

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LEXICAL BORROWINGS IN A TAMIL JOURNAL*

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1.0 Background to the Study

An attempt has been made in this paper to analyse the English lexical borrowings in a Tamil Journal. For the purpose of this study, the author has selected a weekly news journal from Tamil Nadu, India. It is published in Madras by Vasan Publications under the title *ju:niyar vikaṭaṇ*. The title itself has an English loan word i.e. *ju:niyar* 'junior'. The other word *vikaṭaṇ* means 'jester' in Tamil. A total of 25 issues of the above mentioned journal covering eight months, i.e. from March 1990 till October 1990 were used for the collection of the data.

The use of borrowed English elements in Tamil by the Tamil speakers is not confined to discourse alone. Borrowing occurs widely in the media, particularly in newspapers and journals. The journal under study uses a type of Tamil defined by P.N. Udaya Shankar and K. Karunakaran (1986) known as 'the modern literary style and the educated style which avoids archaic usages and adopts necessary loan features as opposed to the classical and neo-classical styles'. (P.17)

During the period of Sanskritization of Tamil culture in the medieval period, Sanskrit became the single most important donor language of Tamil. Words that have entered Tamil from Sanskrit have been completely Tamilised and now form part of the Tamil lexicon.

The whole of the Indian sub-continent is highly multilingual in nature. According to a 1961 report (Vijayindirapas 1982) there are 1652 languages spoken in India. The Indian constitution provides for 14 official languages. It is reported by Vijayindirapas (1982) that there are 15 languages belonging to the Indo-Aryan family of languages that are being spoken in Tamil Nadu.

With westernization, came English. It is the single most important foreign language that is spoken in Tamil Nadu and in India as a whole. This is due to the colonial past where the British were ruling India for nearly two centuries. During this long history of British occupation, English was widely used as a language of administration and in education - in primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Given the potpourri of languages that Tamil has come into contact with, it is not surprising to find the movement of words from other languages into Tamil. English because of its long association with Tamil has become a major donor language of Tamil. Even after 45 years of Independence, English is still the language for conducting business by private enterprise and industry.

*Adapted from the paper presented at the Third International Symposium on Language and Linguistics: PAN-ASIATIC LINGUISTICS, 8-10 January 1992, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

According to a recent newspaper report (September 1991) less than 25% of the students enrol themselves in pure Tamil medium courses in the institutions of higher learning. This means that more than three-quarter of the students prefer to do their degree course in the English medium. The preference of English is due to the mobility it provides for the graduates to seek employment in the central government and other states of the Indian union. Hence we find that English is very popular among the Tamil speakers. Infact Tamil-English bilinguals in India, Malaysia, Singapore, the U.S. and elsewhere use lots of English words in their discourse. Annamalai (1974) says that 'mixing of English words in the mother tongue is a Pan-Indian feature. The educated speaker of any Indian language uses the English words abundantly when he speaks to another educated person of his own speech community., (P. 240)

The educated Tamil speaking population both in urban and rural Tamil Nadu are mostly bilinguals speaking Tamil and English. They code-mix and use a lot of English words in their speech. Dialogues in short stories and dramas, over the radio and T.V. have lots of English loans. Script writers for the cinema, which is a popular and powerful entertainment media in Tamil Nadu, borrow from English liberally.

Tamil movie actors and actresses find it very fashionable to code-mix and borrow extensively from English. Hence Tamil with English loans is very popular among the bilingual masses both in the spoken form and the written form. Sign boards of shops, restaurants etc are very often monolingual. Words like Auto Repair, Auto Works, Bakery, Cooldrinks, Cutpiece, Hotel, Jeweller, Mart, Medical Store, Nursing Home, Provision Store, Silk House, Tailor, Tea Stall, Textile etc. are a common sight in front of business premises. In some countries like Malaysia where English is not the official language it is mandatory for businesses to have their sign boards written in the official language besides English. This is not so in Tamil Nadu. The absence (?) of such a legislation has led to the present situation where Tamil is used lesser than English. Another possible reason for the wide use of English on sign boards may be due to the fact that many of the businesses which operate in the cities and major towns of Tamil Nadu may be owned by 'notherners' and people from other states of the Indian Union who are indifferent to the use of Tamil. Is it possible that the Tamil masses are apathetic and have an indifferent attitude towards their own language? Don't they take pride in their mother tongue? Do they view Tamil as having no economic value vis-a-vis English? The journal under study i.e. *ju:niyar vikatan* 'junior jester' is mainly a news magazine mostly highlighting the myriad of politico-socio-economic problems faced by the (poor) masses all over Tamil Nadu. Hence it is very popular among the readers. The writers or publishers of the journal appear to have understood the widely prevalent style of Tamil, with substantial English loans in them, that literate people use to communicate with one another. Thus the aim could be to give the news in the type of Tamil best received by the readers. The underlying motive of the publisher could be to popularize the journal and push up the volume of sales. Profit being the main motive, attempts to coin or introduce new terms and words to express concepts and ideas in Tamil rather than resorting to the 'easy way cut' i.e. outright borrowing from English, may not be in the publishers list of priorities.

