Topics in Sinhala Syntax

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Except where otherwise acknowledged in the text, this thesis represents the original research of the author.

Deepthi K Henadeerage
This thesis is dedicated to my father
Henadeerage Wilfred Henry Perera in loving memory,
and
to Venerable Kannantudawe Gunalankara Thero
who has been instrumental in fostering my interest in my language.
I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to Avery Andrews, Chair of my Committee, for his patience, constructive feedback and insightful advice. Over the years, I have benefited from his stimulating ideas and suggestions. I would also like to thank Cynthia Allen, my adviser, whose advice, support and comments have been invaluable, I have learnt a great deal from her. Thanks are also due to Sasha Aikhenvald, who was on my Committee for the first two years, and Nicholas Himmelmann and Anna Wierzbicka for providing comments on the early drafts of some chapters. In addition I appreciate the support and advice of Harold Koch, the Graduate Convenor in 2001-2002.

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Abstract

This study is a detailed investigation of a number of issues in colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax. These issues primarily concern grammatical relations, argument structure, phrase structure and focus constructions. The theoretical framework of this study is Lexical Functional Grammar.

Chapter 1 introduces the issues to be discussed, followed by a brief introduction of some essential aspects of colloquial Sinhala as background for the discussion in the following chapters. In Chapter 2 we present basic concepts of the theoretical framework of Lexical Functional Grammar.

The next three chapters mainly concern grammatical relations, argument structure and clause structure in colloquial Sinhala. Chapter 3 examines grammatical relations. The main focus lies in establishing the subject grammatical relation in terms of various subjecthood diagnostics. We show that only a very small number of diagnostics are reliable, and that the evidence for subject is weaker than assumed previously. All the subjecthood diagnostics that were examined select the most prominent argument in the argument structure as the subject, i.e. ‘logical subject’. However, there appear to be no processes in the language that are sensitive to the subject in the grammatical relations structure, i.e. ‘gr-subject’. Further, there is no evidence for other grammatical relations like objects. In Chapter 4 we discuss the agentless construction and related valency alternation phenomena. It was previously assumed that the agentless construction, valency alternation phenomena and the involitive construction are all related. We argue that the agentless construction should be treated as a different construction from the involitive construction. We also show that the agentless construction and the involitive construction have contrasting characteristics, and that treatment of them as separate constructions can account for some phenomena which did not receive an explanation previously. The valency alternation phenomena are related to the agentless construction, therefore there is no valency alternation in involutive constructions. It will be shown that verbs undergoing the valency alternation can be distinguished from the other verbs in terms of the lexical semantic properties of individual verbs. Chapter 5 examines the structure of non-verbal
sentences in terms of a number of morphosyntactic phenomena. It was previously argued that verbal sentences and non-verbal sentences in colloquial Sinhala differ in terms of clause structure. However, the present study shows evidence to the contrary.

The next two chapters deal with modelling contrastive focus and the phrase structure of the language. Chapter 6 is a detailed analysis of the contrastive focus (cleft) construction in various clause types in the language, and proposes a unified syntactic treatment of contrastive focus. Contrastive focus is in some constructions morphologically encoded, while in others it involves both morphological and configurational assignment of focus. The complex interaction between focus markers and verb morphology in various focus constructions is accounted for by general well-formedness conditions applying to the f-structure, and the principles of Functional Uncertainty and Morphological Blocking. In Chapter 7, we discuss the phrase structure of the language, in particular such issues as its non-configurational nature and the lack of evidence for VP. We propose non-configurational S and some functional projections to account for word order freedom under S and to explain certain morphosyntactic phenomena, such as configurational focus assignment. Finally, Chapter 8 summarises the conclusions made in previous chapters.
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>first person, second person, third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>declarative marker on verbs -a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>absolutive case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>accusative case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>assertion marker -yi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANIM</td>
<td>animate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAU</td>
<td>causative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMP</td>
<td>complementiser that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COND</td>
<td>conditional nag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONJ</td>
<td>conjunction marker -yi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEF</td>
<td>definite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUB</td>
<td>dubitative focus marker yae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>scope marker on verbs -e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMP</td>
<td>emphatic marker -mø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>ergative case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC</td>
<td>exclusive focus marker wixray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNEG</td>
<td>negative focus marker nemey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOC</td>
<td>general contrastive focus marker tamay/tamaa/-yi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUT</td>
<td>future tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>genitive case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND</td>
<td>indefinite</td>
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<tr>
<td>INF</td>
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<td>instrumental case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INV</td>
<td>involitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative particle nææ</td>
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<tr>
<td>NF</td>
<td>non-finite</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>nominative case</td>
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<td>NOMIN</td>
<td>nominalised form</td>
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<td>OPT</td>
<td>optative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PER</td>
<td>permissive -aawe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>plural</td>
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<tr>
<td>POSTP</td>
<td>postposition</td>
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<td>PST</td>
<td>past tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTCP</td>
<td>participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTG</td>
<td>participle marker gamaŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTK</td>
<td>participle marker kotø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>question marker dø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transliteration

- In transcribing proper names in Sinhala examples we follow the common orthography used in day-to-day practice, and have not used phonetic symbols such as schwa.
- Long vowels are indicated by doubling the vowel symbol (e.g. \textipa{aa} for long \textipa{a})
- The following symbols are used in Sinhala examples:
  \begin{itemize}
  \item \textipa{æ}           mid front short vowel (as in \textipa{cat})
  \item \textipa{ə}           schwa
  \item \textipa{ŋ}           velar nasal
  \item \textipa{ⁿd}          prenasalised dental stop
  \item \textipa{ⁿg}          prenasalised velar stop
  \item \textipa{ⁿb}          prenasalised bilabial stop
  \item \textipa{ⁿd}          prenasalised retroflex stop
  \item \textipa{ⁿ⁺}         retroflex stops
  \end{itemize}

Conventions

- The majority of Sinhala data used in this study were obtained by consultation with Sinhala speakers. The data from all the other sources is acknowledged.
- The transliteration and the interlinear gloss of sentences quoted from other sources, have been changed to the conventions of this study for consistency.
- The following acronyms are used in this study:
  \begin{itemize}
  \item AFF     affix
  \item AN(s)   Action Nominal(s)
  \item DSC     dative subject construction
  \item FP      Focus Phrase
  \item FU      Functional Uncertainty
  \item GB      Government and Binding Theory
  \item GR(s)   grammatical relation(s)
  \item IOFU    Inside_Out Functional Uncertainty
  \item LFG     Lexical Functional Grammar
  \item LMT     Lexical Mapping Theory
  \item MBP     Morphological Blocking Principle
  \end{itemize}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCC(s)</td>
<td>Multi Clause Construction(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>non-verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVS(s)</td>
<td>non-verbal sentence(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object grammatical function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJø</td>
<td>secondary object grammatical function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBL</td>
<td>oblique grammatical function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIFU</td>
<td>Outside_In Functional Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJ</td>
<td>subject grammatical function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS(s)</td>
<td>verbal sentence(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.1 Overview

The goal of this dissertation is to conduct a detailed examination of a number of different, but complementary issues in colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax: grammatical relations, the agentless construction and the related valency alternation phenomena, the structure of non-verbal sentences, the focus (cleft) construction and the phrase structure. The first three primarily concern the grammatical relations and the argument structure of colloquial Sinhala grammar, while the last two issues relate to modelling contrastive focus and the phrase structure of the language.

Although colloquial Sinhala has been well-documented and discussed in the linguistic literature, the issues that we will be exploring in this study have either not been adequately studied, or require a different explanation under the theoretical framework of the present study. For instance, there are a number of unanswered questions. What is the nature of the subject and how do we postulate grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala? Is the clause structure of non-verbal sentences different from that of verbal sentences? Volitionality is a striking feature in the language, and whether or not the subject argument in a sentence intentionally involved is morphologically encoded both on the subject and the verb itself. Yet, why do intentional subjects occur with the involutive form of verb (i.e. involitive verbs in volitional contexts)? Does the involutive construction have a valency reducing effect? How do we account for the complexities arising from the morphosyntactic and configurational encoding of focus in contrastive focus constructions? In this study we intend to discuss issues such as these and hope to provide explanations for them.

The investigation of this thesis is significant in two ways.

Firstly, it provides detailed analyses of various constructions and enriches our understanding of these morphosyntactic phenomena in colloquial Sinhala, some of which are previously undescribed. Further, the focus construction and some aspects of the involutive construction that we will be discussing in this study are extremely pervasive in the language, and involve all levels of the grammar. Therefore, an
in-depth analysis of these issues is essential for an overall understanding of grammatical structure.

Secondly, the issues that are examined in this study, and our findings are important both theoretically and typologically. For instance, one of the key issues dealt with in this study is the evidence for, and the nature of, the subject grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala. The notion of grammatical relations plays an important role in some linguistic theories, such as Lexical Functional Grammar, which is the basis of the present study. Universal concepts such as subject and object are also useful for making cross-linguistic generalisations and explaining some morphosyntactic phenomena across languages. Further, our discussion of grammatical relations and the nature of subject in colloquial Sinhala is also useful from a typological point of view, especially because the notion of grammatical relations—in particular the subject in South Asian languages—has received much attention and has sometimes been shown to be problematic (Masica 1991, Bhat 1991).

Furthermore, our study shows how closely morphological, syntactic and semantic aspects of grammar interact with each other. The subject grammatical relation appears to be the highest semantic role in the argument structure of a predicate. Volitionality is a semantic notion, yet, it constrains the morphosyntactic expression of arguments. Likewise, the focus interpretation, essentially a pragmatic notion, has morphosyntactic reflexes. The semantic conditioning of verbs undergoing valency alternation and the resulting effect on the syntactic structure is another example of the interface between the different modules of grammar. Thus, the present study is also relevant in terms of linguistic theory, in particular the theory of syntax.

1.2 The Issues to be Explored

In what follows, we describe in turn each issue that we will be examining in this study.

Grammatical Relations: Chapter 3 is a detailed discussion of grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala. We primarily focus on what evidence is available for the subject in this language and how the subject grammatical relation can be characterised. We also look at whether there is evidence for objects and other grammatical relations.

Previous studies, on the basis of some subjecthood diagnostics, have shown that the subject grammatical relation exists in colloquial Sinhala (see Wijayawardhana et
al. (1991), Inman (1993) among others). However, our examination reveals that not all subjecthood diagnostics employed previously are reliable in postulating a subject in colloquial Sinhala and the evidence for subject is weaker than previously assumed. The present study crucially differs from previous ones in terms of the range of morphosyntactic constructions examined in search of evidence for the subject grammatical relation, and in terms of how the subject is determined in a given construction. We will discuss a large number of morphosyntactic constructions ranging from coding strategies to various behavioural properties of subject that are usually considered diagnostics of subject in many languages. Following Van Valin and La Polla (1997), we expect to find a restricted neutralisation of semantic and pragmatic roles with regard to the subject argument position in morphosyntactic constructions if they are to be considered reliable subjecthood diagnostics. The important aspect of this method is to see if the subject can be reduced to a particular semantic role (e.g. agent) or to a pragmatic role (e.g. topic).

As will be shown in our discussion of grammatical relations, the subject in colloquial Sinhala is always the most prominent semantic role in the argument structure (i.e. ‘a-subject’ (Manning 1996) or ‘logical subject’) of a clause. Interestingly, there is no evidence for the ‘gr-subject’ (i.e. the most prominent entity in the grammatical relations structure (see Manning 1996)) and other grammatical relations such as objects. We suspect that the lack of certain syntactic processes like passivisation and the lack of evidence for the ‘gr-subject’ and other grammatical relations, in particular the primary object might be related.

Valency, Volition and Argument Structure: The involitive construction is one of the most notable phenomena in Sinhala and over the years has perhaps been the most studied topic in the language.¹ However, there appear to be a number of problems associated with these analyses, and as a result, the involitive construction has not received an adequate explanation and a proper treatment. There is a valency alternation associated with some verbs. These verbs can be used transitively or intransitively. We refer to the intransitive uses of these verbs as the agentless construction. In previous studies the intransitive form of these verbs undergoing the valency alternation is

¹ These studies range from descriptive work to theoretical work. Although some of them do not exclusively focus on the involitive construction, nonetheless they all discuss some aspects of it more or less. See Gair (1970, 1971); Gunasinghe (1985); Gunasinghe and Kess (1989); Wijayawardhana et al. (1991) and Inman (1993).
incorrectly assumed to be involitive due to the morphological resemblance between the
two. As a result, the agentless construction is treated as a part of the involitive
construction, and the involitives are generally considered to have a valency reducing
effect. While some studies (e.g. Wijayawardhana et al. (1991), Inman (1993)) assume
that only some verbs are intransitive in the involitive form, other studies (e.g.
Gunasinghe (1985), Gunasinghe and Kess (1989)) assume that involitive verbs are
intransitive by nature. Thus, in some studies the volitive/involitive distinction is seen
to be correlated with the transitive/intransitive distinction.

In the present study we discuss the valency alternation phenomena and show
that verbs undergoing valency alternation can be distinguished from others on the basis
of the lexical semantics of individual verbs. More importantly, we show that the
involitive construction has no effect on the argument structure of verbs, and that there
is no correlation between the volitive/involitive distinction and the
transitive/intransitive distinction. We argue that the agentless construction is
completely different from the involitive construction despite the resemblance in the
verbal forms of both. It will be shown that the treatment of the involitive construction
and the agentless construction as two separate constructions explains their contrasting
characteristics. Further, in the light of the present analysis, we can explain why the
involitive form of the verb occurs in some volitional contexts, a fact that has gone
unnoticed in the literature, as far as we are aware.

We will also show that the involitive construction and the agentless
construction crucially differ from the prototypical passive construction that is found in
languages like English.

**Structure of Non-Verbal Sentences:** We discuss the structure of non-verbal
sentences (NVSs) and compare them with verbal sentences. The main aim of this
investigation is to see if they differ from verbal sentences in terms of clause structure.
Further, we will also discuss copula-less non-verbal sentences and whether there is an
underlying verb form which can be treated as copula in such non-verbal sentences.

Kariyakarawana (1998) has argued that the clause structure of verbal sentences
and non-verbal sentences is different. He discusses a number of constructions as
diagnostics to distinguish verbal clauses from non-verbal clauses. A closer
examination of these constructions suggests that there is no conclusive evidence to
warrant such strong conclusions in relation to the clause structure of verbal and non-verbal sentences in colloquial Sinhala. Further, Kariyakarawana assumes that the subject in verbal sentences and non-verbal sentences occupy different structural positions. Therefore, further examination of the nature of clause structure in non-verbal sentences is desirable.

**Focus Construction**: This construction is also very pervasive in Sinhala grammar and interacts with various modules such as morphology, syntax, phrase structure and pragmatics. In this study we provide a comprehensive analysis of the syntax of the contrastive focus construction in colloquial Sinhala, based on LFG. This construction has been previously discussed by studies based on the framework of Government and Binding theory, such as Gair (1983)\textsuperscript{2} and Kariyakarawana (1998). We are not aware of a treatment of this construction under the theoretical framework of LFG. Further, the present study investigates the contrastive focus of various forms such as *constituent focus* and *predicate focus* in various clause types, i.e. in simple clauses, complex constructions and non-verbal sentences.

A notable characteristic of this construction is that the focussed constituent carries a focus marker and the verb itself is marked with a morpheme indicating that one of its constituents bears focus. The co-occurrence of these two elements, focus markers and the verb marker, plays a key role in focus interpretation. An account of colloquial Sinhala focus construction needs to be able to account for the complex interaction of these elements, as they co-occur in some constructions, whereas their co-occurrence is relaxed in others. For instance, in *constituent focus* (i.e. where a constituent of the clause bears focus instead of the predicate) they must co-occur. The co-occurrence condition does not hold in the *predicate focus* constructions, and is relaxed in *clause-final focus* constructions in which a constituent occupies the configurationally-defined focus position. Finally, the co-occurrence condition is not applicable to focus in NVSs, as the special verb marker does not occur with non-verbal predicates.

Apart from the morphological encoding of focus, there are other restrictions associated with the focus construction. For instance, only one constituent in a clause can bear focus, in other words, multiple focus is not allowed in simple sentences.

\textsuperscript{2} Reprinted in Gair (1998).
However, multiple focus constituents are allowed in clauses containing embedded clauses, provided that each focus constituent is licensed by a verb which carries the focus morpheme. Further, only certain constituents in a clause can be focussed. Possessors in NPs, complements of PPs and relative clauses or parts thereof modifying an NP cannot be focussed. As we will show, only the direct daughters of S can be focussed.

Although focus encoding is largely morphological, sometimes focus may be encoded with a combination of both morphological and configurational means. Thus, the present analysis also aims to account for the interaction of morphological and configurational encoding of focus, apart from the interaction of focus markers and verb marking. In accounting for focus in colloquial Sinhala, the present study makes use of well-formedness conditions on the f-structure of LFG, along with the principles of Functional Uncertainty and Morphological Blocking. The language specific requirements of focus in colloquial Sinhala are built into the formulations of lexical entries for the focus markers and other associated particles.

**Phrase Structure:** In Chapter 7, we examine aspects of phrase structure in colloquial Sinhala as it is relevant to the discussion of grammatical functions and the focus construction in earlier chapters. In this regard, this chapter complements the issues of colloquial morphosyntax discussed previously.

One of the issues to be discussed in Chapter 7 is the non-configurational nature of colloquial Sinhala. Generally, colloquial Sinhala is known as a free word order language (see Gair (1983), Inman (1993) among others). This is because subject, object and verb can occur in any order, although SOV is the unmarked order. Our main objective is to see whether colloquial Sinhala has a flat phase structure and whether there is evidence for subject-object asymmetries. Constructions such as focus in Sinhala, which is by far the most useful source of information for phrase structure, suggest that colloquial Sinhala has no VP. Further, pronominal binding appears to be based on linear precedence rather than hierarchical structure.

Although word order tends to be free, especially under S, there are instances in which word order plays a crucial role in syntax. There is some evidence in the phrase structure of colloquial Sinhala for what is known in linguistic literature as word order freezing (Mohanan & Mohanan 1994, Lee 2001). We note that in some instances
where case marking cannot determine grammatical function, word order is used for function identification. Further, as we will show in the discussion of the focus construction (Chapter 6), in some clauses the contrastive focus is determined jointly on the basis of morphological encoding and phrase structure. Thus, it appears that colloquial Sinhala makes use of both morphological encoding as well as phrase structure for function identification. In our analysis we will propose functional projections, apart from the non-configurational S, to account for some of these phenomena within the LFG framework.

1.3 Relevant Previous Literature

Colloquial Sinhala grammar has been described and discussed in many previous studies, for example traditional grammar books (e.g. Gunasekara (1981)), pedagogical grammars (e.g. Reynolds (1980), Karunatillake (1992)) and linguistic studies (e.g. Gair (1970)). There are also several linguistic studies, both descriptive and theoretical, which concentrate on specific aspects of colloquial Sinhala grammar (e.g. the involitive construction). In this section we briefly introduce a number of studies relevant to the issues discussed in the present study. Where relevant, we will make detailed discussions of these studies in subsequent chapters.

Gair (1970): This is a detailed linguistic study of the clause structure in colloquial Sinhala, based on notions of generative transformational grammar. We discuss Gair’s study in § 4.2.1 in relation to volitive and involitive clauses.

Gunasinghe (1985): This study argues for recognition of two major subtypes of passive structures: agentive and non-agentive passive. The agentive type is a non-basic and derived structure, and corresponds to active clauses through syntactic transformations, while the non-agentive type, also called semantic passive, is basic and intransitive, and does not have the same active/passive derivation that the agentive passive has. For this semantically based, cross-linguistic analysis of passive, Gunasinghe discusses three languages: English, Nyangumarda (Pama-Nyungan, Australia) and Sinhala (both literary and colloquial). The psycholinguistic dimension of the passive voice is also considered as evidence for the two types of passives. The analysis of Sinhala data and the related explanations by Gunasinghe will be discussed in § 3.2.1 and § 3.3.1.1.
Gunasinghe and Kess (1989): The claims of this paper are based on Gunasinghe’s earlier study of the re-analysis of passive (1985). They argue that agency should be separated from voice in passives in Sinhala (both literary and colloquial). Thus, the passive has two distinct structures. The first one is the grammatical passive, which is based on voice, and the second one is the semantic passive, which is based on agency. These two types of passives correspond to the agentive and non-agentive divisions discussed in Gunasinghe (1985), respectively. As a part of the volitive and involitive constructions, we will discuss this study in § 4.2.2.

