the study. The data collection involved reading the selected two novels, documenting significant use of the substitute 'one', and analysing the types of 'one'. A qualitative analysis method was employed to identify the substitute 'one' within the selected Sri Lankan English novels. A quantitative data analysis approach was implemented to identify the most used type of 'one' within the selected Sri Lankan English novels. The theoretical framework of Halliday and Hasan (1976) was used as a guiding model for the study to analyse the collected data. The analysis of the obtained results revealed that there are two types of substitutes 'one' within the two selected Sri Lankan English novels, and those are the modified 'one' and the unmodified 'one'. Ultimately, unmodified 'one' emerged as the most used type of substitute 'one'. In conclusion, this study highlights the significant presence of two main types of substitutes 'one' within the context of Sri Lankan English novels.

Keywords: Modified 'one'; Sri Lankan English novels; Substitute 'one'; Substitution; Unmodified 'one'

Introduction

The multifaceted nature of English is receiving heightened scholarly attention. This is particularly evident in the growing focus on the interrelated concepts of World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. Due to the colonial experience of Sri Lanka during the 18th and 19th centuries, the English language was introduced to the island nation. English occupies the official position of a second language in Sri Lanka (Mendis and Rambukwella, 2020, p. 182). Over time, the English language in Sri Lanka has undergone a process of nativization, adapting to the linguistic patterns and cultural contexts of its Sri Lankan speakers. Consequently, Sri Lankan English has emerged as a distinct variety within the broader family of World Englishes, characterised by its unique features developed within the Sri Lankan sociolinguistic context (Mendis and Rambukwella, 2020, p. 183). Through a process of diachronic contact, Sri Lankan English has become imbued with influences from Sinhala, Tamil, and the specific socio-political landscape of the country. Gunasekara (2005) defines Sri Lankan English as "the language used by Sri Lankans who choose to use English for whatever purpose in Sri Lanka" (p. 11). Thus, Sri Lankan English stands as a compelling case study in the dynamic evolution of English across diverse global contexts.

According to Biber et al. (1999), as cited in Herat (2006), "one of the features of English that is sometimes realised differently in Sri Lankan English than in Standard British and American English is

substitute *one/ones*" (p. 65). Halliday and Hasan (1976) define substitution as "a relation within the text. A substitute is a sort of counter which is used in place of the repetition of a particular item" (p. 89). Additionally, Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify "three types of substitution called nominal, verbal, and clausal" (p. 90). Within the realm of cohesive devices, nominal substitution uses 'one' or 'ones' to replace previously mentioned nouns or noun phrases. Verbal substitution, on the other hand, leverages 'do' to stand in for a preceding lexical verb or verb phrase. Clausal substitution employs 'so' and 'not' to act as substitutes for entire clauses.

According to Herat (2006), "the use of 'one' is interesting as a feature because it is often seen as a feature of Sri Lankan English transferred from Sinhala 'eka' for 'one' (p. 70). The Sinhala language frequently employs 'eka', signifying 'one', when incorporating loanwords from English. This results in constructions such as *car-eka*, *bus-eka*, *telephone-eka* and so on. This phenomenon extends to colloquial Sri Lankan English, where speakers frequently insert the word 'one' in situation where its inclusion is not grammatically obligatory (Herat, 2006, p. 71). As an example, the expression "She is a beautiful one" demonstrates the use of 'one' as a pronoun at the head of an adjective phrase, where Standard English would not require it (Herat, 2006, p.72). Consequently, this study investigates the use of 'one' as a substitute within Sri Lankan English novels. This study aims to identify a grammatical feature specific to Sri Lankan English written discourse and demonstrate how it contributes to the variety of syntactic features observed in Sri Lankan English.

Research problem and justification of the purpose of the study

Herat (2006) investigates 'Substitute *One* in Sri Lankan English' by shedding light on the spoken syntax of Sri Lankan English. However, the study leaves a gap in understanding the use of substitute 'one' in the written syntax of Sri Lankan English. Thus, this study aims to address this gap by analysing the presence

of substitute 'one' within the written syntax of Sri Lankan English. The analysis is conducted by using two selected Sri Lankan English novels: *The Jam Fruit Tree* by Carl Muller (1993) and *Theravada Man* by Manuka Wijesinghe (2009).

Materials and Methods

Population and Sampling

To address the research questions, this study adopts a corpus-based approach, analysing two selected Sri Lankan English novels known to incorporate Sri Lankan English syntactic features: *The Jam Fruit Tree* by Carl Muller (1993) and *Theravada Man* by Manuka Wijesinghe (2009). Crucially, the selection of these novels is particularly significant. The selected two Sri Lankan English novels were written by Sri Lankan authors, a vital factor that influenced the researcher to select the afore-mentioned novels. Notably, the novel *Jam Fruit Tree* by Carl Muller secured the Gratiaen Memorial Prize in 1993, an honour bestowed upon the finest work of English literature by a Sri Lankan author. Additionally, the works of Manuka Wijesinghe have garnered recognition through shortlisting for prestigious awards such as the Fairway Literary Prize. Moreover, the two novels were selected using the purposive sampling method, focusing on the incorporation of Sri Lankan English vocabulary.