The popular use of English among the Tamil bilinguals in their Tamil discourse could be viewed from another perspective i.e. as a process of modernisation. According to Ferguson, modernization has two aspects: i) the expansion of lexicon of the language by new words and expression or development of vocabulary and ii) the development of new styles of forms of discourse (cited in S.V. Shanmugam 1983 p. 3). The development of new styles and registers is referred to as modernization by Shankar and Karunakaran (1986). 'Modernization is a process by which language use is made simple and more efficient to express the modern scientific, technological and other social advancements that take place in the various domains of our social activity. By evolving new styles, registers, varieties and patterns, a language is modernised in the sense that its status is raised to match some of the developed languages. Hence modernisation becomes an important aspect in the development of language use in different domains like education, administration and mass media' (Rubin and Jernudd 1971 - cited in Shankar and Karunakaran 1986, pp 17 - 18).

Jean D'Souza (1987) says that modernization of language entails the process by which a language is made functionally suitable for use in new or extended domains. It is the way in which a language is made to cope with new situations and expands its functional roles by developing the vocabulary and structures necessary in fields like administration, the judiciary, journalism, broadcasting, higher education, research etc.

In post independent India, according to Jean D`Souza (1987), the regional languages were called upon to play a wider range of roles than they had so far and therefore they had to be developed and modernized. Interestingly enough in the process of modernization one of the resources turned to was, and is, English. Kachru (1984) says 'English is considered a symbol of modernization, a key to expanded functional roles, and an extra arm of success and mobility in culturally and linguistically complex and pluralistic societies' (p. 176) (cited in Jean D' Souza 1987).

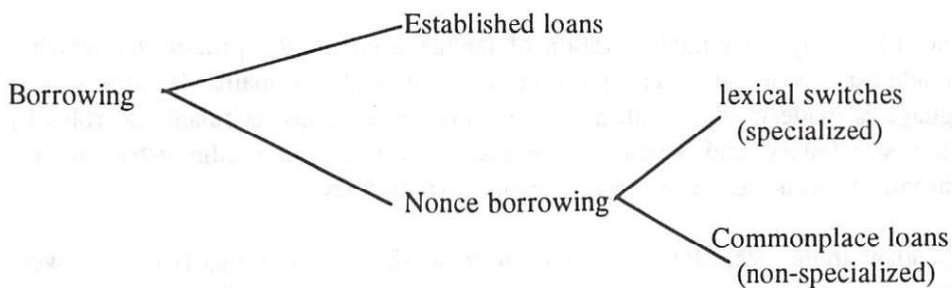
It must be remembered that English is a powerful modernising force and an important resource and one which is freely resorted to in the modernising process not only by Tamil but by all the major languages in India.

Such is the background information on the linguistic situation in Tamil Nadu, India. Before proceeding with the analysis of the data it is best that the definition of 'lexis' is looked into, followed by a brief review of literature on borrowing.

2.0 Reasons for Borrowing

The term lexis, according to Crystal (1985), is used in linguistics 'to refer to the vocabulary of a language and used in a variety of technical phrases'. A lexical item or lexeme is defined as a unit of vocabulary. Crystal (1985) also defines borrowing as 'linguistic forms being taken over by one language or dialect from another' (p.36). In lexical borrowing units of vocabulary from one language are borrowed and used in another (usually) by bilingual speakers. The borrowed lexical items or lexemes, undergo phonological and morphological adaptations to suit the phonological and morphological structure of the recipient language.