Kariyakarawana (1992/1998): Kariyakarawana (1998), the published version of the author’s (1992) doctoral dissertation, concentrates on long distance dependencies in colloquial Sinhala. The main issues dealt with in this study are the focus construction and wh-questions in the theoretical framework of Government and Binding Theory. We will discuss a number of non-theoretical issues relating to the analysis of colloquial Sinhala data by Kariyakarawana: see § 3.2.2 in relation to Kariyakaranwana’s analysis of the subject, § 5.4 for clause structure of non-verbal sentences, and § 6.3 in relation to the focus construction.

Wijayawardhana, Wickramasinghe and Bynon (1991): Entitled Passive-related constructions in colloquial Sinhala, this is another study on the involitive construction. Following Shibatani’s (1985) approach to grammatical voice, this study treats volitive and involitive clauses as two distinct voice constructions (active and passive) on the basis of verb morphology and case marking. We will discuss their treatment of agentless clauses and the involitive construction in § 4.2.3. Also see § 3.2.3 in relation to subjecthood diagnostics.

Inman (1993): This is the most detailed study of the semantics and pragmatics of colloquial Sinhala involitive verbs to date. Various aspects and semantic properties of the involitive have been discussed in the framework of Montague Grammar. Also discussed in this study is subjecthood, in particular non-nominative subjecthood, as it is related to the involitive construction. We discuss Inman’s study in § 4.2.4 with respect to the agentless construction and the involitive construction. See also § 3.2.4 and in particular § 3.3.7 in relation to the subjecthood diagnostics.

Apart from the studies mentioned above, there are also a smaller number of studies, which will also be discussed in relevant sections.
1.4 Theoretical Framework

It is to be noted that nearly all of the analyses of various morphosyntactic phenomena discussed in the present study are theory neutral, and may be explained in terms of various theoretical frameworks. However, we have made some theoretical assumptions with regard to the explanations of certain issues raised in the discussion. The formal theoretical model that is used in the present study is that of Lexical Functional Grammar (Kaplan and Bresnan 1982, Bresnan 2001).

1.5 Colloquial Sinhala

Sinhala, pronounced [sɪŋhələ], is one of the two official languages in Sri Lanka (the other being Tamil). It is spoken by around 74% of the population.\(^3\) It belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family, and is related to other Indian languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Panjabi, Marathi, etc. Sinhala is also closely related to Divehi, the language of the Maldives Islands. Due to its geographical separation from other Indo Aryan languages for over 2000 years it has developed independently. However, its grammatical structure and lexicon have been influenced by languages such as Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Malay, Arabic, Dutch, Portuguese and English, which came into contact with Sinhala during different stages of its development. Among these languages, Tamil, a Dravidian language predominantly spoken in northern and eastern Sri Lanka and in southern India, has had a significant influence on lexicon, phonology, morphology and the syntactic structure.

Modern Sinhala is diglossic, and exhibits two distinct varieties: spoken Sinhala and written Sinhala.\(^4\) Spoken Sinhala, also referred to as colloquial Sinhala, is the language of day-to-day conversation in all social levels. Written Sinhala, also referred to as Literary Sinhala, is the language of almost all written documents such as newspapers, journals and other literature. The two types differ significantly from each other in all levels of the language ranging from the lexicon to grammatical structure (Gair 1968). For instance, complex morphological structures, a strict subject-verb agreement phenomena and an active/passive distinction in clause structure are present.

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\(^4\) See Paolillo (1992) for a detailed study of Sinhala diglossia.
in literary Sinhala. However, colloquial Sinhala lacks these features. In the present study, we concentrate only on colloquial Sinhala.

### 1.6 Colloquial Sinhala Morphosyntax: Relevant Background Issues

In what follows we briefly describe several characteristics of colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax relevant for the discussion in subsequent chapters. In the present context, the following properties require mentioning: verb and nominal morphology, and, in particular, the case marking of arguments. This section is descriptive and mainly based on information taken from Gunasekara (1891), Gair (1970), Inman (1993) and Henadeerage (1995).

#### 1.6.1 Volitive/Involitive Distinction

Verbs may be volitive or involitive. This division based on volition applies to both literary and colloquial Sinhala (see Gunasekara (1891:203-205)). The two classes are distinguished on morphological grounds. Volitive verbs generally denote intentional states-of-affairs while involitives generally denote unintentional states-of-affairs, in other words, the value of the volitive or the involitive suffix tells us about the volitionality of the subject of the verb. Some examples of volitive and involitive verb forms are given in Table 1-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volitive form</th>
<th>Involitive form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <em>ahan</em>(\text{wa})</td>
<td><em>(\text{q})hen</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. <em>mar</em>(\text{wa})</td>
<td><em>(\text{q})ren</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. <em>kap</em>(\text{wa})</td>
<td><em>(\text{q})pen</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. <em>naf</em>(\text{wa})</td>
<td><em>(\text{q})ten</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. <em>(\text{d})d(\text{e})n</em>(\text{wa})</td>
<td><em>(\text{q})den</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. <em>moor</em>(\text{wa})</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. -</td>
<td><em>(\text{w})t(\text{a})n</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. -</td>
<td><em>(\text{r})den</em>(\text{wa})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1-1: Volitive and Involitive verbs**

---

5 For a detailed discussion of the notions of volitivitiy, and semantic and pragmatic aspects of the involitive constructions, the reader is redirected to Inman (1993).
Generally speaking volitive and involitive verb forms can be found for any given verbal stem. However, there are some volitive verbs that do not have involitive counterparts and vice-versa. For instance, as can be seen in the table above, \textit{moor} \textit{wa} ‘mature’ does not have an involitive counterpart even though it is non-volitional, while \textit{wa} \textit{gen} \textit{wa} ‘drop’/‘fall’ and \textit{riden} \textit{wa} ‘ache’ do not have corresponding morphologically volitive forms. In the event of a gap in the morphological paradigm, such as these, the corresponding volitive or involitive verb form is used for the non-existent form.

It is also to be noted that, contrary to general expectation, some involitive verbs may also be used in volitional contexts in some instances, even when the corresponding volitive form exists. This phenomenon of involitive verbs appearing in volitional contexts is a productive construction and we are not aware of any reference to such a construction in previous studies of Sinhala involitives. Chapter 4 contains a discussion of this phenomenon. Thus, ‘volitivity’ is not always synonymous with ‘volition’ or ‘voluntariness’: in special circumstances, a volitive verb may represent an involuntary action while, conversely, an involitive verb may represent a voluntary action.

1.6.2 Verb Classifications

Apart from the traditional volitive/involitive classification, described in the previous section, other classifications of verbs are also found in the literature. Some researchers have classified colloquial Sinhala verbs into three categories as Active (A), Passive (P) and Causative (C) in terms of the morphemic composition of verbs (see De Silva (1960) and Gair (1970)). Volitive verbs are referred to as (A)ctive verbs, while involitive verbs are referred to as (P)assive verbs in these studies. The verbs with the causative morpheme are (C)ausative verbs. It is to be noted that although these terms suggest an active/passive distinction in colloquial Sinhala verbs that is parallel to the active and passive construction in languages like English, Gair (1990) mentions that they are used for terminological convenience. Geiger (1990) also classifies verbs along the same lines. Coates (1972) mentions that the roots of the A-C-P classification go back to Sanskrit.
Table 1-2: A-C-P Classification of Volitive and Involitive Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Volitive</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘kill’</td>
<td>mara�na</td>
<td>mara�na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘cut’</td>
<td>kapa�na</td>
<td>kapa�na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘dance’</td>
<td>nata�na</td>
<td>nata�na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘cry’</td>
<td>adirøna</td>
<td>adirøna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1-2 shows how the threefold A-C-P classification corresponds to the traditional twofold volitive and involitive types. All the ‘Involitive’ verbs are treated as P verbs. Note that ‘Volitive’ verbs are divided into A and C on the basis of volitive and causative morphemes present in such verb forms. Causative verbs have both the volitive morpheme as well as the causative morpheme, that is, they are volitive as well as causative.

We argue that the A-C-P classification is itself not adequate to describe verbs in terms of their morphemic composition, because some (if not most) of P verbs can be further divided into two groups: causative and non-causative (see Henadeerage (1995)). However, as it is irrelevant for the present study, we do not intend to discuss the arguments put forward by Henadeerage (1995) here.

In our discussions in forthcoming chapters we will not make use of the A-C-P classification. This information is intended as a background for the reader, as sometimes we refer to the A-C-P classification in relation to previous studies.

1.6.3 Case Features

There are five cases on nominals: nominative, accusative, dative, instrumental and genitive/locative. These are expressed by suffixes. One form of the instrumental case is expressed by a word-level item atig, which will be discussed in § 1.6.5. Nominative is unmarked. Nominals are also marked for number and animacy; sometimes this information is not expressed by a discrete morpheme but fused with case information.

Table 1-3 shows the case features and their allomorphs for animate and inanimate nouns in singular and plural forms.
Table 1-3: Case Features for Animate and Inanimate Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Animate</th>
<th>Inanimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>∅</td>
<td>-oo ~ -uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>(-wɔ)</td>
<td>-n(wɔ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>-geŋ / atiŋ</td>
<td>-ngeŋ / atiŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>-twar</td>
<td>-ntar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive/Locative</td>
<td>-ge</td>
<td>-nge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It appears that a detailed study is required to determine the case assignment pattern of inanimate nouns in colloquial Sinhala in terms of a cross-linguistic perspective, and to see whether the lack of a nominative/accusative distinction in inanimate nouns is due to semantic properties. However, for the purpose of the present study, we assume that inanimate subjects are (unmarked) nominative and inanimate objects are (unmarked) accusative, as the actual case marking on inanimate nouns and their semantic properties have no impact on the conclusions made in this study. Further, for orthographical convenience, I do not indicate the case of inanimate nouns in the gloss, as they are unmarked, except where such case information is crucial for the discussion.

1.6.4 Case Assignment

The subject is understood to act intentionally in bringing about the event in volitive clauses. The subject lacks intentionality with involitive verbs; in other words a subject can be a patient, theme, experiencer or unintentional/accidental agent. An intentional animate subject, which is canonically the agent, is always nominative, whereas an unintentional animate subject can be assigned accusative, dative or instrumental case depending on the semantic properties that the subject argument bears (Inman 1993, Henadeerage 1995).\(^6\) Inanimate subjects are unmarked for nominative and accusative case regardless of whether the verb is volitive or involitive. Thus, semantic distinctions of arguments of a verb are generally reflected in the morphology of the verb and the case assigned to arguments.

Object case-marking exhibits the following dichotomy: most verbs mark objects in the accusative; the rest take dative objects. Postpositional complements may be in any of the five cases except accusative. Again, the case-marking system follows familiar patterns of association between case marking and semantics; for instance, goals (including recipients) are dative and the locative source is expressed by the instrumental case. The locations and possessors are expressed by the genitive/locative case. Animate nouns that appear with the genitive/locative case are possessors (hence they are glossed in our examples as genitive), while inanimate nouns that appear with the genitive/locative case indicate location (hence they are glossed as locative).

\(^6\) This is rather an oversimplification of the subject case marking pattern in colloquial Sinhala, the reader is directed to Henadeerage (1995) for a detailed discussion.
1.6.5 Instrumental Case and *Atig* Phrase

Earlier we mentioned that the word level *ati* is treated as an instance of instrumental case in this study. The subjects of some transitive involitive verbs are marked with *ati*, and denote the accidental or involuntary agent (as opposed to nominative subjects of volitive clauses, which are intentional agents). Although *ati* is a postposition (Gair 1970:73, Wijayawardhana et al. 1991, Inman 1993), the *ati* phrase [NP *ati*] is similar to an instrumental case marked NP in terms of the distribution and meaning (Henadeerage 1995). The following examples illustrate this:

(1)  

\[ \text{la} \text{m} \text{Ya} \text{-} \text{gi} \text{n} \text{ee} \text{ wage} \text{ wa} \text{\text{"a}lak} \text{ ker} \text{enn} \text{ ne} \text{w}. \]

child-INST that like work-IND do.INV.PRE NEG.

\[ \text{la} \text{m} \text{Ya} \text{ at} \text{i} \text{n} \text{ee} \text{ wage} \text{ wa} \text{\text{"a}lak} \text{ ker} \text{enn} \text{ ne} \text{w}. \]

child *ati* that like work-IND do.INV.PRE NEG.

‘The child does not (intentionally) do a thing like that.’ (Henadeerage 1995:36)

(2)  

\[ \text{a} \text{mma-ge} \text{n} \text{s in} \text{h} \text{\text{"a}l} \text{a} \text{ k} \text{aw} \text{\text{"a}l} \text{ho} \text{\text{"d}z} \text{e} \text{ ha} \text{\text{"e}nd} \text{en} \text{\text{"a}h}. \]

mother-INST Sinhala food well make.INV.PRE Gair (1990:22)

\[ \text{a} \text{mma} \text{ ati} \text{n} \text{s in} \text{h} \text{\text{"a}l} \text{a} \text{ k} \text{aw} \text{\text{"a}l} \text{ho} \text{\text{"d}z} \text{e} \text{ ha} \text{\text{"e}nd} \text{en} \text{\text{"a}h}. \]

mother *ati* Sinhala food well make.INV.PRE

‘Mother (always) makes Sinhala food well.’ (Henadeerage 1995:36)

Thus, the *ati* phrase and the instrumental case-marked NP are interchangeable.

*Ati* is etymologically the instrumental form of *at* ‘hand’ [at + i]. We assume that *at* has become grammaticalised as a postposition, and in its postpositional use it has lost its literal meaning as ‘with/by hand’, as can be seen by the following sentence:

(3)  

\[ \text{maa ati} \text{n} \text{ee} \text{ wac} \text{n} \text{e} \text{ kiy} \text{\text{"o}n} \text{\text{"u}n} \text{a}. \]

1SG *ati* that word say.INV.PST

‘I said that word (unthinkingly).’ (Gair 1990:22)

---

7 Some transitive involitive verbs take subjects in dative case (e.g. experiencers).

8 Note that with an involitive verb and the instrumental case-marked subject, the subject has unintentional interpretation. This means that *mother* might not have expected the food to be that good, or the speaker who is commenting on the mother’s cooking may not have expected it to be that good.
In previous studies like Inman (1993) and Henadeerage (1995), the \emph{ati\text{N}} phrase has been treated as an NP, but not as a PP. Inman assigns \emph{ati\text{N}} to the category of postposition. However, he treats \emph{ati\text{N}} as the ergative case marker, which takes a nominal complement to yield an NP.\(^9\) We assume that \emph{ati\text{N}} has characteristics of nouns as well as postpositions (see also Henadeerage (1995)).\(^{10}\) \emph{Ati\text{N}} itself can inflect for case and takes nominal complements, which it governs and assigns case to.\(^{11}\)

The categorical status of \emph{ati\text{N}} is not crucial to the present study. In the present analysis, we treat subject NPs with the \emph{ati\text{N}} phrase as an instance of instrumental case, and on a par with other instrumental case-marked subjects (i.e. NP-\emph{ge\text{N}}).

1.7 Organization of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2, we present an outline of the formal framework of Lexical Functional Grammar. The next three chapters concentrate on grammatical relations and the argument structure of colloquial Sinhala. Chapter 3 investigates grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala. The agentless construction, valency alternation phenomena and related issues will be discussed in Chapter 4. The discussion of the structure of non-verbal sentences is taken up in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 contains the analysis and the modelling of contrastive focus constructions. The phrase structure of the language as it relates to the discussion of previous chapters will be discussed in Chapter 7. Finally, in Chapter 8 we present a summary of conclusions that emerge from our study.

\(^9\) It is to be noted that Inman (1993) treats \emph{ati\text{N}} as a distinct case (ergative) from instrumental case. Henadeerage (1995) argues that it does not represent a separate case, but an instance of instrumental case.

\(^{10}\) See the discussion of these postpositions in § 5.2.2.

\(^{11}\) For instance, the complement of \emph{a\text{t}\text{O}} can be either nominative (unmarked) or genitive. It itself inflects for cases depending on its function within the clause, just like other nouns do:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{amma(-ge)} & \{ \text{a\text{t}\text{O}-\text{g}} \} / \text{ati\text{N} } / \text{atee} \\
\text{mother(-GEN)} & \{ \text{a\text{t}\text{O}-\text{DAT} } / \text{a\text{t}\text{O}-\text{INST} } / \text{a\text{t}\text{O}-\text{LOC} } \}
\end{align*}
\]
Chapter 2  Theoretical Framework: Lexical Functional Grammar

The formal theoretical assumptions made in the present study are based on the theoretical framework of Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) (Kaplan and Bresnan 1982, Bresnan 2001). This chapter is an outline of the formal framework of LFG. I will also provide a detailed outline of certain theoretical principles and issues in following chapters where they are relevant.

LFG is a constraint-based theory of grammar with parallel structures. Unlike transformational frameworks, in which grammatical functions are derived through phrase structure configurations, grammatical functions (GFs) in LFG are treated as an independent concept and not determined on the basis of the phrase structure, thus separating the two from each other. The phrase structures or ‘external structures’ vary from language to language, while the internal structure of a language, which includes such things as the representation of GFs, association of GFs with predicate argument relations and binding relations, etc., are ‘largely invariant across languages’ (Bresnan 2001:45). Thus, variability (of external structures) and universality (of internal structures) are two important principles that are embodied in the design of the LFG architecture.

The LFG architecture of grammar consists of independent, but simultaneously co-existing structures. These structures, which represent and model different aspects of language, are not derived from one another, but correspond to each other by various ‘linking’ or ‘mapping’ principles. These structures include c(onstituent) structure, f(functional) structure, a rgument structure, semantic structure and so on (Falk 2000). In what follows we will outline only the syntactic structures: c-structure, f-structure and a-structure that we will make use of in this study.

12 See Bresnan (2001), Falk (2000), and Sadler (1996) for detailed introductions to LFG, and Kaplan and Bresnan (1982), Dalrymple et al. (1995) and Dalrymple (2001) for formal and conceptual basis for LFG.
2.1 C-structure

C-structure, also known as the constituent structure or the categorical structure, is the surface form of an expression, and is represented as a phrase structure tree. C-structures are derived through phrase structure rules, which are essentially based on the principles of the X′ Theory. However, apart from the endocentric phrase structure rules that are based on the X′ Theory, LFG also allows exocentric phrase structures (e.g. with category head ‘S’ that has no fixed category) to account for phrase structure variations across languages, in particular those of non-configurational languages. Further, precedence and dominance relations may be encoded in the c-structure in such a way that it reflects the hierarchical organization of a phrase as required by individual languages.

There are a number of principles that constrain c-structure.

1. **Lexical Integrity:**
   
   Morphologically complete words are leaves of the c-structure tree and each leaf corresponds to one and only one c-structure node (Bresnan 2001:92).

   Words are formed in the lexicon, rather than at syntactic levels such as c-structures and f-structures. Therefore, only fully inflected words are inserted into the terminal nodes of the c-structure tree. For instance, an affix of a verb that indicates tense cannot be inserted as a separate word into a c-structure node.

2. **Economy of Expression:**

   All syntactic phrase structure nodes are optional and are not used unless required by independent principles (completeness, coherence, semantic expressivity) (Bresnan 2001:91).

   The Economy of Expression principle does not allow empty elements in the c-structure. The empty elements are considered redundant.

   LFG allows highly hierarchical c-structures (endocentric) for configurational languages such as English and flat c-structures for non-configurational languages like Warlpiri (Pama-Nyungan, Australia, Simpson 1991) and Malayalam (Dravidian, India, Mohanan 1982), or a mixture of the two types depending on language-specific requirements. Phrase structure trees are generated with context-free phrase structure rules, based on endocentric or exocentric principles. Thus, for an English sentence like
(3) and a Sinhala sentence like (4), phrase structures rules and lexicon may be formulated as in (5) and (6) respectively.