Data collection tools

Data collection involved a close reading of the two selected Sri Lankan English novels, *The Jam Fruit Tree* and *Theravada Man*, with a specific focus on identifying instances of the substitute 'one'. Data analysis involved the use of grids to assess validity, reliability, and efficacy. These qualities are established through methodological rigour and potentially through inter-rater reliability checks if the analysis involves coding or classification. However, the data itself can be coded and organised in a grid format to facilitate analysis of the identified instances of substitute 'one'.

Data analysis procedure

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, employing both qualitative and quantitative analyses. The study employs a qualitative analysis to identify and categorise the various functions of the substitute 'one' within the two selected Sri Lankan English novels. In conjunction with the qualitative analysis, a quantitative method was employed to determine the most frequently used type of substitute 'one' within the corpus.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the theoretical framework of Halliday and Hasan (1976) based on 'Cohesion in English' as its foundation. It is a seminal work in linguistics that delves into the mechanisms that bind sentences together to form coherent texts. The authors propose a framework for analysing how language elements connect semantically, creating cohesion.

Results and Discussion

According to Biber et al. (1999), as cited in Herat (2006), there is "a distinction between two types of substitute *one* NPs: those with and without modifiers" (p. 72). Upon cursory examination of the two selected Sri Lankan English novels, instances of the use of substitute 'one' have been identified and categorised into two primary types: modified 'one' and unmodified 'one'.

Modified 'one'

Herat (2006) defines modified 'one' as "substitute *one/ones* is always accompanied by one of several modifying elements which function as defining in that particular context" (p.72). For Example, "**She wanted a skirt. So I gave her a blue one**" (Herat, 2006, p. 73). The given example exemplifies a modified 'one' noun phrase (NP). In this instance, 'one' occupies the syntactic head position of the NP, but it is modified by the adjective 'blue'. The present study has categorised the primary instances in which the modified 'one' is

employed. These applications encompass its use as adjectives, possessives, and demonstratives.

Unmodified 'one'

An unmodified noun phrase is simply a group of words that functions as a noun but does not have any extra words describing it. Herat (2006) states that in "an unmodified one NP, where one has the syntactic position of a whole NP" (p. 72). For example, "Phil gave Carol a sandwich because she asked for one" (Herat, 2006, p. 73). Thus, in an unmodified noun phrase, there are no adjectives, articles, quantifiers, or other modifiers attached. Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that "it is useful to distinguish the substitute *one* from the various other words *one*, the other items which are forms of the same etymon" (p. 98). As Halliday and Hasan (1976) identified, the present study has categorised the primary instances in which the unmodified 'one' is employed. These applications encompass its use as personal pronoun one, cardinal numeral one, indefinite article one, and pro-noun one.

Table 1. Distribution of Modified and Unmodified 'One'

Modified 'one'		Unmodified 'one'	
Environments in which modified 'one' is realised	The number of times 'one' is used	Environments in which modified 'one' is realised	The number of times 'one' is used
Adjectives	14	Personal Pronoun 'one'	16
Possessives	1	Cardinal Numeral 'one'	32
Demonstratives	1	Indefinite article 'one'	1
Interrogatives	0	Pro-noun 'one'	14
Quantifiers	0		
Numerals	0		
Total	16	Total	63

Conclusions

This study has yielded a more nuanced understanding of the employment of substitute 'one' within the corpus of the two selected Sri Lankan English novels: The Jam Fruit Tree by Carl Muller (1993) and Theravada Man by Manuka Wijesinghe (2009). Furthermore, the

present investigation unveils two distinct categories within the phenomenon of substitute 'one' in Sri Lankan English written discourse: modified 'one' and unmodified 'one'. The modified 'one' can exhibit functional versatility, incorporating adjectives, possessives, and demonstratives. The unmodified 'one' functions as personal pronoun one, cardinal numeral one, indefinite article one, and pro-noun one. The analysis of the two selected novels revealed that the unmodified 'one' was the most frequently encountered type of 'one'. It is noteworthy that the study done by Herat (2006) on the use of substitute 'one' in spoken Sri Lankan English, revealed modified 'one' to be the most frequent occurrence. This contrasts with the findings of the present study, where the unmodified 'one' dominated within the written discourse of Sri Lankan English. Consequently, these findings highlight the potential for distinct syntactic features within written Sri Lankan English. The limitation of this study, which focused on only two novels, suggests the value of incorporating a larger corpus of novels in future studies. This broader approach would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the syntactic characteristics of Sri Lankan English, as relying solely on novels may not be sufficient for definitive conclusions. Moreover, future research endeavours could explore this phenomenon in a wider range of written genres, such as short stories and newspapers.

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