Borrowing according to Haugen (1969) is linguistic diffusion, and can be unambiguously defined as 'the attempt by a speaker to reproduce in one language, patterns which he has learned in another.' (p. 363). Gleason (1979) defines borrowing as 'the copying of linguistic item from speakers of another speech form' (p.397). Jacobson and Osman (1987) in their paper entitled 'Gaining insight into Malay-English code-switching' say that: 'In recent discussions of borrowing, the distinction between two kinds of borrowing has been proposed. Established borrowings are those that are no longer conceived as non-native words. Nonce-borrowings in turn, are those that are so conceived. Established borrowings, do exist in all languages but as for nonce borrowing, there may be a need to break this notion further down into two subclasses, one whose source is a series of technical or otherwise specialised terms and the other whose source is common place vocabulary; hence



Talking of borrowing, Bloomfield (1962) says that 'the adoption of features which differ from those of the main tradition is linguistic borrowing' (p. 444). Bloomfield distinguishes two types of borrowing i.e. 1. dialect borrowing where the borrowed features come from within the same speech area; 2. cultural borrowing where the borrowed features come from a different language. He also makes a distinction between ordinary cultural borrowing and the intimate borrowing which occurs when two languages are spoken in what is topographically and politically a single community. Intimate borrowing he says is one sided where differentiation could be made between the upper or dominant language spoken by the conquering or otherwise more privileged group and the lower language spoken by the subject people. It is said that borrowing goes predominantly from the upper language to the lower and it very often extends to speech forms that are not connected with cultural novelties. In most cases of intimate borrowing, it is said, the lower language is indigenous and the upper language is introduced by a body of conquerors.

Thanga Manian (1983) says that prestige and need-filling can be two possible motives that encourages borrowing. Non-Tamil speakers use many Tamil words in their speech because Tamil is the official language in Tamil Nadu and is the language of the majority. Likewise during the colonial days the educated Tamils in Tamil Nadu used lots of English expressions in their Tamil speech.

When a speech community comes into contact with new objects and practices, new words and expressions enter the community's language because there is a need to use those expressions - hence, need-filling occurs. Words like tea, coffee, chocolate, ice-cream, car,

bus, lorry, cinema etc. are some of the many words that have been borrowed to fulfil a need in the recipient language.

"Borrowing often takes place because the words of the new language are used so frequently that they become more accessible to bilingual speakers even though there might be perfectly acceptable words in the first language" (Guadalupe Valdes Fallis: 1978: P.6)

According to Thanga Manian (1983), linguistic borrowing is made on account of exigencies of circumstances. When people want to convey new or imported ideas precisely and accurately foreign words which have come into vogue in various spheres of activities have to be used. The advancement of modern knowledge is at the very root in this process of enriching the language.

Jespersen (1922) observed that "when a nation has once got into the habit of borrowing words, people will very often use foreign words, where it could have been perfectly possible to express their ideas by means of native speech material, the reason for going out of one's own language being in some cases the desire to be thought fashionable or refined through interlarding one's speech with foreign words, in others simply laziness as is very often the case when people are rendering thoughts they have heard in a foreign language." (P.208)

As to the presence of English loans in the Tamil journal, borrowing could have occurred due to one or a combination of more than one factor discussed above.

3.0 Classification of Lexical Borrowings

For the purpose of classification, Haugens (1969) method of classifying loanwords is followed in this paper. Depending on the extent to which the loans are modified to suit the linguistic nature of the native language, the loans are said to fall into two main categories.

They are: 1 Importation and 2. Substitution.

3.1 Importation

The process of importation involves the process of transferring lexical items from English and the assimilation and intergration of the loanwords into Tamil. There are two sub-categories under this, namely a) loanwords and b) loanblends.

3.1.1 Loanwords

The loanwords are further divided into four types.

They consist of

- i) Unassimilated loanwords
- ii) Partially assimilated loanwords
- iii) Wholly assimilated loanwords and
- iv) Orthographically assimilated loanwords.