(3) The lion will kill the deer.

(4) sinhɔya muwaa-w maraawi.

lion deer-ACC kill.FUT

‘The lion will/might kill the deer.’

(5) Phrase structure rules and lexicon for (3):

a. IP \( \Rightarrow \) DP I’
   \( (↑SUBJ) = ↓ \quad ↑=↓ \)

b. I’ \( \Rightarrow \) I VP
   ↑=↓ \quad ↑=↓

c. VP \( \Rightarrow \) V DP
   ↑=↓ \quad (↑OBJ) = ↓

d. DP \( \Rightarrow \) D NP
   ↑=↓ \quad ↑=↓

e. the D \( (↑DEF) = + \)
f. lion N \( (↑PRED) = ‘lion’ \)
g. deer N \( (↑PRED) = ‘deer’ \)
h. will I \( (↑TENSE) = \text{FUT} \)
i. kill V \( (↑PRED) = \text{kill ‘<(↑SUBJ) (↑OBJ)>‘} \)

The phrase structure rules for the English sentence, which are based on the X’ Theory reflect the hierarchical organization and prominence relations in the c-structure of the English sentence. Functional schemata that are written with ↑ and ↓ arrows are given below the category symbols in phrase structure rules. ↑ and ↓ arrows define the head relation: the metavariable ↑ refers to mother node, while ↓ is refers to node to which it is attached, i.e ‘self’.

(6) Phrase structure rules and lexicon for (4):

a. S \( \Rightarrow \) C*

b. sinhɔya N \( (↑PRED) = ‘lion’ \)
c. muwaa N \( (↑PRED) = ‘deer’ \)
d. -wi inflV \( (↑TENSE) = \text{FUT} \)
e. -wɔ inflN \( (↑CASE) = \text{ACC} \)
f. marɔ- V \( (↑PRED) = \text{kill ‘<(↑SUBJ) (↑OBJ)>‘} \)
In contrast with (5), the (simplified) phrase structure rule given in (6), based on lexocentric principles, has a non-projective S.\textsuperscript{13} It generates a flat structure reflecting the word order freedom in Sinhala. The constituents of S, indicated by ‘C’ in (6a), may belong to any category, such as V, A, P, N, NP, PP, AP or other. In this model of non-configurational phrase structure, syntactic functions (i.e. SUBJ and OBJ) are not assigned on the basis of phrase structural positions, instead information carried by words, such as case marking, determines the syntactic function of respective constituents.\textsuperscript{14}

C-structures for (3) and (4) are given in (7).

(7) a. C-structure for (3):

```
IP
  DP
    The lion   I
        I'      VP
            will    V
                DP
                    kill
```

```

b. C-structure for (4):

```
S
  N
    sinhaya
      muwaa-wə
        maraawi.
            N
              V
                lion     deer-ACC
                  kill.FUT
```

\subsection*{2.2 F-structure}

F(unctional) structure is the formal model of the internal structure, and this is where universal syntactic principles like grammatical functions are represented. F-structure is an attribute-value matrix (see Figure 2-1). Attributes can be functions like SUBJ, OBJ, COMP, FOCUS, and features like TENSE, CASE, NUM and DEF so on. Function attributes may take subordinate f-structures as their values, while feature attributes may take a symbol as their values (e.g. PAST, ACC and SG, etc.). There are also semantic features, each of which takes a unique value given in single quotes, as in ‘lion’.

\textsuperscript{13} See Chapter 7 for a detailed discussion of the Sinhala phrase structure.

\textsuperscript{14} To see how this may accomplished within LFG, the reader is directed such studies like Nordlinger (1998) for Australian languages; T. Mohanan (1990) for Hindi; and Inman (1994) and Henadeerage (1995) for Sinhala.
The f-structure representation for the Sinhala sentence in (3) looks like (8).

(8) F-structure for (4)

\[
\begin{array}{rl}
\text{TENSE} & \text{FUT} \\
\text{PRED} \quad \text{‘} \text{kill} <(\uparrow \text{SUBJ}) (\uparrow \text{OBJ}) > \text{’} \\
\text{SUBJ} & \begin{cases} 
\text{PRED} & \text{‘lion’} \\
\text{DEF} & + 
\end{cases} \\
\text{OBJ} & \begin{cases} 
\text{PRED} & \text{‘deer’} \\
\text{DEF} & + 
\end{cases}
\end{array}
\]

Grammatical functions (GFS) are the most important attributes in f-structures. The widely recognised GFS in LFG include SUBJ (subject), OBJ (primary object), OBJ₀ (secondary object), OBL₀ (oblique), COMP (complement), ADJ (adjunct), TOP (topic) and FOC (focus), etc. These GFS are divided into different groups depending on their characteristics. All the GFS that are designated by the PRED feature of a predicate are argument functions, in other words, they are the arguments specified in the lexical form of the head: see (5i) and (6f). GFS that do not directly map onto the argument structure roles of the predicate are non-argument functions. Further, non-argument functions (i.e. adjuncts) may allow multiple instances in an f-structure, unlike argument functions. This is explained by the fact that a sentence may have more than one adjunct, but not more than one subject or object. Argument functions correspond to thematic arguments of the predicate, and are represented within the angled brackets <...> of PRED feature, as given in (5i) and (6f), as opposed to non-argument functions, which appear outside the angled brackets. Another distinction has been made among GFS on the basis of discourse function roles that some GFS play. TOPIC (topic of the discourse) and FOCUS (new information) and SUBJ (the default discourse topic) are
distinguished as grammaticalized discourse functions. Thus, GFs, described above, may be cross-classified as in Figure 2-2:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{TOP} & \text{FOC} & \text{SUBJ} & \text{OBJ} & \text{OBJ}_1 & \text{OBL}_1 & \text{COMP} & \text{ADJ} \\
\hline
\text{non-argument functions} & \text{argument functions} & \text{non-argument functions} \\
\end{array}
\]

**Figure 2-2: Cross-classifications of GFs**

F-structures are regulated by a set of well-formedness conditions, which are applied after the minimal f-structure has been constructed. These conditions serve to rule out ungrammatical structures. While two attributes may share a single value, a single attribute cannot have two or more different values. Thus, (9b) is ruled out by the Uniqueness Condition.

\[(9) \begin{array}{c}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{attribute}_1 \\
\text{attribute}_2
\end{array}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{value}_1 \\
\text{value}_2
\end{array}
\end{array}
\]

(9a) √  (9b) *

(10) **Uniqueness Condition:**

Every attribute has a unique value (Bresnan 2001:47).

Argument functions, which are specified as values of the PRED feature, must appear as attributes of the f-structure. Incomplete f-structures may be generated if all the arguments selected by the PRED feature do not appear as GF attributes, and such structures are ruled out by the Completeness Condition (11).

(11) **Completeness Condition:**

Every function designated by a PRED must be present in the f-structure of that PRED (Bresnan 2001:63).

Conversely, when arguments that are not specified in the PRED feature appear as attributes, the f-structure becomes ungrammatical. Coherence Condition (12) ensures that all argument functions in the f-structure are designated by the PRED.
Coherence Condition:

Every argument function in an f-structure must be designated by a PRED (Bresnan 2001:63).

Examples of incomplete and incoherent f-structures are illustrated in (13a) and (b), respectively.

(13) a. Incomplete f-structure for: *‘The lion killed.’

```
PRED  ‘kill <(↑SUBJ) (↑OBJ)>’
TENSE  PAST
SUBJ  
  PRED  ‘lion’
  DEF    +
```

b. Incoherent f-structure for: *‘The lion killed the deer the man.’