3.1.1.1 Unassimilated Loanwords

Unassimilated loanwords are loanwords that have not been orthographically adapted in anyway. In writing, therefore, the model in English and the replica in the borrowing language would be identical in form and meaning. Unassimilated English loanwords were found to occur in 48 places. They are made up of nouns, phrases, clauses etc. The following are some of the unassimilated English loans.

anatomy, annexe, president, industrial activities, indirect taxation, expert opinion, hyoid bone, Intelligence Bureau, dead line, value based politics, probation period, Destalinisation, moral support; The most unpredictable man; Power corrupts, Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely.

3.1.1.2. Partially Assimilated Loanwords

Partially assimilated loanwords are loanwords which show evidence of the morphemic shape of their English originals with some degree of orthographic adaptation. Since the loans are written completely in the Tamil script there are no partially assimilated loanwords in the corpus.

3.1.1.3 Wholly Assimilated Loanwords

This refers to loanwords that are completely assimilated into the orthographical as well as the sound system of the borrowing language. The categories of partially assimilated loanwords and wholly assimilated loanwords are applicable only in situations where the donor language and the borrowing language have identical writing system such as English and Malay.

3.1.1.4 Orthographically Assimilated Loanwords

The orthographically assimilated loanwords are loanwords which have been adapted by being re-spelled in Tamil in such a way that they reflect their pronunciation in English. There are two types of orthographically assimilated loanwords in Tamil.

Type One

This consists of English loans that are pronounced in Tamil almost exactly as in English; the

only difference between these loanwords and their English original is in their orthographic form.

E.g. kampeṇi	`company'
klip	`clip'
sku:l	`school'
nampar	`number'
risk	`risk'
laiprari	`library'

Type Two

This consists of English loans that have been adapted phonemically to suit the Tamil phonemic system. Hence the phonemic substitution is in the form of lengthening of the vowels in loanwords and the use of various consonants that are different from English and peculiar to Tamil. The vast majority of the seven hundred English loanwords that are found in the corpus belong to this type of loanwords, a sample of which is given below. They are mainly in the form of single nouns, nominal compounds and multinominal compounds.

Single nouns

Eg. a:tittar	`auditor'
kamiṣan	`commission'
cartipike:t	`certificate'
pa:lici	`policy'
meccu:riṭi	`maturity'
ṣa:k	`shock'

Nominal Compounds

Eg. atmiṣan ṭaim	`admission time'
a:kčilari nars	`auxiliary nurse'
kavar sto:ri	`cover story'
cek po:st	`check post'
speṣal rippo:rt	`special report'
veyiṭṭin list	`waiting list'

Fused Compounds

These are English compounds that have been borrowed as single units into Tamil. There are only four such compounds in the corpus.

Eg. to:lke:t	`toll-gate'
pa:ma:yil	`palm oil'
me:kkap	`make-up'
la:kkap	`lock-up'

Multinominal Compounds

The multinominal compound has three elements in it. Of the three, the last one is the head 'H' and the first and second elements function as the modifying compound 'M'. In this multinominal compound all the three elements are borrowed loans from English.

Eg.	cini tiraivarkaḷ yu:niyan	'cine drivers' union'
	faina:ns kampaṇi se:rkaḷ	'finance company shares'
	meyin a:pi:s kiḷar:rk	'main office clerk'
	riyal este:t piṣiṇas	'real estate business'
	skuttar mekka:nik ṣeṭ	'the scooter mechanic shed'

3.1.2 Loanblends

In loanblends the borrower imports parts of the model and replaces part of it by or adds to it something already in his own language. A loanblend is therefore, the result of a process that combines morphemic importation together with substitution or addition or affixation in the same item

Loanblends in Tamil can be categorised into two types. They are simple loanblends and compound loanblends.

3.1.2.1 Simple Loanblends

Among the simple loanblends in Tamil, the following types may be distinguished according to which part is imported. They are marginal loanblends and nuclear loanblends.

3.1.2.1.1 Marginal Loanblends

In this type of loanblends, the stem is indigenous and the affix is borrowed from English. There are no such loanblends in the corpus.

3.1.2.1.2 Nuclear Loanblends

A nuclear loanblend is one that combines a single stem (The only exception being the compound nouns under compound Adverbs) or nucleus with a native word or suffix. There are two types of nuclear loanblends in the corpus. In type one the English loans occur with Tamil verbalisers to form Tamil compound verbal stems and idiomatic compounds. In the second type of nuclear loanblends, the English loans are affixed with Tamil suffixes such as plural suffix, casual suffixes, adjectival and adverbial suffixes; post positions and particles.