```
PRED  ‘kill <(↑SUBJ) (↑OBJ)>’
TENSE  PAST
SUBJ  
  PRED  ‘lion’
  DEF    +
OBJ  
  PRED  ‘deer’
  DEF    +
OBJø 
  PRED  ‘man’
  DEF    +
```

The Extended Coherence Condition (14) ensures that all the syntactic functions (including non-argument functions) are properly integrated into the f-structure.

(14) Extended Coherence Condition:

All syntactic functions must be appropriately integrated into the f-structure [Bresnan and Mchombo 1987; Bresnan 2001]. Argument functions are subject to the Coherence Condition. “Non-argument functions are integrated if they bear an appropriate relation to a PRED. An ADJUNCT is integrated if its immediate f-structure contains a PRED. A TOP or FOC is integrated whenever it is identified with, or anaphorically linked to, an integrated function” (Bresnan 2001:63).

2.3 Correspondence between c- and f-structures

The correspondence between c-structure and f-structure is many-to-one. Therefore, more than one c-structure node may correspond to a single f-structure. Consider the Figure 2-3, which graphically illustrates the correspondence between different c-structure nodes and the f-structure. The c-structure for (3) is annotated with functional schemata, which are specified in the lexicon (see 5e-i). The correspondence between different c-structure nodes and f-structures is shown by indices \( f1, f2, f3 \) and so on.
2.4 A-structure

A(argument) structure is the representation of syntactic arguments of a predicate, which provides information about the number of arguments that a particular predicate has, the syntactic type of those arguments and their relative prominence (Bresnan 2001). A-structure relates to semantics as it is constrained by lexical-semantic characteristics of individual participants in a predicate and the relative prominence among them. On the other hand, it relates to the syntactic representation of a predicate by being mapped onto f-structure. In this regard, it can be considered as the intermediate lexical representation that maps lexical conceptual structure and the GFs in f-structure. Although highly sensitive to semantics, a-structure has syntactically relevant information, and is treated as a ‘syntactic construct’ (see, Bresnan and Zaenan (1990), T. Mohanan (1990), Manning (1996), and Bresnan (2001)). The lexical semantic character of a-structure in LFG literature has sometimes been defined by way of thematic proto-roles proposed by Dowty (1991) (for instance, see Alsina (1996), Manning (1996) and Asudeh (1999) among others), or by the lexical conceptual structure proposed by Jackendoff (1990): see, Butt (1995), for instance.
The a-structure of *put* and *pound* can be represented as in (15):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{put} & \quad < \text{arg}_1 \text{arg}_2 \text{arg}_3 > \\
& \quad [-o] \quad [-r] \quad [-o] \\
\text{pound} & \quad < \text{arg}_1 \text{arg}_2 > \\
& \quad [-o] \quad [-r]
\end{align*}
\]

The relative prominence of arguments in the a-structure is based on the Thematic Hierarchy (Bresnan 2001:307), given in (16), in which thematic/semantic roles are ordered from left to right in the decreasing order of prominence.

(16) **Thematic Hierarchy:**

Agent > beneficiary > experiencer/goal > instrument > patient/theme > locative

The syntactic type or the classification of arguments in a-structure is determined by the relative prominence of arguments and the mapping principles laid out in Lexical Mapping Theory (LMT) (Bresnan and Kanerva 1989, Bresnan and Moshi 1990, and Bresnan and Zaenan 1990). LMT provides a set of principles to classify arguments in the a-structure and GFs in f-structure, and map them between two levels. The cross-classification of arguments and GFs are based on two properties derived from semantic/thematic characteristics of argument roles. Thus, features \([\pm r]\) (thematically (un)restricted) and \([\pm o]\) ((un)objective) are assigned to arguments of a-structure on the following basis:

(17) **Semantic classification of arguments:**

- patientlike roles: \(\theta\) \\
  \([- r]\)
- secondary patientlike roles: \(\theta\) \\
  \([+ o]\)
- other semantic roles: \(\theta\) \\
  \([- o]\) \quad (Bresnan 2001:309)

The most prominent argument role in the a-structure of a predicador identifies the ‘logical subject’ (Bresnan 2001) or what Manning (1996) refers to as the ‘a-subject’. Thus, arguments marked as \text{arg}_1 in a-structures of *put* and *pound*, given in (15) are the most prominent roles.
We do not intend to describe how a-structure is mapped onto f-structure, and conditions governing the mapping of the two levels, in detail. However, the relationship between lexical-semantics and a-structure, and the mapping between a-structure roles to GFs of f-structure are schematically shown in Figure 2-4. A- to f-structure mapping is based on LMT and other associated constraints, such as the Subject Condition (18) and Function-argument biuniqueness (19).

(18) **Subject Condition:**

Every predicator must have a subject (Bresnan 2001:311).

(19) **Function-argument biuniqueness:**

Each a-structure role must be associated with a unique function, and conversely (Bresnan 2001:311).

---

**Figure 2-4: Correspondence between lexical-semantics, a-structure and f-structure**

This completes the brief outline of the theoretical framework of LFG. Wherever necessary further details on specific theoretical issues will be discussed.
3.1 Overview

In some modern linguistic theories, grammatical relations (GRs) like subject and object are used as essential features for describing syntactic phenomena across languages (Chomsky 1965, Bresnan 1982). GRs are defined differently in various theories. Whether they may be considered as theoretical primitives (Relational Grammar: Perlmutter 1982) or considered to be derived from phrase structure configurations (Transformational Grammar and its developments: Chomsky 1965, 1980) or derived from semantic features on the basis of a formal system (LFG’s Lexical Mapping Theory: Bresnan and Moshi 1990), they are, in these formal accounts, regarded as universal notions. Nonetheless, the universality of GRs has also been questioned (Foley and Van Valin 1984, Van Valin 1981, Durie 1987, Bhat 1991, La Polla 1993 among others). The notion of GRs has attracted much attention and has also been pointed out to be problematic in literature on other South Asian languages (see: Masica 1991, Bhat 1991, Bhat and Ningombo 1997). GRs in colloquial Sinhala also seems problematic, although no study to date, to our knowledge, has argued against the existence of GRs in Sinhala.

Our aim in this chapter is to present a thorough investigation of GRs in colloquial Sinhala. We will consider such issues as why it is difficult to postulate GRs in colloquial Sinhala, whether it possible to reduce syntactic grammatical relations to semantic roles, and what the subject in colloquial Sinhala really is.

It will be shown that evidence for subject in colloquial Sinhala is weaker than it has been shown before. Further, there appears to be no construction that is sensitive to objects and other GRs. Consequently, it is not possible to make a distinction between core arguments and non-core (oblique) arguments in colloquial Sinhala.

In § 3.2, we consider some previous studies in relation to the analysis of GRs contained in them. § 3.3 is an extensive analysis of various subjecthood diagnostics.
Finally § 3.4 looks at what evidence is available for postulating objects and other grammatical relations.

### 3.1.1 Why establishing GRs is problematic in colloquial Sinhala

There are a number of problems associated with establishing GRs like subject and object in this language. Firstly, most coding and behavioural properties of subject and object that are generally recognised as diagnostics for these GRs in languages (see Keenan 1976a, for example) do not appear in Sinhala. For instance, there is no agreement between an argument and the verb with regard to number, gender and person.

Sinhala has a rich case marking system; the case marking on arguments seems to be based on the semantic relations they hold. Therefore the case marking does not provide convincing evidence for GRs. Further, transitivity has no observable effect on case assignment, as is the case with some accusative and ergative languages where core arguments may be distinctly marked on the basis of transitivity of the verb.

It is not only in the case marking pattern where the effect of semantics can be seen, but also in some syntactic constructions. Certain syntactic phenomena seem to be constrained by semantic relations enforced by predicates and individual arguments, such as control and volition. For instance, as we will show in this chapter, controllees in some participle constructions can be reduced to a particular semantic role. These syntactic phenomena, generally considered as subjecthood diagnostics in other languages (i.e. English), are not, therefore, sensitive to syntax in colloquial Sinhala. Consequently, they cannot provide evidence or motivations for syntactic grammatical relations in this language.

GF-changing constructions like passivisation and causativisation can be useful for motivating GRs in a language. However, colloquial Sinhala does not have a passive, an antipassive or an applicative construction. Many other behavioural properties such as topicalisation, quantifier float, possessor ascension etc., that some other languages possess are not available in Sinhala for this purpose.

Further, even some of the diagnostic tests that are available in Sinhala are restricted to certain constructions. For instance, certain subjecthood tests cannot be applied to involitive sentences due to semantic restrictions. This is what we find with
nominalisation as a subjecthood diagnostic: its application is limited. As a result, it cannot provide conclusive evidence on full range of constructions including non-nominative subject constructions, as it will be shown.

A number of subjecthood diagnostics employed by previous studies as evidence for syntactic subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala do not provide satisfactory evidence for the existence of the subject grammatical relation, as these different tests arbitrarily point to different arguments within the same clause. Predicate Gapping (Inman 1993), kot=± participles (Wijayawardhana et al. 1991) and –la participles (Wijayawardhana et al. 1991, Inman 1993) are examples of such unreliable subjecthood diagnostics.

Thus, there are very few constructions that could be considered for motivating the subject grammatical relation. Further, there appear to be no coding strategies (i.e. case marking and verb agreement) or behavioural properties that can be applicable to objects and other grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala.

3.1.2 Present Study: Another look at Sinhala GRs
Subject and object grammatical relations are considered to be semantically unrestricted ([−r]) in Lexical Mapping Theory of Lexical Functional Grammar (Bresnan and Kanerva 1989, Bresnan and Moshi 1990, Bresnan and Zaenan 1990). This means that the semantic roles which the subject and object can be associated with are unrestricted. For instance, a subject may be associated with any semantic role like an agent, experiencer or an instrument depending on the requirements of the individual predicate. If a particular construction or a number of constructions can always be explained purely in terms of semantic roles, then there is no need to employ syntactic relations like subject and object to explain them. Further, if all the constructions in a language can be explained in terms of semantic concepts, GRs cannot be shown to exist in that language.

The present study will investigate GRs, in particular subject and object, with an approach that is somewhat different from those of previous studies. We expect to find a restricted neutralisation of semantic and pragmatic relations for syntactic purposes, if GRs exist in colloquial Sinhala. In other words, can Sinhala subject and object be reduced to semantic relations of agent and patient and/or pragmatic topic and comment? We expect to see if a particular syntactic construction is sensitive to semantic relations, syntactic relations or pragmatic relations. This approach is due to
Van Valin and La Polla (1997) and La Polla (1993). Sentence (1) taken from Van Valin and La Polla (1997:252) illustrates a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to the want-construction in English.

(1)  
   a. Susan, wants __₁ to run in the park.  
   b. Susan, wants __₁ to eat a hamburger.  
   c. Susan, wants __₁ to be taller.  
   d.* Susan, doesn’t want the police to arrest __₁.  
   e. Susan, doesn’t want __₁ to be arrested by the police.

Each sentence in (1) has a missing or unrealised argument, and there is a restriction as to what can be the unrealised argument of this construction in English. The unrealised argument can be an Actor (a-b) or a Undergoer (c-e). Thus, there is a neutralisation of semantic functions with what can be the unrealised argument. The ungrammaticality of (d) cannot be explained in terms of the semantic function of the unrealised argument. In (d), the unrealised argument is an object, whereas in all the other sentences it bears the subject grammatical function, making the relevant relationship between the unrealised argument and the controller a syntactic one. Thus, the unrealised argument in the want-construction must be the subject, and its semantic relations are irrelevant. The presence of at least one construction with a restricted neutralisation of semantic and pragmatic relations can be treated as evidence for the existence of syntactic grammatical relations in a language (Van Valin & La Polla 1997). In what follows, a number of clause constructions will be examined in order to see if such constructions can be explained in terms of syntactic, semantic or pragmatic relations. For instance, in Equi-NP-Deletion in Sinhala, is the unrealised argument semantic (agent, patient or any other role) or syntactic (subject, object or any other GRs) in nature?

We will show that there is a restricted neutralisation of semantic and pragmatic roles with regard to some arguments in Sinhala inter-clausal constructions, while in others there is no neutralisation of semantic roles—as it is always the volitive agent in the clause that is picked out as the pivot of the construction.

We will use a number of terms through out this chapter. One such term is the pivot, as used by Dixon (1979), Foley and Van Valin (1984, 1985) and Van Valin and La Polla (1997). Foley and Van Valin (1985:305) define the pivot as “any NP to which a particular grammatical process is sensitive, either as controller or as target”. There are two types of pivots: semantic pivots and syntactic pivots. If, for instance, the pivot in a particular construction is always the agent or patient, it is a semantic pivot (i.e. no neutralisation of semantic roles). The syntactic pivot would refer to the subject or
object in a construction, and cannot be explained in terms of its semantic role. In other words, there is a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to the subject or object position. The unrealised argument in (1) is an example of a syntactic pivot.

Also, we refer to some NPs as *Actors* and *Undergoers*. These terms are from the Semantic Macrorole System of Foley and Van Valin (1984) and Van Valin and La Polla (1997). They are generalised semantic roles, and do not directly correspond to subject and object grammatical relations in a language. Thus, depending on the verb, the Actor or the Undergoer can be the subject of a sentence in English. Actor is the generalised agent and may subsume a number of thematic roles like the agent, experiencer and perceiver, etc., whereas the Undergoer is the generalised patient role, which may subsume thematic roles like the patient and theme, etc., depending on the verb.

Before we establish the subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala, we will use the term the *highest argument* to refer to the logical subject in a clause, which is the most prominent thematic role in an argument structure of a predicate. Also, where the *lower argument* is used, it refers to the (logical) object in a clause.

3.2 Previous Studies

A number of previous studies have argued that the subject grammatical relation exists in colloquial Sinhala: see for instance, Kariyakarawana (1998), Inman (1993) and Wijayawardhana et al. (1991). Further, in these studies, not only the nominative case-marked argument, but also some non-nominative case-marked arguments like experiencers in the dative; unintentional agents in instrumental case, and patients and themes in accusative case are shown to be grammatical subjects. Note that all the previous studies that we are aware of provide descriptions only about the subject grammatical relation, but not about other GRs. Below I will briefly outline a number of issues raised by some of these studies, which have significant bearings on the present study.

3.2.1 Gunasinghe (1985)

Gunasinghe (1985: 118-119) states that in colloquial Sinhala the subject is optional, and is *not* an obligatory surface category. What she means by *not obligatorily surfacing* is that the subject of a clause may be ellipsed (i.e. null subject) or totally
absent (i.e. subjectless), as Gunasinghe points out. Gunasinghe also claims that (a) all non-nominative NPs, such as dative and accusative NPs and instrumental NPs (also known as \textit{ati} phrase etc.) are adverbal phrases; (b) colloquial Sinhala has an ergative character, while literary Sinhala is accusative; and (c) involitive verbs are intransitive, while volitive verbs can be either transitive or intransitive. Gunasinghe’s claims contradict those of other studies (cf. Inman 1993, Gair 1990) and what has been presented in this study.

Gunasinghe’s claim that “subject is not a surface structure category in colloquial Sinhala” (1985:126) is based on such examples as (2). She further assumes that these constructions with omitted subjects are results of a Subject Deletion operation, as in (3).

(2) \((\text{bili pujaaw}-t) \quad \emptyset \quad \text{muwan-w} \quad \text{mæruwa.}\)
\text{ (sacrificial offering-DAT) } \emptyset \text{ deer.PL-ACC kill.VOL.PST}

‘The deer were killed as a sacrificial offering.’
Lit: ‘[Someone] killed deer’ (as a sacrificial offering). \hspace{1cm} (Gunasinghe 1985:117)

(3) \([\text{NP}_1] \quad [\text{NP}_2 \ \text{V}^{\text{volitive}}]_{\text{VP}} \] \rightarrow \hspace{0.5cm} [\text{NP}_2 \ \text{V}^{\text{volitive}}]_{\text{VP}} \] (Gunasinghe 1985:118)

Gunasinghe also states that once the subject is thus deleted, the subjectivising operation (i.e. to promote the object to subject position as in passive) has not taken place, hence the subjectlessness.

We argue that subject is not deleted from the structure as a formal operation (as Gunasinghe has assumed), but rather that these are examples of an occasional omission of the subject NP during the speech. In colloquial Sinhala, null arguments (both controlled and uncontrolled) in sentences are very common. They are not only limited to subject position, but also in other argument positions (except those of postpositions) (Gair, Lust, Sumangala & Rodrigo 1989). Further, such a subject deletion rule would also incorrectly imply that subject is always deleted.

Maintaining the hypothesis that subject is an optional category for colloquial Sinhala is crucial, as a support for Gunasinghe’s proposal that colloquial Sinhala possesses ergative characteristics. We will discuss so-claimed ergative features of the language in detail in § 3.3.1.
Extending the hypothesis, Gunasinghe further claims that the involitive construction too lacks subject. The following is one of the examples given as evidence to support her claim:

(4)  \[\text{mat} \quad \text{a} \, \text{den\text{wa}.} \]

\[\text{1SG.DAT cry.INV.PST}\]

‘I can’t help but cry.’ (Gunasinghe 1985: 119)

Although the subject is not present in the surface structure, it is implicit in (2), and has the reading that someone carried out the action of killing the deer. However, in the case of (4), the subject can be argued to be (overtly) present, and simply the agent of the corresponding volitive sentence has become dative case-marked with the involitive verb. Gunasinghe does not treat non-nominate arguments as grammatical subjects, and hence claims that these clauses are subjectless. Gunasinghe’s criterion for subject is strictly based on the nominative case assignment and the verb agreement, as can be seen from her statement:

“Subject is the nominal that determines the verbal concord and has assigned to it a special grammatical case marking subject - nominative - in literary Sinhala and other Indo-European languages” (Gunasinghe 1985: 137).

Gunasinghe does not consider the subject potential of these non-nominate logical subjects, which have been shown to be grammatical subjects in later literature (see Gair 1990 and Inman 1993, among others).

### 3.2.2 Kariyakarawana (1992/1998\(^{16}\))

In this study, Sinhala is argued to have two basic clause structure types based on Verbal Sentences (VSSs) and Non-Verbal Sentences (NVSs, i.e., those with adjectival, postpositional and adverbial predicates). Kariyakarawana claims that this distinction is made on the basis of a number of syntactic processes that these constructions can or cannot participate in. For instance, embedding, complement extraction, subject extraction, quantifier float and genitive case marking of subject under nominalisation are said to be possible with VSSs, but not with NVSSs. On the other hand, the topic interpretation is said to be possible only with NVSSs. Kariyakarawana assumes that this division is due to the different structural positions that subjects of these NVSSs and VSSs occupy. VSSs are shown to have ‘inner subjects’, which are positioned in [Spec PredP]

\(^{16}\) This work is the reprinted version of author’s PhD dissertation (1992).
On the other hand, NVSs are claimed to have ‘outer subjects’ appearing outside the domain of PredP. Further, he assumes that predicates of VSs assign theta role to their subjects, while the predicates of NVSs do not, since they appear outside the verb’s theta domain. Furthermore, Kariyakarawana claims that subjects of Dative Subject Construction (DSC) fall into the category of outer subjects, while the objects of the DSC are inner subjects on a par with VSs. These arguments are quite controversial and contradict with earlier studies on Sinhala (see Gair (1990), for instance). In this chapter and in Chapter 5, I will argue that some of the tests used to distinguish characteristics of VSs, NVSs and the DSC fail to capture the distinctions among them, hence there is no conclusive evidence to claim that colloquial Sinhala has two types of subjects.

Kariyakarawana argues that sentences such as the following have the structure given in Figure 3-1:

\begin{equation}
\text{Gune atig Siri-}36 \text{ potak devuna.}
\end{equation}

\begin{align*}
\text{Gune} & \quad \text{INST} \\
\text{Siri-DAT} & \quad \text{book.IND} \\
\text{give.INV.PST} &
\end{align*}

‘Gune happened to give a book to Siri.’

\footnote{The DSC does not include involitive clauses with \textit{atig} phrase which Kariyakarawana refers to as passive. But, Kariyakarawana considers them to be identical with the DSC in terms of the structure.}
Our examination of the properties that are claimed to distinguish VSs from NVSs and the DSC revealed that there is insufficient evidence for such a claim. Differences between VSs, NVSs and the DSC in terms of their functions and properties are marginal. The Table 3-1 from Kariyakarawana (1998:76) outlines the properties that subjects and objects of different constructions are claimed to possess. The highlighted area of the table indicates properties and constructions that we argue not to offer any conclusive evidence with regard to the different types of subjects or clause structures.
Table 3-1: Properties of subjects and objects of VSs, DSC and NVSs
(from Kariyakarawana 1998:76)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subj of VSs</th>
<th>Subj of NVSs</th>
<th>Subj of DSC</th>
<th>Obj of VSs</th>
<th>Obj of DSC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genitive marking</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under nominalisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantifier stranding</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraction</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic interpretation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only one of the constructions discussed in Kariyakarawana, namely the control in participle adjuncts, is acceptable to us. With regard to all the other properties, there are some disparities between Kariyakarawana’s analysis and our view. These differences are not solely due to dialectal differences that may exist, but partly due to the analysis itself and the interpretation of data. Therefore, we do not assume that there is conclusive evidence to support the inner and outer subject distinction. Our position regarding the inner and outer subject analysis is also supported by Inman (1993). Further, an earlier study, Gair and Paolillo (1988) assumes subjects of VSs, NVSs and the DSC have identical structural positions, and proposes a single phrase structure representation for both VSs and NVSs.

As we will argue, the properties determining two types of constructions leading to the inner and outer subject division do not, in fact, indicate a clear cut distinction. For instance, ‘subject of the DSC’ differs from ‘subject of VSs’ only on the basis of a single property (namely, the genitive marking under nominalisation), all the rest are shared by both types of subjects. Further, ‘subjects of NVSs’ and ‘subjects of the DSC’, both of which are claimed to be outer subjects, have only two properties in common (namely, the genitive marking under nominalisation and control), while they differ from each other in terms of four other properties. The overlapping of these properties has led Kariyakarawana to assume that there are three different structural positions for the subjects of these three constructions.

“Inner subjects are generated inside the argument domain of the verb (PredP) [see Figure 3-1], and outer subjects are generated outside the argument domain of the verb. While inner subjects are always generated in or moved to the SpecPred, outer subjects may be generated either in SpecT (in the case of NVSs) or in the SpecVoice in the case of passive/involitivies” (Kariyakarawana 1998: 79).18

18 See footnote 17 above.
Genitive marking under nominalisation seems to be possible only with ‘subjects of VSS’ and ‘objects of the DSC’, as Kariyakarawana claims. The explanation for this, according to Kariyakarawana, is that ‘subjects of VSS’ and ‘objects of the DSC’ are inner subjects and are part of the head. Therefore, they may be affected by lexical rules, unlike outer subjects, which are outside the domain of the head. We do not assume that this is a sufficient explanation of nominalisation facts. It cannot explain why it is not possible to have any higher arguments, once the ‘object of the DSC’ is nominalised (for instance, [OBJ-GEN V-NOMINALISED] is fine, but not [SUBJ-DAT OBJ-GEN V-NOMINALISED]). Further, it does not explain why ‘objects of VSS’, which are also part of the head, cannot be genitive marked (for instance, [SUBJ-GEN (OBJ-ACC) V-NOMINALISED] is fine, but not [SUBJ-NOM OBJ-GEN V-NOMINALISED]). We will look into these and other nominalisation facts in detail in this study. In § 3.3.6, we demonstrate that nominalisation does not provide any evidence for two types of subjects. In § 5.4.5, we will show that nominalisation cannot distinguish one clause structure type from another along the line of verbal and non-verbal predicates.

Kariyakarawana claims that VSSs and NVSSs can be embedded using the complementiser kiyala/bawə, but only VSSs can be embedded as small clauses without complementisers. However, according to our informants not just NVSSs but even VSSs cannot be embedded without the complementiser (see § 5.4.1).

NVSSs are claimed to have an optional ‘topic interpretation’ even without an overt topic marker. However, Kariyakarawana argues that this is not the case with VSSs. According to our view, the topic interpretation does not appear to be a strong argument illustrating the divisions between VSSs and NVSSs (see also § 5.4.4). There seems to be a number of reasons why NVSSs have an optional topic reading. In VSSs, the word order can vary and any arguments (even non-arguments) can be overtly marked for the topic interpretation. Such an overt marking seems specially necessary due to the free word order and the fact that any NP can potentially be a topic. On the other hand, with NVSSs, the topic interpretation/reading inherent in NVSSs may be due to the fact of them being intransitive (i.e., not having a second argument to distinguish from) and having a less flexible word order, in which in most cases the argument precedes the predicator. In other words, in NVSSs the sole argument, which usually occurs sentence-initially, is naturally the topic of the clause. Furthermore, VSSs involve actions and events, while NVSSs generally involve states. The lack of an ‘event’ in NVSSs might
also be a relevant factor for the optional topic reading in NVSs, as suggested by Avery Andrews (p.c).

As far as the subjecthood tests are concerned only ‘control’ among all the other properties can be considered as the useful one. The highest argument (i.e. subject) of all the constructions (VSs, NVSs and DSC) can be controllers. We present a detailed discussion of control in § 3.3.10. We will show that quantifier stranding is not a reliable subject test, since not only subjects but also other arguments allow quantifier stranding (§ 3.3.5). Extraction is not a useful subjecthood diagnostic, since subjects as well as objects can be extracted, as can be seen in the Table 3-1. Relativisation is another construction that has been used to distinguish verbal clauses from non-verbal ones. In § 5.4.6, we will show that this is not the case.

The alleged extractability of inner subjects has motivated Kariyakarawana to assume that only inner subjects, but not outer subjects are in theta positions. This assumption is due to the condition on long extraction proposed by Koopman & Sportiche (1988, cited in Kariyakarawana). They propose that “long extraction is possible iff from a theta dependent position” (p.66). However, Kariyakarawana’s claim that outer subjects are base generated in SpecT or SpecVoice positions (1998:79) contradicts Sportiche’s proposal that all NPs in SpecI position are derived subjects and base-generated in the SpecVP position (see Haegeman 1991:324-329).

Further, the claim that “inner subjects are part of the argument structure of the head” compared with outer subjects which are “outside the argument domain of the head” (Kariyakarawana 1998:71), raises a number of questions to the widely accepted notion of GB that oblique case-marked arguments are inherently assigned case by the governing V under the D-structure and then realised in S-structure (see Davison (1988), Gair (1990), Belletti & Rizzi (1988) and Haegeman (1991) among others). Thus, there appear to be some conflicts between Kariyakarawana’s analysis and accepted notions of GB.

19 See also § 5.4.7, in which we show that there is no distinction between verbal and non-verbal clauses with regard to quantifier stranding.
3.2.3 Wijayawardhana et al. (1991)

The main focus of this study by Wijayawardhana, Wickramasinghe and Bynon (1991) is to analyse volitive and involitive clauses as two distinct voice constructions on the basis of verb morphology and case marking. Volitive clauses, as the morphologically unmarked type, are treated as ‘active’, while involitive clauses are treated as ‘passive’. The passive active/passive analysis in this study follows Shibatani’s (1985) approach to grammatical voice. In this section we do not intend to discuss these voice constructions. They will be discussed in § 4.2.3. In what follows, we briefly comment on the subject grammatical relation, as has been discussed in this study.

In this analysis, the notion of control is the property differentiating two volitive and involitive clause types. Wijayawardhana et al. state that in ‘active clauses’, “the syntactic subject is a prototypical agent in full control of the action, whereas in the prototypical (agentless) passive subject status fall on the patient as the prototypical affected party” (p.109). They further mention that subject in colloquial Sinhala is semantically determined, and that it has the highest position in a hierarchy formed by two complimentary properties, control and affectedness (p.117).

More importantly, both nominative NPs and non-nominative arguments (e.g. instrumental, dative and accusative NPs) are argued to be syntactic subjects, although they mention that the subject status of instrumental NPs (i.e. ati& phrase) is problematic (p.132). We assume that this perhaps might be due to the subjecthood diagnostics that are employed by Wijayawardhana et al. In the present study, we argue that the three subjecthood diagnostics (e.g. control in kot participle construction, -la participle construction and infinitive clauses) that are discussed by Wijayawardhana et al. cannot be reliably used for postulating subject in this language. For instance, the two participle constructions cannot consistently pick out the subject in two structurally similar clauses, as the control in such constructions is determined by context or pragmatic factors. Nonetheless, conclusions reached by Wijayawardhana et al. in relation to the existence of grammatical subject in colloquial Sinhala are correct.
3.2.4 Inman (1993)

This is a thorough study of semantics and pragmatics of involitive verbs in colloquial Sinhala. Non-nominative subjects of involitive clauses are argued to pattern with nominative subjects with regard to a number of syntactic constructions. Inman provides a number of subjecthood diagnostics: control of the null subject on participle adjuncts, reflexive binding, predicate gapping and word order, some of which are critically sensitive to the notion of 'subject' in many languages. However, not all the diagnostics seem to be useful in postulating subject in Sinhala. We will now investigate the reasons why certain tests have little or no use in identifying subject or any other GRs in this language.

3.3 Subject in Colloquial Sinhala

3.3.1 NP-Marking

The purpose of this section is to show that morphological marking on NPs does not provide evidence to identify or postulate grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala. Colloquial Sinhala has five cases: nominative, accusative, dative, instrumental, and genitive/locative. Previously it has been shown that not only nominative case-marked arguments, but also accusative, dative and instrumental case-marked NPs are potential subjects (see Inman (1993), for instance). Genitive/locative case is not used to mark subjects in Sinhala, unlike in some South Asian languages like Hindi and Urdu.

In this section, we use Dixon’s (1972, 1979, 1994) concept of A, S, and O as a notational device for identifying arguments in sentences. This concept has a three way contrast based on transitivity. Thus, A is the agent-like argument of a transitive verb; S is the sole argument of an intransitive verb, and O is the patient-like argument of a transitive verb. In ergative languages, S and O are grouped together, while in accusative languages A and S are grouped together (see Figure 3-2). This grouping may be based on overt case marking of NPs and/or morphosyntactic processes that are sensitive to the assignment of grammatical relations in those languages. Our use of

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20 In § 4.2.4, we look at aspects of Inman’s study with regard to agentless clauses and the involitive construction.

21 I should point out here that Inman (1993) did not consider the NP-marking as a subjecthood diagnostic in determining the subject potentials of some arguments in Sinhala clauses.
these terms A, S and O in this section is simply based on the overt case marking on arguments of transitive and intransitive clauses, but not on the basis of syntactic functions they may have.

Accusative languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>transitive agent-like</td>
<td>intransitive argument</td>
<td>transitive patient-like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ergative languages

Figure 3-2: Accusative and Ergative systems and A, S, O

Sinhala is traditionally considered to be an accusative type language typologically. On the other hand, Gunasinghe (1985) argues, on the basis of case marking in involitive constructions that colloquial Sinhala is an ergative type language. However, in what follows, we find that such terms do not clearly reflect the nature of case marking in this language.

As sentences in (6-8) illustrate, the highest argument (A/S) of a sentence may take accusative (a sentences), nominative (b sentences), instrumental (c sentences) or dative case (see 8c). In these examples, S and O arguments have same case, marked with accusative, while A arguments are marked with different cases.

(6) a. sattun-wə məruna.
   animal.PL-ACC die.INV.PST
   ‘Animals died’ (because of a disease).

   b. gowiya sattun-wə məruna.
      farmer.NOM animal.PL-ACC kill.VOL.PST
      ‘The farmer killed the animals’ (for meat).

   c. gowiya ati sattun-wə məruna.
      farmer INST animal.PL-ACC kill.INV.PST
      ‘The farmer accidentally killed the animals’ (by giving a wrong treatment).

(7) a. laməya-wə wəruna.
    child-ACC fall.INV.PST
    ‘The child fell.’
b. *miniha lam\-ya-wo wa\-tuwa.*
   man.NOM child-ACC fall.CAU.VOL.PST
   ‘The man dropped the child.’

c. *miniha ati\-g lam\-ya-wo wa\-tuna.*
   man INST child-ACC fall.CAU.INV.PST
   ‘The man accidentally dropped the child.’

(8) a. *bim\-o nidaa_gattot, oyaa-wo ps\-ywaaevi.*
   ground.LOC sleep.PST.COND 2SG-ACC tread_on.INV.OPT
   ‘If you sleep on the ground, you might get stepped on’.

b. *lam\-ya pot\-o ps\-ywaa.*
   child.NOM book.ACC tread.on.VOL.PST
   ‘The child trod on the book’ (since he was angry).

c. *lam\-ya-\-jo lam\-ya ati\-g puua-wo ps\-ywaga.*
   child-DAT / child INST cat-ACC tread.on.INV.PST
   ‘The child stepped on the cat accidentally’ (because he did not see it).

However, S is not always marked with accusative case in Sinhala. S can appear with nominative and dative cases as well (see (9)). A small number of verbs mark O with dative case (as in (10)). Most of these verbs include speech act verbs like *banin\-\-wa* ‘blame’, *kataa_kar\-\-\-wa* ‘call’, etc. Three highly transitive verbs taking dative O arguments are given in (10a-b). As (10c) illustrates, with a small number of verbs, both arguments can be marked with dative case.

(9) a. *miniha d\-\-\-\-wa/e\-\-\-\-\-wa/nag\-\-\-wa.*
   man.NOM run.VOL.PST/cry.VOL.PST/dance.VOL.PST
   ‘The man ran/cried/danced.’

b. *lam\-ya-\-jo e\-\-\-\-\-u/nag\-\-\-u.*
   child-DAT cry.INV.PST/dance.INV.PST
   ‘The child cried/danced’ (he could not help it).

(10) a. *miniha g\-\-\-\-\-a-\-jo g\-\-\-\-\-u/wed\-i\-tiba.*
   man.NOM bull-DAT hit.VOL.PST/shoot.VOL.PST
   ‘The man hit/shoot the bull.’

b. *miniha ati\-g g\-\-\-\-\-\-a-\-jo g\-\-\-\-\-u.*
   man INST bull-DAT hit.INV.PST
   ‘The man hit the bull accidentally.’
c. miniha-ta lamya-ta bənuna.
man-DAT child-DAT blame.INV.PST

‘The man accidentally blamed the child’.

As shown so far, what can be considered as the subject, that is the highest argument, in a sentence is not morphologically marked consistently. Colloquial Sinhala seems to exhibit both the accusative and ergative case marking patterns. Sometimes the language treats A and S marked one way with nominative (see (6b) and (9a)) or with dative (see (8c) and (9b)). On the other hand, sometimes S and O are marked one way either with accusative (as in (6a) and (b)) or with dative (as in (8c) and (10)). Thus, the case marking in colloquial Sinhala cannot be described in terms of the ASO system, because the case marking pattern is not based on transitivity. In this regard, colloquial Sinhala is comparable with languages like Acehnese (Austronesian, Sumatra, Indonesia, Durie (1985:186)) and Manipuri (Tibeto-Burman, India, Bhat and Ningomba (1997)) in which the contrast between transitive and intransitive clauses does not bear a relationship with postulating grammatical functions.

Case marking is not sensitive to GRs in colloquial Sinhala, and is highly semantically based. What can be considered as the subject can be marked with any one of the four cases. There is no one-to-one relationship between cases and GRs. This is shown in Figure 3-3. Sinhala case assignment appears to be based on semantic roles and other semantic properties like control and volition of the individual arguments involved. For instance, an actor performing intentionally is in nominative, regardless of the transitivity of the verb (see (6b) and (9a)). A patient argument bears the accusative case, while experiencers are generally marked with dative case regardless of whether they appear as S arguments or the O arguments of a clause. Unintending actors and NPs denoting institutions or groups (i.e. government, police and the like) receive instrumental case.
If case marking is viewed in terms of grammatical roles that NPs hold, not only would it be an arbitrary explanation, but we would also miss an important generalisation behind the motivation of the case marking. It is worth noting at this point the remarks made by Wierzbicka (1980, 1981, 1988) that case marking and case allomorphs may have their own meaning.

### 3.3.1.1 Is colloquial Sinhala ergative?

As mentioned in § 3.2.1, Gunasinghe (1985) argues that colloquial Sinhala possesses characteristics of ergative languages, while the literary Sinhala manifests accusative characteristics. The following are given as some of the ergative characteristics of colloquial Sinhala:

(11) **Ergative characteristics in colloquial Sinhala (Gunasinghe 1985:130)**

- a) The overt presence of the pervasive dichotomy between volitive and involitive structures, i.e., the *do/happen* distinction
- b) The absence of verbal concord
- c) The absence of active/passive relationship and consequently the grammatical passive structure
- d) The absence of subjectivising
- e) The syntactic parallelism between the subject of intransitive verbs and the object of transitive verbs

With regard to (11a), Gunasinghe draws a similarity between colloquial Sinhala and Nyangumarda (Pama-Nyungan, Australia) which has a causative/inchoative relationship morphologically marked on the verb like in colloquial Sinhala. In doing

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22 Note that Inman’s (1993) use of the term Ergative case to refer to *ati* phrases is not based on morphological ergativity.
so, Gunasinghe follows Lyons (1969) who defines the semantic distinction between do/happen as “an ideal ergative system” (see Gunasinghe 1985:33).

It is not clear if colloquial Sinhala can be treated as an ergative language on the basis of these properties, some of which are not unique to ergative languages. For instance, properties such as (11a) and (b) are equally common in accusative languages, while the absence of characteristics such as (11a) and (b) would not make a language necessarily accusative.

“Voice is a typical feature of Accusative languages”, states Gunasinghe (1985:127). This claim seems to have been motivated by general facts like the absence of typical active/passive relationships in ergative languages and the treatment of ergative constructions in such languages as passives by some linguists (see Silverstein 1976). This claim fits well with Gunasinghe’s treatment of dative and instrumental logical subjects in involutive clauses as adverbial phrases (such as (8c)), although she considers such clauses to be subjectless. However, it is to be noted that Gunasinghe’s analysis of involutive clauses in Sinhala as passive is completely different from Silverstien’s treatment of ergative as passive. Further, colloquial Sinhala lacks not only passive, but also antipassive, which too is generally seen as a characteristic of some ergative languages. Again, lack of passive cannot be treated as an ergative characteristic. There are other non-ergative languages like Acehnese (Durie 1985) and Manipuri (Bhat and Ningomba 1997) that lack passive and antipassive, and that also share similar semantically-based case marking systems with colloquial Sinhala. By considering (11a) and (11c), colloquial Sinhala would be best seen as an active/stative language, rather than an ergative language.

With characteristics given in (11d) and (11e), comes the most crucial error in Gunasinghe’s argument. Firstly, Gunasinghe’s view on subject is based on the simple idea that subject is a nominal that has nominative case and controls the verb agreement (Gunasinghe 1985:137-8). This claim is correct, to a certain extent, for literary Sinhala, but not for colloquial Sinhala. Secondly, “being unmarked for subject [i.e., not marked with nominative, DKH] they cannot determine the verbal concord, ...” states Gunasinghe (1985:138). This is incorrect, since there is no person-number-gender agreement even between the verb and nominative subjects in colloquial Sinhala. Therefore, it is accurate to say that colloquial Sinhala does not have a verb agreement as such. Gunasinghe has not considered behavioural properties of subject that are
shared by non-nominative as well as nominative subjects. As is argued in this paper, colloquial Sinhala subject cannot be determined on the basis of coding properties, like verb agreement and case marking. In fact, coding properties in general are not seen as reliable indicators of grammatical relations (see Andrews (1985)).

Simply on the basis of the parallelism between dative and accusative logical subjects (S position) in intransitive clauses, and dative and accusative object NPs (O position) in transitive clauses, Gunasinghe argues that colloquial Sinhala is of ergative nature. It is true that patient/experiencer NPs get the same case regardless of whether they are S or O arguments. However, this fact by no means shows that the language is ergative, nor that it is non-accusative. Gunasinghe’s claim cannot be maintained due to the following reasons (a) not recognising transitive involitive clauses (e.g. (10b-c)), (b) ignoring nominative NPs in S position of volitive clauses (e.g. (9a)), and (c) not recognising dative NPs in A position of involitive clauses (e.g. (8c)). We have shown in Figure 3-3 that S is not like A nor it is like O in terms of case marking. Therefore, colloquial Sinhala cannot be shown to manifest ergative features, as Gunasinghe claims. However, colloquial Sinhala may be viewed as syntactically accusative on the basis of some syntactic constructions, in which S and A arguments function alike (see, for instance, control in participle adjuncts in § 3.3.10.2.3 and § 3.3.10.2.7).

3.3.2 Constituent Order

Constituent order is free in colloquial Sinhala. Therefore, it cannot determine the grammatical relation each argument holds, although the “subject”, the highest argument in the semantic hierarchy, is always the left-most item in the unmarked constituent structure, which is SOV. Manning (1996) writes that the constituent order provides very weak evidence for the subjecthood in a language due to the variations of typological patterns in word orders across languages.

We do not intend to discuss the constituent order as a diagnostic of grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala. However, Chapter 7 presents an extensive discussion of phrase structure in colloquial Sinhala.

3.3.3 Cross-referencing

One of the most common subjecthood diagnostics, subject-verb agreement in terms of number, gender and person, which manifests in literary Sinhala, is not available in
colloquial Sinhala. As can be seen in (12), taken from Henadeerage (1995), the verb does not agree with the subject in terms of person, number and gender in colloquial Sinhala.

(12) mamə/api/oyaa/oyaala/eyaa/eyaala/minihə/gəhəniyə laməya-ʃə kataa_karəniyə/kəla.
1-sg/1-pl/2-sg/2-pl/3-sg/3-pl/man-nom/woman-nom  child-dat  talk.pst/past

‘I/we/you (sg)/you (pl)/he/they/the man/the woman talk(ed) to the child.

At any rate, subject-verb agreement is not a reliable subjecthood diagnostic.

3.3.4 Relativisation

It appears that only the subject can be relativised in some languages. Keenan and Comrie (1977) state that if a language allows only a single argument in a clause to be relativised, that argument is the subject of the clause. Malagasy (Malayo-Polynesian, Madagascar, Keenan (1985)) is one of such languages. On the other hand, any argument can be relativised in some languages (see Mandarin, La Polla (1993)). We find that there is no restricted neutralisation of semantic roles with what can be relativised in colloquial Sinhala, and relativisation does not provide evidence for the existence of GRs.