Nuclear Loanblends I

In Tamil the verbs aṭi 'beat': a:ku 'become': eṭu 'take'; kaṭṭu 'tie'; koṭu 'give'; cey 'do' ;

paṇṇu `do'; po:tu `drop'; viṭu `let go' and vai `keep' occur as verbalisers giving the action as indicated by the nouns just preceding them. Before these verbalisers only nouns can occur in Tamil.

Eg.	kollai aṭi	`plunder'
	o:yvu eṭu	`take rest'
	pantayam kaṭṭu	`take a bet'
	vampu paṇṇu	`make trouble'
	po:tṭi po:tu	`compete'
	kai vai	`lay hands on' (literal meaning)
		`get involved' (idiomatic meaning)

The English loans that occur with the Tamil verbalisers to form compound verbal stems do not belong to just one category but many. They are made up of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions.

The Tamil verbalisers that occur with the English loans are as follows

paṇṇu, aṭi, a:ku, cey, eṭu, kaṭṭu, po:tu, koṭu, vai, eṭu, viṭu. paṇṇu `do'

The verbaliser paṇṇu occurs with the following English loans.

aṭvais paṇṇu	`advice'
puk paṇṇu	`book'
ce:s paṇṇu	`chase'
invaiṭ paṇṇu	`invite'
mis paṇṇu	`miss'
pa:s paṇṇu	`pass'
reṭi paṇṇu	`get ready'
su:t paṇṇu	`shoot'
caspenṭu paṇṇu	`suspend'
vork paṇṇu	`work'

aṭi `beat'

The verbaliser aṭi occurs with the following English loans.

po:r aṭi	`make (someone) to be bored'
peyiṇṭu aṭi	`paint'
ravuṇṭu aṭi	`go on a round'

a:ku `become;

The verbaliser a:ku occurs with the following English loans.

Eg.	aṭmiṭ a:ku	`be admitted'
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ceṭṭik a:ku	`become septic'
ceṭṭal a:ku	`be settled'
ṭisca:rj a:ku	`be discharged'
pa:s a:ku	`pass'
reṭi a:ku	`get ready'

cey `do'

The verbaliser cey occurs with the following English loans.

Eg. impi:c cey	`impeach'
pla:kmeṭil cey	`black mail (someone)'
ripper:r cey	`repair (something)'
rili:s cey	`release (something/someone)'

eṭu `take'

The verbaliser eṭu occurs with the following English loan.

Eg. a:kṣaṅ eṭu	`take action'
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kattu `tie'

The verbaliser kattu occurs with the following English loan.

Eg. peṭ kattu	`lay a bet'
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po:tu `put. drop'

The verbaliser po:tu occurs with the following English loans.

Eg. cain po:tu	`sign'
ke:s po:tu	`sue (someone)'
li:v po:tu	`apply for leave'
peṭṭiṣaṅ po:tu	`send a petition'

koṭu 'give'

The verbaliser koṭu occurs with the following English loans.

Eg. rippo:rt koṭu	`make a report'
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vai `keep. place'

The verbaliser vai occurs with the following English loan.

Eg. ci:l vai `seal'

etu `take'

The verbaliser etu occurs with the following English loan.

restu etu `take rest'

viṭu `let go'

The verbaliser viṭu occurs with the following English loan.

to:s viṭu `scold'

Idiomatic Compounds

In Tamil, there are many compound verbs that are used idiomatically. Agesthalingom (1982: P.63) has listed 44 such compound verbs. Three idiomatic compound verbs are found in the corpus. All three have borrowed elements in them.

Eg. ais vai `flatter'
 peṇṭ nimir `correct'
 skuru: koṭu `incite'

Nuclear Loanblends II

As mentioned earlier, in the second type of nuclear loanblend, the English loans are affixed with Tamil bound morphemes such as the plural suffix, post positions, particles, casual suffixes, adjectival and adverbial suffixes.

a. English Stems with Tamil Plural Suffix

English loans both simple and compound nouns are affixed with the Tamil plural suffix kaḷ.

Eg. a:rṭarkaḷ `orders'
 paippukaḷ `pipes'
 kaṣṭams a:pi:carkaḷ `customs officers'
 ci:riyal namparkaḷ `serial numbers'

English loans that are affixed with the plural suffix kaḷ are sometimes further inflected with casual suffixes such as the accusative, dative and locative.