In the relativisation of Sinhala, the verb changes to a verbal adjective, and as a modifier precedes the relativised noun. Any argument of (13a) can be relativised regardless of the grammatical relation and the semantic role that each argument bears, as given in (13b-d).

(13) a. guruwəʃəya laməya-ʃə potə dunna.
   teacher-nom  child-dat  book.acc  give.pst
   ‘The teacher gave the child a book.’

b. [guruwəʃəya laməya-ʃə dunəo] potə
   [teacher-nom  child-dat  give.pst.vadj]  book
   ‘The book which the teacher gave to the child’

c. [guruwəʃəya potə dunəo] laməya
   [teacher-nom  book  give.pst.vadj]  child
   ‘The child to whom the teacher gave the book’

d. [laməya-ʃə potə dunəo] guruwəʃəya
   [child-dat  book  give.pst.vadj]  teacher
   ‘The teacher who gave the book to the child’
The grammatical relation that the head NP holds in the main clause also has no effect on the relativisation. The head NP is the lower argument (i.e. the object) in (14a) and is the highest argument (i.e. the subject) in (14b). Not only arguments, but also any NP, including adjuncts, can be heads of a relative clause (see 14c).

(14) a. taatta [nayaa gahapu] miniha-wɔ balannɔ giya.
   father.NOM [snake.NOM bite.PST.VADJ] man-ACC see.VOL.INF go.PST
   ‘The father went to see the man whom the snake bit.’

b. [nayaa gahapu] miniha-wɔ ḥaruna.
   [snake.NOM bite.PST.VADJ] man-ACC die.INV.PST
   ‘The man whom the snake bit died.’

c. taatta [miniha-ʃu nayaa gahapu] kaʃt̪u bura ḥal̪a.
   father.NOM [man-DAT snake.NOM bite.PST.VADJ] field.LOC work.PST
   ‘The father worked in the field in which the snake bit the man.’

However, there are a number of NPs that cannot be relativised. They include complements of postpositional phrases and possessors. Compare (15a) and (15b). The complement of the PP ḥudɔ ‘above’ in (15b) is not allowed to be relativised.

(15) a. [meese ḥudɔ tibunɔ] potɔ
   [table.NOM above.LOC be.INAN.PST.VADJ] book
   ‘the book which was on the table’

b.* [potɔ ḥudɔ tibunɔ] meese
   [book above.LOC be.INAN.PST.VADJ] table
   ‘the table which was on the book’
   Intended: ‘the table which the book was on’

c. lamɔy̱a-ge potɔ meese ḥudɔ tibunɔ.
   child-GEN book table.NOM above.LOC be.INAN.PST
   ‘The child’s book was on the table.’

d.* [potɔ meese ḥudɔ tibunɔ] lamɔy̱a
   [book.NOM table.NOM above.LOC be.INAN.PST.VADJ] child
   Intended: ‘the child whose book was on the table’

e. [atɔ tuaalɔ ḥunu] lamɔy̱a
   [hand.ACC injury_become.INV.PST.VADJ] child
   ‘the child whose hand was injured’
Possessors cannot normally be relativised, as shown in (15c-d). However, (15e) is acceptable. We assume that acceptability of this sentence is due to the inalienable possession.

The relativised NP can bear any semantic relation within the relative clause. Therefore, it is semantically neutralised. However, the head noun need not have a specific syntactic relation. Therefore, it is syntactically neutralised as well. Thus, the relativisation does not prove to be a subjecthood diagnostic in colloquial Sinhala.

### 3.3.5 Quantifier Float

Kariyakarawana (1998) discusses quantifier float/stranding (QF) as a process distinguishing ‘subjects of Verbal Sentences’ (VSs), ‘subjects of the Dative Subject Construction’ (DSC) and ‘objects of the DSC’ from ‘subjects of Non-Verbal Sentences’ (NVSs) (see Table 3-1). QF is generally considered to be a property of ‘term’ arguments (see Balinese, Arka (1998)), while only the syntactic subject allows QF in some languages (see Tagalog, Kroeger (1993) and Romance, Alsina (1996)). In this section, we discuss QF in order to see if it can throw some light on postulating GRs in colloquial Sinhala. Finally, we show that QF has no use in identifying GRs in colloquial Sinhala.

Our analysis indicates that the lower argument (i.e. the object) as well as the highest argument (i.e. the subject) in a clause allows QF, regardless of the semantic relations such arguments hold. For instance, the highest argument licences the floating quantifier in (16a-b). In fact (16a) illustrates that not only ‘subjects of VSs’ (like (16b) for instance), but also what can be the ‘subject of NVSs’ like adjectives allows QF.

---

23 Consider the following sentence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>potak</th>
<th>tibunə</th>
<th>lamžya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>book.IND</td>
<td>be.INAN.PST.VADJ</td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘The child who had a book’

This sentence is derived from lamžya-ge potak tibuna ‘the child’s book existed’. Therefore, it is consistent with our assumption that possessors cannot be relativised.

24 Note that the Table 3-1 in page 36, taken from Kariyakarawana, indicates that ‘objects of the DSC’ allow QF, although his discussion does not contain any such examples.
contrary to Kariyakarawana’s claim that QF is not possible with NVSs.\(^{25}\) (16c) is an instance where the lower argument allows QF. The ambiguity in (16d) further supports our claim. If only the highest argument licences QF, no ambiguity would result in.

(16) a. guruwēru ape iskoole okkomē ho\(^{8}\)dayi.
   teacher.PL.NOM 1PL.GEN school.LOC all good
   ‘All the teachers in our school are good.’

b. lamayi mee iskoole dennek-
   child.PL this school.LOC two.IND-DAT present.PL.ACC receive.PST
   ‘Two children from this school received gifts.’

c. amma topi nangi-
   mother.NOM toffee.ACC younger.sister-DAT a.lot give.PST
   ‘The mother gave a lot of toffees to the younger sister.’

d. api pot kiyōnaka tiyenēwa okkomē.
   3PL.NOM book.PL.ACC read.PST.PTCP be.INAN.PRE all
   ‘We have read all the books.’
   ‘All of us have read the books.’

There is insufficient evidence in our data to claim that QF is a property of only the term arguments (i.e. subjects and objects excluding obliques) in colloquial Sinhala. While clauses in which non-term arguments allow QF are in general disfavoured or unacceptable (see (17a-b)), sometimes they seem to be acceptable, as in (17c).

(17) a.? mahattēya okkojī ghee iskoole lamay-
   gentleman.NOM all.DAT.EMP this school.LOC child.PL-DAT book.PL give.PST
   ‘The gentleman presented gifts to all the children in this school.’

b.* amma lamayi-
   mother.NOM child.PL-DAT food.ACC all.DAT.EMP cook.PST
   ‘The mother cooked food for all the children.’

c. Gune lamayi a-
   Gune.NOM child.PL today all.also with.EMP talk.do.PST
   ‘Gune talked with all the kids today.’

There is a neutralisation as to what semantic roles can licence QF, as can be seen from the examples above. However, it is not a restricted neutralisation, since any

\(^{25}\) Also, see § 5.4.7 for more examples involving NVSs.
argument seems to be able to allow QF. Therefore, QF in colloquial Sinhala is not a subjecthood diagnostic, because it applies to objects; neither is it a term diagnostic, because it applies to non-term arguments.

### 3.3.6 Nominalisation

Kariyakarawana (1998) argues that ‘inner subjects’ have the characteristic of being able to be genitive case-marked under nominalised verbs. Nominalisation is, thus, said to distinguish ‘inner subjects’ from ‘outer subjects’ (see § 3.2.2 for a discussion of these terms). According to Kariyakarawana, subjects of VSs and objects of the DSC are inner subjects, while subjects of the DSC and NVSs are outer subjects. In what follows we examine Kariyakarawana’s claim as to what sort of relationship the process of nominalisation and subjects of different clause types hold. We will demonstrate that the nominalisation is not a property that helps distinguish two types of subjects. Further, it will also be clear at the end of this section that it is not a subjecthood diagnostic that can usefully identify the grammatical subject.

First, let us look at the genitive marking under nominalisation, and how Kariyakarawana makes the distinction between subject types on this basis. Sentence (18a) has the highest argument in nominative case, the ‘object’ in accusative case and a volitive verb. The ‘subject’ can be genitive-marked when the verb is nominalised. This is shown in (18b). The object case remains unchanged in this sentence. The nominalisation of sentence (18b) and the ungrammatically of (18c), in which the object is genitive-marked under nominalisation, have led Kariyakarawana to claim that only ‘subjects of VSs’ possess this particular property of the ‘inner subject’, but not the objects (of VSs).

(18) a. \(\text{Gunapala } \text{Siri-}w\dot{o}\ \text{tallu}_k\text{eruwa.}\)
   \begin{align*}
   \text{Gunapala.NOM} & \quad \text{Siri-ACC} & \quad \text{push}_d\text{.PST.VOL} \\
   \end{align*}
   ‘Gunapala pushed Siri.’ \quad (Kariyakarawana 1998:75)

b. \(\text{Gunapala-ge } \text{Siri-}w\dot{o}\ \text{tallu}_k\text{riim}_s.\)
   \begin{align*}
   \text{Gunapala-GEN} & \quad \text{Siri-ACC} & \quad \text{push}_d\text{.NOMIN} \\
   \end{align*}
   ‘Gunapala’s pushing Siri’. \quad (Kariyakarawana 1998:75)

---

26 Kariyakarawana’s term ‘Verbal Sentences’ include those with nominative subjects like (18a) in the text, but exclude non-verbal sentences and involutive sentences with dative/instrumental subjects.
We argue that the ungrammaticality of (18c) is not due to the fact that the object has been genitive-marked under nominalisation. Nor is it due to the object not being an inner subject. It is due to the fact that the object has not been marked with accusative case, as it would need to be if it were to be the patient argument of *being pushed*. In this sentence (18c), the argument ‘Siri’ with its genitive case suffix is the possessor of the nominalised verb *pushing*, hence it is the *pusher*, but it does not represent itself as the object argument affected by *being pushed* (i.e. ‘Siri’ *being pushed*). Under a nominalised verb, the genitive-marked argument is always interpreted as the highest argument of the clause. In other words, only the highest argument can be genitive-marked. Therefore, it can never be a patient argument of a transitive verb. So, the presence of *Gunapala* in nominative case also contributes to the unacceptability of (18c), since the sentence has two arguments (*Gunapala* and *Siri-ge*) which are potential highest arguments.

Furthermore, when the verb is nominalised, the highest argument cannot have the nominative case, as also shown by unacceptability of example (19a). However, when a NP is in accusative case functioning as the patient/object (19b), or in genitive case functioning as agent/subject (19c), the clauses are acceptable.

(19)  

a.* *Gunapala* (Siri-w) *tallu_kiriim*.  
Gunapala-NOM (Siri-ACC) push_do.NOMIN  
* ‘Gunapala pushing (Siri)’

b. *Gunapala-w* *tallu_kiriim*.  
Gunapala-ACC push_do.NOMIN  
‘pushing Gunapala’ (Gunapala as the patient/object)

c. *Gunapala-ge* *tallu_kiriim*.  
Gunapala-GEN push_do.NOMIN  
‘Gunapala’s pushing’ (possessor as the agent/subject)
We can simply assume that nominalised verbs do not assign nominative/direct case in colloquial Sinhala, as is also shown by the ungrammatically of parallel sentences in English, like *'he pushing Siri'.

Now, let us turn to Kariyakarawana’s claim in relation to the genitive-marking in the objects of the DSC. On the basis of sentences in (20), Kariyakarawana claims that objects of the DSC can be genitive marked, but not the subjects of the DSC, thereby assuming that such objects, on a par with subjects of VSs, are realised in the structural position of ‘inner subjects’. (20a) has an involutive verb, a dative subject and an object. As can be seen, the dative NP cannot be genitive-marked under nominalisation (20b). However, what corresponds to the patient in (20a) can be genitive-marked as in (20c).

(20)  
a. Ranjani-t Sita-w tallu_una.  
Ranjani-DAT Sita-ACC push_become.PST.INV  
‘Ranjani pushed Sita accidentally’.  
(Kariyakarawana 1998:74)  
b.* Ranjani-ge Sita-w tallu_wiim.  
Ranjani-GEN Sita-ACC push_become.INV.NOMIN  
Intended: ‘Ranjani’s (unintentional) pushing Sita’.  
(Kariyakarawana 1998:74)  
c. Sita-ge tallu_wiim / tallu_wen ek.  
Sita-GEN push_become.NOMIN / push_become.PRE.VADJ NOMIN  
‘Sita’s being pushed’.  
(Kariyakarawana 1998:74)  

Sentence (20b) is clearly unacceptable. It appears the nominalisation of certain involutive clauses results in unacceptability, as in (20b). We assume that the

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27 However, nominative is accepted in the following construction in both languages, which is different from (19a) in the text:

\[
mamo \ k^\text{æm} \ ne \ [\text{Gunapala} \ Siri-w \ tallu_kiriim] \ geno.\]

1SG.NOM like NEG [Gunapala.NOM Siri-ACC push_do.NOMIN] about

‘I don’t like Gunapala pushing Siri.’

28 Tallu_wen ek in the sentence is an alternative form of nominalisation. Both tallu_wen ek and tallu_wiim have the same meaning in this sentence, ‘is being pushed’.

29 This translation implies that there is an agent (i.e. ‘Sita’s being pushed (by X)’). However, there is no such agent implied in the Sinhala sentence, and Sita-ge ‘Sita’s’ is understood as the subject/experiencer of pushing, but not as the object of being pushed.
unacceptability of (20b) is, however, not due to the fact that subjects of the DSC are not allowed to be genitive-marked under nominalisation. If we consider the following sentences (see (21a) and (21c)) with dative NPs as the highest arguments, we find that nominalisation is indeed possible with them, as shown by (21b) and (21d).

(21)  
a. lamɔya-tɔ hiinɔyɔ matak_una.
child-DAT dream.ACC memory_become.PST
‘The child suddenly remembered the dream.’
b. lamɔya-ge hiinɔyɔ matak_wiimɔ.
child-GEN dream.ACC memory_become.NOMIN
‘The child’s recollection of the dream.’
c. Siri-扵 kenuna.
Siri-DAT see.PST.INV
‘Siri saw.’
d. Siri-ge peniimɔ.
Siri-GEN see.NOMIN
‘Siri’s seeing.’

In fact, we claim that it is incorrect that (a) subjects of the DSC cannot be genitive-marked under nominalisation; (b) only canonical subjects can be genitive-marked under nominalisation; and (c) ‘objects of the DSC’ can be genitive-marked under nominalisation, as we have shown thus far. We believe that such claims obscure the facts about nominalisation and the argument structure of verbs in colloquial Sinhala. Now, we intend to explain a number of issues raised by the (un)acceptability of nominalised sentences. In doing so, we can answer some questions such as why the highest argument in (18) can be genitive-marked, while it is not possible with (20b), and why sentences in (20) and (21), all of which are involitive clauses, behave differently with regard to the nominalisation.

30 Note that even (20a) in the text is only marginally possible according to our informants. Most speakers instead would use (20a) with an instrumental NP, instead of a dative NP.

Ranjani atiy Sita-wɔ tallu_una.
Ranjani INST Sita-ACC push_become.PST.INV
‘Ranjani pushed Sita accidentally’.
We argue that verbs such as *tallu_we-* (in 20) are intransitive. They are formed by suffixing the verbal stem *we- ‘become’ to nominal, adjectival or other verbal stems. These compound verbs are in most cases intransitive, and usually denote involitive or spontaneous actions. The volitive counterparts of *we-* verbs are formed by suffixing the verbal stem *kər- ‘do’ to nominal, adjectival or other verbal stems. *Kər-* verbs are transitive and volitive. See Table 3-2 for verb formation with *we-* and *kər-*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stem</th>
<th><em>we-</em></th>
<th><em>kər-</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>tallu ‘push’</em></td>
<td><em>tallu_we-</em> ‘be pushed’</td>
<td><em>tallu_kər-</em> ‘push’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>matakə ‘memory’</em></td>
<td><em>matak_we-</em> ‘remember’ [T]</td>
<td><em>matak_kər-</em> ‘remind’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>usə ‘height’</em></td>
<td><em>us_we-</em> ‘become tall’</td>
<td><em>us_kər-</em> ‘make tall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bayə ‘fear’</em></td>
<td><em>bayə_we-</em> ‘feel afraid’</td>
<td><em>bayə_kər-</em> ‘terrify’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>molok ‘soft’</em></td>
<td><em>molok_we-</em> ‘become soft’</td>
<td><em>molok_kər-</em> ‘soften’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ləwəsti ‘ready’</em></td>
<td><em>ləwəsti_we-</em> ‘get ready’ [V]</td>
<td><em>ləwəsti_kər-</em> ‘prepare’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*wisi [M]’</td>
<td><em>wisi_we-</em> ‘be thrown’</td>
<td><em>wisi_kər-</em> ‘throw’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>iwərə ‘termination’</em></td>
<td><em>iwərə_we-</em> ‘run out’</td>
<td><em>iwərə_kər-</em> ‘finish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kataa ‘talk’</em></td>
<td><em>kataa_we-</em> ‘chat’ [V]</td>
<td><em>kataa_kər-</em> ‘invite/talk to’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pal ‘mire’</em></td>
<td><em>pal_we-</em> ‘become stale’</td>
<td><em>pal_kər-</em> ‘make stale’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*gata [M]’</td>
<td><em>gata_we-</em> ‘(time) pass by’</td>
<td><em>gata_kər-</em> ‘spend (time)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>udau ‘help’</em></td>
<td><em>udau_we-</em> ‘become helpful’ [V]</td>
<td><em>udau_kər-</em> ‘help’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>unandu ‘keen’</em></td>
<td><em>unandu_we-</em> ‘be interested in’ [V]</td>
<td><em>unandu_kər-</em> ‘encourage’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kəməti ‘willing’</em></td>
<td><em>kəməti_we-</em> ‘consent/be willing’ [V, T]</td>
<td><em>kəməti_kər-</em> ‘make X like’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>staat ‘start’</em></td>
<td><em>staat_we-</em> ‘start up (by itself)’</td>
<td><em>staat_kər-</em> ‘start’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>paas ‘pass’</em></td>
<td><em>paas_we-</em> ‘be passed’</td>
<td><em>paas_kər-</em> ‘pass (an exam)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| M: no meaning on its own; T: transitive; V: volitive |

Table 3-2: Compound verbs with *we-* ‘to be/happen’ and *kər-* ‘to do’

Therefore, we assume that *tallu_we-* in (20) is intransitive. Further, consider sentence (22a), which has an accusative NP as the sole argument. This sentence does not have an implied agent, who is doing the act of *pushing*. The accusative NP is a patient/theme. Now consider (22b), which has a nominative NP as the sole argument. With the nominative argument, the sentence has an intentional agent, who is doing the act of *pushing*. The point we want to make here is that even with the nominative

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31 There are no direct equivalent translations in English for some of these forms. Therefore I use the passive for them.

32 Note that the verb form remains unchanged in both (a) and (b) sentences. It is possible for some morphologically involitive verbs to appear in volitional contexts, as we will show in relation to the agentless construction in the next chapter.
agent, the sentence is intransitive. It is not possible to have another argument in this sentence. A patient argument (including the reflexive) as the object is not acceptable, as can be in (22b).

(22) a. Sita-\textit{w} \textit{tallu\textunderscore una.}
\noindent Sita-ACC push\_become.PST.INV  
\noindent ‘Sita was pushed’.\textsuperscript{33}

b. Sita \textit{(*(taman\textunderscore w}/eyaa\textunderscore w\textbackslash /Gune\textunderscore w\textbackslash \textit{) tallu\textunderscore una.}}
\noindent Sita.NOM (self-ACC/3SG-ACC/Gune-ACC) push\_become.PST.INV  
\noindent ‘Sita pushed in *(him/herself/Gune)’.

On this basis, it is not possible to claim that it is the object that has been genitive-marked in (20c), since \textit{tallu\textunderscore we} is intransitive.

Further, another problem that we find with Kariyakarawana’s analysis is that it cannot explain the unacceptability of sentences like the following under his analysis of inner/outer subject distinction:

(23) a.* Ranjani-\textit{t Sita\textunderscore ge \textit{tallu\textunderscore wiim.}} \quad (cf. 20c)
\noindent Ranjani-DAT Sita-GEN push\_become.INV.NOMIN  
\noindent Intended: ‘Sita’s being pushed by Ranjani’

b.* \textit{lam\textunderscore ya\textunderscore t} \textit{aata\textunderscore ge matak\textunderscore wiim.} \quad (cf. 21b)
\noindent child-DAT grand\_father-GEN memory\_become.INV.NOMIN  
\noindent Intended: ‘child’s recalling of the grandfather’

Both of these sentences are involutive (hence would qualify to be DSCs in Kariyakarawana’s analysis). The objects or the lower arguments have been marked with the genitive case, while so-called ‘outer subjects’ are also present in these sentences. Now, sentences in (23) raise a number of questions that Kariyakarawana’s account cannot explain. Why are they ungrammatical, even when the so-called ‘objects of the DSC’ are nominalised? Why can the dative NPs not be present when the ‘objects of the DSC’ are nominalised?

With regard to the ungrammaticality of these sentences in (23), our explanation is simple, and follows from the assumption made earlier that only the highest argument in a clause can be genitive marked. The genitive argument is in fact the possessor of

\textsuperscript{33} Note that Sita’s role in this sentence is the same as that of (20a), but agent is not implied here.
the nominalised action. Therefore, it always functions as the highest argument. The reason for the ungrammatically in (23a), which we have shown to be intransitive, is the presence of the dative NP. Both the dative NP and the genitive-marked argument compete for the place of the highest argument, while there can only be one argument in this clause. As for (23b), which is argued to be transitive, the highest argument lam̃ya-ja should be in the genitive case, but not the lower argument.

To conclude, the process of nominalisation does not give any conclusive evidence to establish different structural positions for the subjects (i.e. inner and outer subjects). As we argued, the argument that can be marked with genitive case under nominalisation has the highest semantic role.

3.3.6.1 Nominalisation and Subjecthood

Now let us move on to see if nominalisation can be treated as a reliable subjecthood diagnostic. As we observed in the previous section, regardless of the semantic role of the highest argument, it can be genitive marked under nominalisation. Thus, the genitive argument position has a neutralisation of semantic roles. Further it is a restricted neutralisation (i.e. the genitive marking is restricted to the highest argument). However, we do not consider nominalisation as reliable subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala for two reasons. Firstly, these nominalised phrases are not sentences as such, but rather they are noun phrases. They cannot participate in other inter-clausal constructions like control constructions. Consequently, we cannot observe if the genitive-marked argument can also be a controller or controlllee of such clauses, if it were to occur in an inter-clausal construction. Secondly, nominalised phrases do not represent a full range of clause types in Sinhala. For instance, the genitive marking under nominalisation is not applicable to the involitive construction in general, which plays a very crucial part in colloquial Sinhala clause structure. A good example is that instrumental subjects cannot be tested as to whether they are syntactic subjects or not under this construction. Before we explain why the nominalisation is not representative of full range of clause types, it is necessary to explain the morphological process of nominalisation.
A majority of Sinhala verbs have volitive and involitive verbs derived from the same stem, by adding the respective morpheme, as shown in the 1.6.1.\textsuperscript{34} The nominalisation marker -\textit{iim} is suffixed to the verbal stem, which is neutral as to volitivity (see the Table 3-3). The tense and volitivity is indicated by a single affix: -\textit{a} is present volitive; -\textit{e} is present involitive; -\textit{uw} is past volitive; and -\textit{un} is past involitive.\textsuperscript{35} Note that the nominalised form does not include a tense affix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>present tense</th>
<th>past tense</th>
<th>nominalised form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textit{VOL}</td>
<td>kad-\textit{a} \textit{n\textomega} \rightarrow kad\textit{\textomega}</td>
<td>kad-\textit{uw} \textit{a} \rightarrow k\textit{\textomega}uwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{INV}</td>
<td>kad-\textit{e} \textit{n\textomega} \rightarrow k\textit{\textomega}\textit{\textomega}n</td>
<td>kad-\textit{un} \textit{a} \rightarrow k\textit{\textomega}\textit{\textomega}n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{VOL}</td>
<td>mar-\textit{a} \textit{n\textomega} \rightarrow mar\textit{\textomega}n</td>
<td>mar-\textit{uw} \textit{a} \rightarrow m\textit{\textomega}\textit{\textomega}n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{INV}</td>
<td>mar-\textit{e} \textit{n\textomega} \rightarrow m\textit{\textomega}\textit{\textomega}n</td>
<td>mar-\textit{un} \textit{a} \rightarrow m\textit{\textomega}\textit{\textomega}n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-3: Verb morphology and nominalised form /kad-/- ‘break’ /mar-/- ‘kill’

Therefore, once these verbs are nominalised, the nominalised form does not indicate whether the action is volitive or involitive, nor present or past. We can show that nominalised forms are unspecified for (non-)volition by performing a simple adverbial modification test. The adverb \textit{oon\textomega}man\textomega ‘deliberately’ can only modify actions performed intentionally, while adverb \textit{b\textomega}riwiim\textomega ‘accidentally’ cannot modify intentional actions. The nominalised forms can be modified by both these adverbs, as shown by the following examples:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(24)] a. (b\textomega riwiim\textomega /oon\textomega man\textomega) k\textomega y\textomega iim\textomega

‘breaking (accidentally/deliberately)’

b. (b\textomega riwiim\textomega /oon\textomega man\textomega) m\textomega riim\textomega

‘killing (accidentally/deliberately)’
\end{enumerate}

The following sentences can also be given as evidence for this fact. (25a) is volitive, and (25b) is involitive. (25c) is the nominalised form corresponding to both (25a) and (25b). But, (25c) does not indicate volitivity or tense.

\textsuperscript{34} There is a very small number of verbs which do not have volitive and involitive counterparts derived from the same stem. For instance, \textit{penen\textomega} ‘see’ does not have a morphologically related volitive form. The only volitive form for it is the morphologically unrelated \textit{dakin\textomega} ‘look’, which is derived from a different stem.

\textsuperscript{35} A [+front] vowel following the stem triggers the stem vowel to be fronted.
Now, let us go back the point we made earlier that nominalised forms do not represent the involitive construction in general. Sentence (25c) is a case in point. On the basis of (25c), we cannot say that either ‘the nominative subject’ in (25a) or ‘the instrumental subject’ in (25b) has been genitive marked in (25c) under nominalisation. The only conclusion we can make is that the highest argument has been genitive-marked.

Note that very few verbs can retain the involitive aspect in the nominalised form. The only transitive we- type verb that appears in our data, and that keeps its involitive aspect in the nominalised form is matak_we- ‘remember’ (see 21a-b). All the other we- type verbs are unspecified for volition in the nominalised form. Therefore, we cannot consider nominalisation as a subjecthood diagnostic, since too few involitive verbs can be nominalised (i.e. 21).

Thus, it is not possible to use nominalisation as a subjecthood diagnostic and make a conclusion that should apply to all the clause types in colloquial Sinhala, since it cannot differentiate volitive and involitive clauses containing different case-marked subjects (also see Inman (1993:55)). However, the nominalisation can be treated as a process sensitive to argument structure, since it can always pick out the highest argument of a verb.

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36 The other verb that we are aware of and that can retain the involitive aspect is penenقوا ‘see’. Note, however, that this verb is inherently involitive, and does not have a morphologically related volitive form. See fn. 34.
3.3.7 Predicate Gapping

Predicate Gapping has also been treated as a subjecthood diagnostic for nominative and non-nominative logical subjects in Sinhala (see Inman 1993:52). In this construction, the predicate is gapped with ehemayi ‘like that’, which occurs as the continuation of a sentence. For instance, sentence (26b) is a continuation of (26a), and the predicate ehemayi ‘like that’ gaps the main predicate ဟွေဟွေ ‘wash’, the argument ပဲ့ ‘floor’ and adverbs, leaving the agent. The meaning is ‘the mother always washes the floor well, so does the older sister.’ However, (26c) as a continuation of (26a) is said to be odd, since ehemayi gaps the predicate and the agent argument.

(26) a. အမ မ နိုင်ပွား ဟွေဟွေ ဟွေဟွေ, ...
   မုန်း. NOM အိမ်. ACC ကြည် ဝါ. PRE ...
   ‘The mother always washes the floor well, ...’

b. အိုက်-သ အ ဟောများ အမ အမ
   ပွားး. NOM-also ကြည်.that-AM
   ‘... and older sister, too.’

c.? ဝီးန်-ဆွဲ အ ဟောများ အမ
   ပွားး. NOM-also ကြည်.that-AM
   ‘... and pots, too.’
   (Inman 1993:53)

Inman (1993) assumes that

“the predicate ehemayi ‘like that’ is a one-place predicate that behaves like a predicate anaphor. In order for a constituent to occur as the subject of ehemayi, it must be interpretable as the subject of the gapped predicate” (p.52).

Therefore, Inman further assumes that “‘older sister’ [in (26b)] can easily be interpretable as the subject of the gapped predicate” (1993:52). And the oddness of (26c) is, thus, assumed to be due to ဝီးန် ‘pots also’ not being the ‘subject’ of the gapped predicate. While the informants of our study, too, agree with the judgements on the sentences (like the one in question) in Inman, we think that an argument not bearing a particular GRs (i.e. subject and object, etc.) in the gapped predicate does not necessarily render the sentence unacceptable. Further, the present analysis suggests that Predicate Gapping is not a reliable subjecthood diagnostic for Sinhala. Below we present a number of sentences to support our claim.
Some sentences are equally good with either the higher argument (i.e. the subject) being gapped or the lower argument being gapped. All informants believe that the following sentences (27-28) are acceptable, and do not find (b) sentences to be odd, although in those sentences *ehemayi* gaps the verb and the highest argument.

(27) a. wəssə-tə goyam winaasə_wenəwa, ... niyəge-ja-t ehemayi.  
    rain-DAT rice.ACC destroy_become.PRE, ... drought-DAT-also like.that-AM  
    ‘Rain destroyed the rice,... as did the drought.’

b. wəssə-tə goyam winaasə_wenəwa, ... mal_gasut ehemayi.  
    rain-DAT rice.ACC destroy_become.PRE, ... flower_tree.also like.that-AM  
    ‘Rain destroyed the rice, ... as well as the flowering trees.’

(28) a. Sarath ganitàšə-jə daksə-yi, ... Nimalat ehemayi.  
    Sarath.NOM maths-DAT good-AM, ... Nimal.NOM.also like.that-AM  
    ‘Sarath is good at maths, ... as is Nimal.’

b. Sarath ganitàšə-jə daksə-yi, ... widyaawəja-t ehemayi.  
    Sarath.NOM maths-DAT good-AM, ... science-DAT-also like.that-AM  
    ‘Sarath is good at maths, ... as well as science.’

The following sentences show that sometimes the meaning is odd when the argument of *ehemayi* corresponds to the highest argument of the main predicate. For instance, in (29a) *yanəwa* ‘go’ is intransitive, and therefore *huəgak sinhala sindu* ‘many Sinhala songs’ can be treated as the highest argument of the sentence. However, (29a) is less preferred over (29b), in which predicate and highest argument are gapped.

(29) a. radio_ekə huəgak sinhələ sindu yanəwa, ...  
    Radio_DEF.LOC many Sinhala song.PL go.PRE, ...  
    ? demələ sindu-t ehemayi.  
    Tamil song.PL-also like.that-AM  
    ‘A lot of Sinhala songs are played on the Radio, ... and Tamil songs, too.’

b. radio_ekə huəgak sinhələ sindu yanəwa, ...  
    Radio_DEF.LOC many Sinhala song.PL go.PRE, ...  
    TV_eket ehemayi  
    TV_DEF.LOC.also like.that-AM  
    ‘A lot of Sinhala songs are played on the Radio, ... and on the TV, too.’

Sentences in (30-31) also illustrate the same point. Sentence (31) shows that a non-finite clause like ‘*when go to Kandy*’ can also appear as the subject of *ehemayi*.  

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The sentences considered so far illustrated that not only the higher argument, but also the lower argument, other adverbs and non-finite clauses can be the subject of ehemayi. According to sentences we observed, it appears that the argument of ehemayi cannot always be interpreted as the subject of the main clause.

In most cases, the sentence is preferred when the lower argument and main predicate are gapped leaving the highest argument as the subject of ehemayi, as Inman notes. However, the opposite is also possible, as shown above. This begs an explanation as to why some arguments and/or adverbs are preferred in this construction as the subject of ehemayi, but not others. It is very hard to pinpoint underlying factors affecting the (un)acceptability of a given sentence involving Predicate Gapping due to the inconsistent pattern of sentence acceptability. The pattern hardly proves that grammatical or semantic relations in a clause constrain the Predicate Gapping construction. Some of the apparent underlying factors have to do with pragmatics and/or the context in which the event takes place. Sentence (32a) is an example of focus construction. The agent argument in the post-verbal position is focused. (32b), (32c) and (32d) are continuations of (32a) as the gapping construction. Note that none of the three NPs in (32a) sentence is acceptable as the subject of ehemayi. Interestingly, not even the highest argument can appear as the argument of ehemayi.
(32) a. sudupaat póttetḵ məleiriyaaw pó dunne mahaṭṭya-yi, ...
    white_tablet.ACC.IND malaria-DAT give.PST.E mister.NOM-AM ...
    ‘It is the gentleman who gave a white tablet for Malaria, ...

b.* noona-t ehemayi.
    lady.NOM-also like.that-AM
    ... and the lady doctor, too.’

c.* dengu unóta-t ehemayi.
    dengue fever-DAT-also like.that-AM.
    ... and for dengue fever, too.’

d.* kahapaat póttetḵu-t ehemayi.
    yellow_tablet.ACC.IND-also like.that-AM
    ... and a yellow tablet, too.’

The unacceptability of (32b-d) is not due to the fact that (32a) is a focused construction. This is shown in (33a), in which the theme argument is focussed. (33b) illustrates that only an agent argument (i.e. one interpretable as the subject of the main clause) is acceptable as the subject of ehemayi.

(33) a. mahāṭṭya maleriyaaw pó dunne sudupaat póttetḵ, ...
    mister.NOM malaria-DAT give.PST.E white_tablet.IND
    ‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave for Malaria, ...

b. noona-t ehemayi.
    lady.NOM-also like.that-AM
    ... and the lady doctor, too.’

c.? dengu unóta-t ehemayi.
    dengue fever-DAT-also like.that-AM.
    ... and for dengue fever, too.’

d.* kahapaat póttetḵu-t ehemayi.
    yellow_tablet.ACC.IND-also like.that-AM
    ... and a yellow tablet, too.’

It appears that indefinite NPs are highly disfavoured in gapped constructions (see (32d) and (33d)). Guruwɔɔyekut ‘a teacher also’ is not acceptable in (34) as the continuation of sentence, while guruwɔɔyato ‘the teacher also’ is fine.
(34) amma lamɔya-t daˈduwam kola, ...
    mother.NOM child-DAT punishment_do-PST, ...

    ‘The mother punished the child, ...
    
guruwɔrya-t ehemayi. / * guruvwɔyekut ehemayi.
    teacher.DEF-also like.that-AM / teacher.IND-also like.that-AM
    …and the teacher, too.’ / …and a teacher, too.’

    Our data does not show a clear pattern which allows us to identify which
    argument is preferred as the subject of ehemayi. However, the data seems to indicate
    that indefinite arguments and focussed arguments are highly disfavoured or
    unacceptable.

    In this section, we attempted to show that the Predicate Gapping construction
does not prove to be a subjecthood diagnostic. It was shown that there is no restriction
as to what can be the argument of ehemayi.

3.3.8 Reflexive Binding

    Being able to control a reflexive is considered to be a property of subject. In many
languages only the subject can antecede the reflexive (see, for instance, Hindi37 (T.
Mohanan 1990), Malayalam (Mohanan 1982) and Urdu (Butt 1995)). In this section,
we examine reflexive binding in colloquial Sinhala as a subjecthood diagnostic.38

    Reflexive relations in colloquial Sinhala can be expressed with the reflexive
pronoun taman ‘self’ or by adding the verb gannɔwa ‘take’ to the perfect participle
form of the verb, which we will refer to as ‘the reflexive verb’. Both the pronoun and
verbal form can occur in a single clause, in which case the verbal form determines the
binding domain of the reflexive taman. On the other hand, when they occur by
themselves, they have different binding domains.

    First, we present those involving the reflexive pronoun. As can be seen in (35),
the antecedent or the controller of the reflexive pronoun can be an intentional agent

37 Both grammatical subject and the logical subject can be the antecedent in Hindi (T. Mohanan
1990:161).
38 A more detailed account of anaphoric binding relations in colloquial Sinhala can be found in
(35a), an unintending agent (35b), an experiencer (35c), or a patient (35d). Thus, semantic role of what can be the antecedent of taman is neutralised.

(35) a. Nimal\textsubscript{1} Siri\textsubscript{-fo} taman-ge\textsubscript{i,*2} ged\textsubscript{eo-do} di kataa_k\textsubscript{la}.
   Nimal.NOM Siri-DAT self-GEN house-while.at talk.PST
   ‘Nimal\textsubscript{1} spoke to Siri\textsubscript{2} at his\textsubscript{1,*2} house.’

b. Nimal ati\textsubscript{1} Siri-w\textsubscript{-fo} taman-ge\textsubscript{i,*2} ged\textsubscript{eo-do} di tallu_keruna.
   Nimal INST Siri-ACC self-GEN house-while.at push.do.INV.PST
   ‘Nimal\textsubscript{1} accidentally pushed Siri\textsubscript{2} at self\textsubscript{1,*2} house.’
   (Inman 1994:51)

c. taatta-t\textsubscript{1} aata-w\textsubscript{-fo} taman-ge\textsubscript{i,*2} ged\textsubscript{eo-do} t\textsubscript{f}.
   father-DAT grandpa-ACC self-GEN house-DAT
   ekk\textsubscript{2}gen\textsubscript{2} yann\textsubscript{2} hituna.
   accompany.INF think.INV.PST
   ‘The father\textsubscript{1} thought to take the grandpa\textsubscript{2} to self\textsubscript{1,*2} home.’

d. eyaa-w\textsubscript{-fo} Gune\textsubscript{2} ekk\textsubscript{3} taman-ge\textsubscript{i,*2} w atte krik\textsubscript{2}.
   3SG-ACC Gune.NOM with self-GEN garden.LOC cricket.ACC
   gahan\textsubscript{3} ko\textsubscript{3} waguna.
   hit.PRE.VADJ PTK fall.INV.PST
   ‘He\textsubscript{1} fell while playing cricket with Gune\textsubscript{2} in self\textsubscript{1,*2} garden.’

Further, it is a restricted neutralisation. As can be seen from these examples, it is the highest argument of a sentence that can be the antecedent of taman. However, there are two problems: the first is due to the presence of the reflexive verb, and the second is related to the person agreement of the reflexive taman. We will look at each one in turn.

**Reflexive Verb:** The coreference pattern of taman changes when the reflexive verb is present. This can be seen in (36-37): the reflexive verb is present in (b) sentences, while it is not in (a) sentences. With the presence of the reflexive verb in an embedded clause, taman binds with the highest argument of embedded clause; otherwise taman binds with highest argument in the matrix clause.

(36) a. Gune-t\textsubscript{2} oon\textsubscript{-una} [ [Wimale-t\textsubscript{2} taman-ge\textsubscript{i,*2} way\textsubscript{eo-\textsubscript{wo}}] Gune-DAT want.PST [ [Wimale-DAT self-GEN work.PL-DAT
   at\textsubscript{2} daann\textsubscript{2} epaa ] kiy\textsubscript{3}la kiyann\textsubscript{3}].
   hand.ACC put.VOL.INF NEG ] that say.INF ]
   ‘Gune\textsubscript{1} wanted to tell Wimale\textsubscript{2} not to meddle with (lit. put hands into)
   self\textsubscript{1,*2} business.’
b. \( \text{Gune} \_\text{DAT} \ \text{oon} \_\text{una} \ \text{[Wimale} \_\text{DAT} \ \text{taman-ge}_{1/2} \ \text{wadak} \)  \\
\text{Gune} \_\text{want.PST} \ \text{[Wimale} \_\text{self-GEN} \ \text{work.IND.ACC} \)  \\
\text{balaa} \_\text{ganna} \ \text{kiyo} \_\text{la} \ \text{kiyannal} \)  \\
\text{watch.PP} \_\text{take.INF} \ \text{that} \ \text{say.INF} \)  \\
‘Gune\(_1\) wanted to tell Wimale\(_2\) to mind self’s\(_{1/2}\) business.’

(37) a. \( \text{Piyal} \_\text{say.PST} \ \text{Sriya} \_\text{self-ACC} \ \text{injury_make.PST} \)  \\
‘Piyal\(_1\) said that Sriya\(_2\) hurt him\(_1\)/*herself\(_2\).’  \\
(Henadeerage 1998:5)

b. \( \text{Piyal} \_\text{say.PST} \ \text{Sriya} \_\text{self-ACC} \ \text{injury_make.PP} \_\text{take.PST} \)  \\
‘Piyal\(_1\) said that Sriya\(_2\) hurt herself\(_2\)/*him\(_1\).’  \\
(Henadeerage 1998:5)

Thus, the antecedent of taman, when it occurs by itself, is always the highest argument of the sentence even if taman occurs in an embedded clause of the sentence. This coreference pattern of taman seems somewhat unusual compared with reflexive pronouns of other languages, as they are in general expected to bind with an antecedent in the same domain (cf. Principle A of Government and Binding Theory (Chomsky 1981)). The presence of a reflexive verb restricts the binding domain of taman to the clause containing the reflexive verb, as (36b) and (37b) show, in other words, the reflexive is bound in what Dalrymple (1993) refers to as the Minimal Complete Nucleus (MCN), which is the domain containing the reflexive, the antecedent and the (reflexive) verb.

So far we observed that the antecedent of the reflexive is either the highest argument of the sentence or the highest argument of an embedded clause if both the reflexive pronoun and the reflexive verb occur in the same embedded clause. Thus, the antecedent of taman always appears to be the highest argument of some verb regardless of whether it belongs to a matrix clause or an embedded clause.

**Person Agreement of the Reflexive Pronoun**: Taman can be coreferential with only third person pronouns or proper nouns. Therefore, where the highest matrix argument is a first or second person pronoun, the reflexive binds with the highest argument of the next lower predicate: see (38a-b):
The reflexive in (38a) binds with the highest argument in the matrix clause. In (38b), the highest argument in the matrix clause, which is a 1st person pronoun, cannot be the antecedent due to a mismatch in person agreement. Therefore, taman is disjoined from the matrix highest argument and coreferential with the highest argument of the lower clause, as there is no other binder available for it. This does not in any case indicate that an object can be a potential antecedent for taman. Siri, the matrix object in this case, is the controller of the unrealised highest argument position in the embedded clause. Therefore, it is a potential antecedent for taman.

Where our criterion for the syntactic subjecthood is concerned, there is clearly a neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to what can be the antecedent of taman. As a result, the controller/antecedent cannot be reduced to a particular semantic role (e.g. agent) in colloquial Sinhala. As for ‘the restriction’ required in relation to the neutralisation of semantic roles, it is not restricted to the extent that reflexive binding can reliably pick out a particular argument as subject. The antecedent of taman is restricted to the highest argument of some clause (e.g. matrix clause or embedded clause) depending on the binding properties of individual anaphors involved. These binding properties like the requirements of the reflexive verb and the person agreement of taman are independent of syntactic relations that an antecedent may hold. Yet, they play an important role in determining which (highest) argument in the sentence can be the antecedent of taman. Therefore, it is more accurate to say the reflexive binding always picks out the highest argument in an argument structure of a predicate, than to claim it can pick out the grammatical subject of a sentence.

We assume that the reflexive binding in colloquial Sinhala may be best described as an argument structure operation. Manning (1996) argues that the reflexive...
binding is one of a number of constructions that are sensitive to the syntactic argument structure (a-structure), rather to the level of grammatical relations (gr-structure), and presents evidence from a number of languages for which the argument structure-based binding theory is applicable.

3.3.9 Summary

To sum up the discussion so far, we looked at the NP-marking and a number of constructions, which are generally diagnostics of subject in some languages, in order to see if they can be considered subjecthood diagnostics in colloquial Sinhala. We showed that all the constructions discussed so far cannot be considered reliable subjecthood diagnostics in colloquial Sinhala, as there was no restricted neutralisation of semantics roles with regard to the subject in any of those constructions. In the next section, we turn to control constructions in search of evidence for subject in colloquial Sinhala.

3.3.10 Control Constructions

As far as the diagnostics for subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala are concerned, the most useful syntactic test available is control, as it can be used for a wide range of constructions, unlike many others which are only applicable to a limited number of constructions. There are a number of constructions involving control in null arguments. Some of these constructions have been used previously to claim the existence of subject in colloquial Sinhala (see Wijayawardhana et al. (1991), Inman (1993)).

Below, I will present a number of behavioural properties relating to control in infinitive and adjunct phrases. First, I will consider control in infinitival complements of different types. Then, a number of different types of participial adjunct phrases will be looked at.

3.3.10.1 Control in Infinitive Clauses

This construction is also known as ‘Equi NP Deletion’. The unrealised argument in this construction, also called the controllee or equi target, corresponds to an argument in the matrix clause, and is obligatorily controlled by the corresponding argument in the matrix clause. Certain predicates in the infinitive clause optionally allow the unrealised argument to be replaced by a lexical NP, which does not correspond to any
argument in the matrix clause. On this basis, we consider infinitive clauses to be of two kinds: obligatorily controlled infinitive constructions and non-obligatorily controlled infinitive constructions. This non-obligatorily control construction resembles English ‘for - to’ type, ‘John bought a book for the son to read’.

3.3.10.1.1 Obligatorily controlled infinitive constructions

Sentences (39-42) contain unrealised arguments in their infinitival complements. A lexical NP cannot occur in the place of the unrealised argument in these clauses. The controller is obligatorily controlled by one of the arguments in the matrix clause. In both (39) and (40), the controller and Wimale are identified as the same. Hence Wimale controls the missing argument position. In Sinhala, infinitival complements of oona ‘want/need’ (41) also fall under the obligatorily controlled infinitives. Oona does not allow another overt argument to appear by replacing the missing argument. Thus, the parallel sentence in English ‘Siri wants Mala to go home’ is not possible in colloquial Sinhala (41b). The unrealised argument in (42) is controlled by lam`ya ‘child’, which is the lower argument in the matrix clause.

Wimale.NOM [ job.IND find.INF ] attempt_do.VOL.PST
‘Wimale tried to find a job.’

(40) Wimale1 Gune-t [ __, rassaawak denn ] porondu_una.
Wimale-NOM Gune.DAT [ job.IND give.INF ] promise.VOL.PST
‘Wimale promised Gune to give (Gune) a job.’

(41) a. Siri-t [ __, gedʒə yann ] oona.
Siri-DAT [ house.ACC go.INF ] want
‘Siri wants to go home.’

b.* Siri-t [ Mala-wə gedʒə yann ] oona.
Siri-DAT [ Mala-ACC house.ACC go.INF ] want
For: ‘Siri wants Mala to go home.’

(42) guruwəyə laaməyin-t [ __, paadəmə kiyəwann ] kiwwa.
teacher.NOM child.PL-DAT [ lesson.ACC read.INF ] say.VOL.PST
‘The teacher told the children to read the lesson.’

Sentences (39)-(41) correspond to what is generally known as the ‘subject control’ type, in which the highest logical argument (i.e. grammatical subject in the case of English) in the matrix clause is the controller. The lower argument (i.e. the one