Eg. cu:pparvaicakaḷai `the supervisors - accusative'
 a:rṭakalukku `for the orders'
 ke:ṅkaḷil `in cans'

b. English stems with Tamil Post Positions

The post positions are - parri, -viṭa and -a:ka.

Eg.	carvi:caipparri	`about the service'
	tavun passaiviṭa	`.... than the town bus'
	emarjensikka:ka	`for emergency'
	po:stiṅkukka:ka	`for posting'

In the following example, the English stem `fridge' occurs with the necessary postpositions to indicate some location.

Eg.	frijukkup pakkattilirunta	`that which was near the fridge'
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c. English Stems with Tamil Particles

The borrowed English stems are also affixed with Tamil particles such as -po:tu -paṭi -ta:n; -um; e; -um... -um; -o:... -o.

Eg.	mi:ttiṅkin po:tu	`during the meeting'
	aṭvaiṣ paṭi	`following (one's) advice'
	akriṁṇtu paṭi	`according to agreement'
	pa:rastarta: :n	`forester only'
	metikaḷ stu:ṭansumta:n	`medical students too'
	ce:rmanum	`chairman too'
	ṣṭikkarum	`sticker too'
	ci:riyasṇasse:	`it is the seriousness'

Sometimes the emphatic particle e: occurs after the accusative, locative and dative suffixes as in

Eg	ime:jaiye:	`the image' (in emphatic mood)
	a:mpulaṅsile:ye	`in the ambulance itself'
	pa:rkkile:ye	`in the park itself'
	caitṭukke:	`more to the side (in the emphatic mood)

In negative expressions involving illai the emphatic particle e: co-occurs with the English nouns to indicate definiteness of negativity.

Eg.	originale: illai	`not at all the original'
	ca:nse: illai	`no chance at all'
	reste: illai	`no rest at all'

There are two type of conjunctive particles in the corpus. They are -um... -um and -o:... -o:

spa:narum kaiyuma:ka	`an idiomatic expression meaning with the spanner in hand'
laican <u>so</u> : anumat <u>iy</u> o:	`license or permission'
parce:s a:r <u>ar</u> aiyo:	`either the purchase order or the bill'
pillaiyo:	

d. English Stems with Tamil Casal Suffixes

English stems are affixed with Tamil casal suffixes that convey prepositional meanings.

Eg. a:pi:cai	`office - accusative'
e:riya:vai	`area- accusative'
ko:rt <u>tu</u> kku	`to court'
pa:ma:yilukku	`for palm oil'
ka <u>st</u> amar <u>in</u>	`customer's'
ro:tt <u>in</u>	`the road's'
ka:rp <u>pare</u> :sa <u>nu</u> ta <u>iy</u> a	`corporation's'
me:ne:ja <u>ro</u> :tu	`with the manager'
ka <u>mi</u> sa <u>na</u> ro:tu	`with the commissioner'
ka <u>va</u> rn <u>ar</u> u <u>ta</u> n	`with the governor'
ti:cca <u>ru</u> ta <u>n</u>	`with the teacher'
ka <u>st</u> amsil	`at the customs'
kyu:vil	`in the queue'
ma:ji <u>st</u> ire:tt <u>ita</u> m	`to the magistrate'
tira: .:pik ka:na <u>st</u> ap <u>il</u> ita <u>m</u>	`to the traffic constable'
sku:liliruntu	`from school'
ha:st <u>al</u> iliruntu	`from hostel'

e. English Stems with Tamil Adjectival Suffix

English nouns and adjectives are affixed with Tamil adjectival suffix -a:na resulting in derived adjectives such as

Eg. a <u>nt</u> ar <u>st</u> e:nt <u>in</u> ka:na	`understanding' (adj)
ke:su <u>va</u> la:na	`casual' (adj)
ci:ni <u>ya</u> ra:na	`senior' (adj)

Some English adjectival loans are used exactly as in the donor language in an MH Structure where the modifier is English and the head Tamil.

Eg. M	H
le:tt <u>ast</u> u	kauravam `recently acquired dignity'
ci:ri <u>ya</u> s	visayam `serious matter'