corresponding to the object in a parallel English sentence) in the matrix clause is the controller in (42). This type is known as the ‘object control’ type. The matrix verb in (39-40) and the others like egeno gannwa ‘learn’ and patangannwa ‘start’ etc. follow the same pattern of control. These verbs are characterised as ‘Commitment’ type in the control theory proposed by Sag and Pollard (1991), and the ‘Committer’ controls the unrealised argument.\(^{39}\) Oona ‘want/need’ and aasayi ‘like’, etc. are in the group called ‘Orientation’ type. The ‘Experiencer’ participant of this type is the controller. The ‘object control’ sentence (42) corresponds to the third group known as the ‘Influence’ type in Sag and Pollard (1991). This type includes matrix verbs in (42) together with others like anokrwa ‘order’, halokrwa ‘force’ and ugannwa ‘teach’, etc. The controller of verbs in this semantic type is always the ‘Influenced’ participant. Thus, the controller of infinitive constructions is predictable from the semantics of matrix verb.

We now turn to the crucially important question of whether the controllee in obligatorily controlled infinitival complements is the grammatical subject or not. The controllee in this construction is always restricted to the volitional Actor of volitive clauses, regardless of the transitivity of the infinitive predicates involved. This is illustrated by embedded infinitival complements in (39-42) and those volitive infinitival complements like run, dance, listen, etc. in (43). In all grammatically acceptable infinitive clauses of obligatory control, the controllee is the Actor acting intentionally and exercising control over the action. Non-Actor controllees, such as the seer of penenn ‘to see’, the hearer of ñhenn ‘to hear’ and the (involitive) dancer of náenn ‘to dance impulsively’ are not acceptable, as in (43-44):

\(^{39}\) Foley and Van Valin (1984) and later Van Valin and La Polla (1997) also propose a theory of obligatory control based on the semantics of verbs.
There is no neutralisation of semantic roles for syntactic purposes in this construction, as the controllee in obligatorily controlled infinitival complements is always the volitional Actor. Therefore, there is no evidence for syntactic subject.

### 3.3.10.1.2 Semantic effect on Equi-NP-Deletion

There is a strong semantic constraint as to what can be the controllee. The controllee of the obligatorily controlled infinitive construction must be a volitive Actor, as it was shown in the previous section. It is impossible for one to want to, like to, need to, try to, intend to or promise to do something unintentionally. Likewise, one cannot ask, force or order someone to act unintentionally. This also means that infinitival complements in involitive mood cannot appear in obligatorily controlled construction, since unrealised controllees of such clauses are non-Actors or involitive Actors.

This fact that the controllee should be an Actor is consistent with similar patterns in many languages, i.e. Inuit (Eskimo, Alaska, Manning (1996)), Tagalog (Austronesian, Philippines, Kroeger (1993), Manning (1996)) and Korean (Kroeger 1993). Many authors have pointed out the semantic conditioning of the equi construction (Fodor (1974), Sag and Pollard (1991) and Kroeger (1993), among others). Manning (1996) has shown that the controlleehood is generally a property of

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40 The verb *yannɔ* ‘go’ in *usɔ yannɔ* ‘height-go.INF’ is a morphologically volitive verb. However, *usɔ yannɔ* ‘become tall’ as a complex predicate implies no agency or control.

41 Although the Actor is ‘the most usual choice of equi target’ in Tagalog, the nominative subject can also be an equi target in constructions where the infinitive is marked with the non-volitive mood (Kroeger 1993:38).
Actor. Following Fodor (1974), Kroeger proposes a semantic constraint on control for Tagalog equi predicates. This constraint (45) applies only to equi-type predicates in which the controller is always the Actor. It is also to be noted that there exists another type of infinitive control construction in Tagalog, which Kroeger refers to as ‘Subject-Subject Equi’. This construction is subject to syntactic constraints, but not to the semantic constraint given in (45). In the Subject-Subject Equi the equi target is not an Actor, but the subject.

(45) Control Constraint (Kroeger 1993:76, based on Fodor 1974):

a. Equi predicates require that their complement express a volitional action.
b. The controllee must be construed as the Actor of the action.

It appears that the Kroeger’s Control Constraint applies precisely to controlled predicates and controllees in obligatorily controlled infinitives in colloquial Sinhala.

However, this semantic restriction does not apply to controllers, as they can be Undergoers as well as volitional Actors. This is shown in such examples as (41a) and (46). The matrix clause need not be in volitional mood and therefore controllers sometimes can be non-Actors.

(46) a. keenti gihilla, Gune-‡ lamʊya-‡ ⌹, gedə yannə) kiyəwuna.
anger go.PST.PTCP Gune-DAT child-DAT [ home go.INF ] say.INV.PST
‘Having got angry, Gune (unintentionally) told the child to go home.’

b. lamʊya-‡ ⌹, aməxə pantiwəyə-yə yannə] siddə una.
child-DAT [ extra class.PL-DAT go.VOL.INF ] happen.PST
‘The child had /happened to go to extra classes.’

Siri.DAT [ book.IND read.VOL.INF ] think.INV.PRE
‘Siri thought of reading a book on impulse’ (It just came to his mind).

Thus, there appears to be no constraint as to what can be the controller.

3.3.10.1.3 Non-obligatorily controlled infinitive constructions

In this construction, matrix verbs do not necessarily indicate the referential dependency between arguments of the matrix verb and those of the infinitival complement, and therefore do not demand a particular argument be obligatorily controlled by an argument in the matrix clause. This means that, unlike in obligatorily controlled infinitives, there may not be any null controllee arguments in this
construction, since they can optionally be replaced with lexical NPs. However, any argument position that is unrealised may be controlled by an argument in the matrix clause, with which the unrealised argument may have a referentially dependency. In this regard, this construction patterns with the English ‘for - to’ construction. As shown in (47a) and (48a), the unrealised controller of the infinitival complement is controlled by the highest argument in the matrix clause. This controller can be replaced with a noun like lamɔya ‘child’, which is not referentially dependent on the highest argument or any argument of the matrix clause: see (47b) and (48b).

\[(47)\]  
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{taatta₁ } [\_₁ \text{ padinnə }] \text{ baisikɔraŋ } \text{ genaawa.} \\
& \text{father.NOM} \ [ \text{ride.VOL.INF}] \text{ bike.IND.ACC} \text{ bring.VOL.PST} \\
& \text{‘The father brought a bicycle to ride.’}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{taatta } [\text{ lamɔya-} \_ \text{ padinnə }] \text{ baisikɔraŋ } \text{ genaawa.} \\
& \text{father.NOM} \ [ \text{child-DAT} \text{ ride.INF}] \text{ bike.IND.ACC} \text{ bring.VOL.PST} \\
& \text{‘The father brought a bicycle for the child to ride.’}
\end{align*}\]

\[(48)\]  
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Gune₁ } [\_₁ \text{ paaganno }] \text{ bimɔŋ } \text{ wæli dæmma.} \\
& \text{Gune.NOM} \ [ \text{tread_on.VOL.INF}] \text{ ground-DAT} \text{ sand.ACC} \text{ put.VOL.PST} \\
& \text{‘Gune spread sand on the ground to trample on.’}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{Gune } [\text{ lamɔya-} \_ \text{ paaganno }] \text{ bimɔŋ } \text{ wæli dæmma.} \\
& \text{Gune.NOM} \ [ \text{child-DAT} \text{ tread_on.VOL.INF}] \text{ ground-DAT} \text{ sand.ACC} \text{ put.VOL.PST} \\
& \text{‘Gune spread sand on the ground for the child to trample on.’}
\end{align*}\]

In (a) sentences of (49)-(50) the controller is not overtly present and hence expects to be controlled by an argument in the matrix clause. However, these sentences are unacceptable, again because of the controller not being an Actor. Thus, even in non-obligatorily controlled clauses such as these, the unrealised controller is restricted to volitional Actors. This is essentially a semantic restriction. (49a) is expected to mean that Gune went to a party in order to listen to songs, as the English gloss indicates. With the verb giya ‘went’, the Actor in matrix clause creates an intentional action of which the main purpose or the goal cannot be an unintentional one. Similarly in (50a), the unrealised argument is expected to be controlled by an argument in the matrix clause. The only acceptable controller is the higher argument (because it requires an animate participant as the dancer). However, as mentioned before, one cannot purposely play a drum in order to dance impulsively. Because of this semantic anomaly, (50a) is unacceptable.
(49) a. *Gune, [di yi+k®-i® giya.]
   Gune.NOM [song.PL.ACC hear.INV.INF] party.ACC go.VOL.PST

   *‘Gune went to a party to hear songs.’

b. Gune [Sita-t® æhenn®] sinduwak kiwwa.
   Gune.NOM [Sita-DAT hear.INV.INF] song.ACC.IND say.VOL.PST

   ‘Gune sang a song for Sita to hear.’

   Gune.NOM [song.PL hear.INV.INF] radio_DEF put.VOL.PST

   ‘Gune turned on the radio for the songs to be heard.’

(50) a.*taatta, [na®-æ>J® gæhuwa.
   father.NOM [dance.INV.INF] drum.ACC hit.VOL.PST

   *‘The father played the drum to dance (impulsively).’

b. taatta [lam®-æ>J® na®-æ>] gæhuwa.
   father.NOM [child.DAT dance.INV.INF] drum.ACC hit.VOL.PST

   ‘The father played the drum (so that) the child would dance (impulsively).’

Now consider (b) sentences of (49)-(50). They show that when there are no unrealised arguments, infinitive clauses need not be in volitive mood, and can contain non-Actors. These sentences do not involve controlled constructions, and can be viewed as two separate events, of which the first causes or results in the second one. The resulting event may be an intentional or unintentional one. For instance, turning on a radio does not necessarily mean that the Actor in the matrix clause wants to listen to songs, but it could be for others to hear (49c). This sentence does not have the meaning *Gune turned on the radio to listen to the songs*. Further, it is also to be noted that in this sentence with its involitive infinitive, there is no unrealised argument that is either obligatorily or arbitrarily controlled.

Also in this construction, as in the obligatorily controlled construction, we observed that the semantic constraint is imposed on the unrealised controllee argument in the infinitive construction. It is to be noted that the term ‘controllee’ in the above sections is used to refer to the highest argument (i.e. understood subject) of embedded infinitival complements. Sometimes more than one unrealised argument position occurs in these clauses, and their referential dependency seems to depend on many factors, such as the semantics of the matrix verb, volitivity of infinitive predicate and the context in which they occur.
Here, our aim was to find out if the controllee (i.e. the equi target) and the controllers of infinitival complements are syntactically or semantically constrained. As we observed so far, the contrast between semantic roles cannot be neutralised in the position of the controllee/equi target. Therefore, the controllee in Sinhala equi predicates is always a volitive agent. As for the controller of the equi target, there is a neutralisation of semantic roles. However, this neutralisation is not a restricted one. The controller can be either the highest argument (i.e. subject) or the lower argument (i.e. object) of the matrix clause depending on the semantics of the verb. Thus, there is no evidence for subject in infinitive control constructions that we have considered so far.

3.3.10.1.4 Anaphoric Control

Lexical Functional Grammar proposes two types of control: the Anaphoric Control and Functional Control (Bresnan 1982b, 2001). For an argument to be functionally controlled by another argument, both arguments should be identical in all features including case. On the other hand, the anaphorically controlled argument would bear features like case, number and person that are different from its controller.

We assume that Sinhala infinitives belong to the Anaphoric Control type, but not to Functional Control, in which the controller and the controllee must be grammatical subjects. In Sinhala, controllee’s semantic relations (i.e. agent, patient, etc.) cannot be neutralised, as shown above. Therefore, the controllee cannot be proved to be the syntactic subject in order to treat this construction under Functional Control. What we have seen in Sinhala is simply a semantic coreference between the controller and controllee. Thus, the controller-controllee relation is not syntactically dependent, and there cannot be a syntactic unification in f-structures, if these infinitives undergo Functional Control.

3.3.10.1.5 Modal verbs and non-modal verbs

Now we present a number of sentences which may seem as if they contradict the assumptions made earlier.

Consider sentences in (51). The controllee in (51a) is a volitive Actor, as expected. However, at first sight, the sentences in (51b-c) may look as if they contradict the semantic conditioning on controllees such that they cannot be non-Actors.
In (51a), the infinitive verb denotes a volitive action. Therefore, the controllee is an Actor, and is controlled by the matrix argument (as shown by the English gloss). This is consistent with the semantic conditioning on controllees, as expected. All the sentences have intransitive infinitive clauses. While in (51a) the infinitive is in volitive mood, the other two have infinitive verbs in involitive mood. What appears to be the missing argument is an agent in (51a), an experiencer in (51b) and a patient in (51c). The case on the matrix argument reflects the semantic relation that the argument holds with the infinitive predicate (agent: nominative, experiencer: dative, patient: accusative). The experiencer and the patient argument in infinitive predicates of (51b) and (51c) look like controllees of those clauses. However, they are not. Further, (51b-c) do not contradict the observations we have made earlier regarding the semantic conditioning on controllees, nor do they illustrate a situation where semantic relations (agent, experiencer and patient, in this case) have been neutralised for syntactic purposes, providing evidence for the GRs. Below, we present an explanation for these sentences, and illustrate that sentence (51a) has a structure which is different from that of (51b) and (51c).

Certain Sinhala verbs can function as main verbs as well as auxiliary verbs. An auxiliary verb adds modality to the clause, and its auxiliary meaning can be different from what it has as a main verb: see Table 3-4, for some examples. Here, we use the term ‘auxiliary verbs’, adapted from Gair (1970), to refer to those verbs and adjectives that function as modal predicates.
Verbal predicates | Meaning as a non-auxiliary verb | Meaning as an auxiliary verb
---|---|---
yanwà | ‘go’ | ‘going to’ ‘about to’
enwà | ‘come’ | ‘coming/going to’ ‘about to’
balwà | ‘look’ | ‘try to’
gannwà | ‘take’ | ‘get to’
innwà | ‘exist/be’ (animate) | ‘is/are waiting/hoping’

Adjectives* | | |
puluwan | ‘can’ (ability) | ‘can/might’ (possibility)
one | ‘want/need’ (necessity) | ‘must’ (obligation)

Table 3-4: Modal Verbs

The structure of a given sentence is assumed to be different depending on whether the sentence has an auxiliary verb or not. We assume that sentences (51a-c) have the structure given in (52a-c) respectively:

(52) a. [ [ lamỳá1 ] [ _1 sellam_k vérannó ] ] [ yanwà ] ]
    child.NOM play_do.VOL.INF go.VOL.PRE

    ‘The child is going to play.’

b. [ [ lamỳá-fó ] ] [ xè'dennó yanwà ] ]
    child-DAT cry.INF go.VOL.PRE

    ‘The child is about to cry.’

c. [ [ lamỳá-wó ] [ bím-só ] ] [ wàγennó yanwà ] ]
    child-ACC ground-DAT fall.INF go.VOL.PRE

    ‘The child is going to fall to the ground.’

There is sufficient evidence for the structural differences in clause types involving auxiliary verbs and those without them, as it will be shown below.42 We argue that the matrix verb and the infinitive verb in (51a) do not form a single constituent, as depicted in (52a). However, the main verb and the modal auxiliary form a single constituent, as shown by (52b-c). Therefore, the two verbs xè'dennó ‘cry’ and wàγennó ‘fall’, which we have glossed as infinitives in our examples (see 52b-c), are

* These forms have distributional characteristics of adjectives. They can function attributively as well as predicatively, and unlike verbs they do not take tense marking. puluwan and one are sometimes referred to in linguistic literature as modal adjectives (Gair 1970).

42 The structural difference between auxiliary and non-auxiliary verbs shown here was first assumed by Wijayawardhana et al. (1991), although they do not provide any evidence to support their assumption.
not infinitives as far as their function in these constructions is concerned, although they morphologically resemble the infinitive form.\(^{43}\) We argue that the auxiliary form \(yan\tilde{w}a\) simply adds the modality to the preceding main verb. On the other hand, \(yan\tilde{w}a\) in (52a) is itself the main verb. It is also to be noted that \(yan\tilde{w}a\) ‘go’ is morphologically volitive (i.e. contains the volitive morpheme), but it can occur with the involitive meaning in some instances.\(^{44}\) We believe that this modal verb is one such form, which does not carry the volitive meaning.

Below we provide three tests to support our claim. They are: the movement of verb as a single constituent, case assignments of arguments and the absence of two modal auxiliaries in a sentence.

**A constituent test:** The matrix verb \(yan\tilde{w}a\) ‘go’ in (52a) can be separated from the infinitival complement, and can appear in any position of the sentence, as shown by (53).

\[
\begin{align*}
(53) & \quad \text{a. } lam\tilde{\gamma}a, \quad yan\tilde{w}a \quad [\ldots] \quad sellam_k\varphiann\tilde{a}]. \quad \text{(cf. 52a)} \\
& \quad \text{child.NOM go.VOL.PRE [ play_do.VOL.INF]} \\
& \quad \text{‘The child is going to play.’} \\
& \quad \text{b. } [\ldots] \quad sellam_k\varphiann\tilde{a} \quad lam\tilde{\gamma}a, \quad yan\tilde{w}a. \\
& \quad \text{[ play_do.VOL.INF]} \quad \text{child.NOM go.VOL.PRE} \\
& \quad \text{‘The child is going to play.’}
\end{align*}
\]

The fact that the infinitival complement can be separated from the main verb indicates that they belong to two different constituents. The situation is completely different with those involving auxiliary verbs (52b-c). For instance, the auxiliary verb cannot be separated from the main verb. This is shown by the ungrammaticality of (54a-b).

\[^{43}\text{In Sinhala, verb forms that appear to be identical to infinitives occur in a variety of constructions, e.g. the imperative form }\text{yanna ‘please go’}.\]

\[^{44}\text{For instance, in the following, the same verb is used with involitive meaning:}\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lam\tilde{\gamma}a \ ati g p\text{iduru ahak\text{\v{a}}} yan\tilde{w}a.}
\quad \text{child \quad INST \quad straw \quad waste.go.VOL.PRE}
\end{align*}
\]

‘This boy might waste the straw.’\quad \text{(Gair 1970:78)}

(The boy does not intend to waste the straw. But because of the boy’s negligence or some other reason it is wasted, and the boy is the cause of it.)
Thus, in the modal construction the main verb and the auxiliary verb form a single constituent. This construction does not have an infinitival complement in it.

**Case assignment:** The case assignment of arguments in semantically constrained (see Inman (1993), Henadeerage (1995)). Generally the volitive agent is assigned nominative, the experiencer dative and the patient accusative. The case assignment of arguments further supports our claim regarding the structural difference in sentences (52). Let us consider a sentence with an infinitival complement. The matrix verb assigns the case to the matrix subject, since it is one of its arguments. Any argument that occurs within the infinitival complement is assigned case by the infinitive verb. Thus, as we expect, in (52a) the volitive matrix verb assigns the nominative case to its subject. When the matrix verb is involitive, it assigns the appropriate case to the subject. To illustrate this point, we change the matrix verb of (52a) to a different verb, which is in involitive mood. This is shown in (55):
Thus, we assume that the auxiliary verb does not assign case to the subject argument, since it is not the main verb in the clause. It only adds the modality to the main verb. In this case, the main verb in involitive form assigns case to its arguments.

**Only one auxiliary per clause:** In our data, it appears that only one auxiliary verb is allowed per sentence. Regardless of the accuracy of this assumption, which is subject to further investigation, it is easy to assume that two auxiliaries with two contradictory meanings cannot occur in a single sentence. This explains the unacceptability of the combination of modal auxiliary *yanwa* ‘about to’ with *oono* ‘must’ and/or *puluwan* ‘might’. In (57a), the auxiliary *oono* ‘must’ and *puluwan* ‘might’ can occur with *yanwa* ‘go’ which we argue to be a non-modal verb. However, same auxiliaries cannot occur and add modality to sentences in (57b-c), since they already contain another modal auxiliary, which has a contradictory meaning.

![Infinitival complement, main verb, auxiliary verb](image)

(57) a. *lamɔŋɔ* [sellɔ̀m_kɔ́nnɔ] [yan̕ɔ] [oonɔ/puluwan].

child.NOM [play.do.VOL.INF] [go.VOL.INF must/might]

‘The child must/might go to play.’

b. *lamɔŋɔ* [pɛ̃dɛ̀nɔ] [yan̕ɔ] [oonɔ/puluwan].

child-DAT [cry_INV.INF go.VOL.INF must/might]

For: ‘The child must/might start crying (involuntarily).’

c. *lamɔŋɔ* [wɛ̃dɛ̀nɔ] [yan̕ɔ] [oonɔ/puluwan].

child-ACC ground-DAT [fall.INV.INF go.VOL.INF must/might]

For: ‘The child must/might accidentally fall on to the ground.’

45 Notice that the main verb *yanwa* ‘go’ changes to what looks like the infinitive form when the auxiliary verb is added to it.
Thus, the unacceptability in (57b-c) is due to the presence of the second auxiliary verb. These sentences confirm our assumption that (51a) is structurally different from (51b) and (51c), and that (51b-c) do not contain infinitival complements, unlike (51a). In other words, what we want to prove in this section with a number of tests is that (51b-c) cannot be treated as equi control types, and therefore do not contain unrealised controller arguments.

3.3.10.1.6 Summary

In this section under ‘Control in Infinitive Clauses’, we analysed two types of infinitive constructions, as a subjecthood diagnostic in order to see if the clause structure patterns in these constructions can be explained in terms of grammatical relations or semantic relations. We observed that the controller, or the equi target is a semantic pivot, and is subject to semantic constraints. Thus, only volitive Actors can be controlleres, and there is no neutralisation of semantic relations in this position.

Generally the equi target is the grammatical subject in some languages (e.g. English). On the other hand, as mentioned before, it has also been shown in the literature (see Manning (1996) and Kroeger (1993)) that the ability to be controller in many languages is a property of the Actor. Among these two groups of languages, Sinhala belongs to the latter type.

As for the controller in infinitive control constructions, it also does not throw any light on the existence of syntactic subject. As we show, controllers can be Actors or non-Actors. Therefore, there is a neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to the controller position in these constructions. However, it is not a restricted neutralisation.

3.3.10.2 Control in Participle Adjunct Phrases

Control in participle adjuncts is a common behavioural property of subjects, and has been used as a diagnostic for subject argument relations in many languages (see, for instance, while clauses in English (Andrews 1985), kontɔ (while) clauses in Malayalam (Mohanan 1982), \(V+ke\) clauses in Panjabi and Lahanda (Bhata 1990), -karra clauses in Warlpiri (Simpson 1991) and in similar adverbial clauses in Hindi (T. Mohanan 1990:168)). Sinhala has several participle adjuncts that allow one of its arguments in the adjunct phrase to be deleted if it is coreferential with one of the arguments in the matrix clause. These adjuncts include: \(gama\) clauses, verb forms marked with -la, and
-kotə, -ddi, -aamə, and the reduplicated form of the verb. Some of these forms allow optional deletion of arguments, while others allow only obligatory deletion.

In what follows, we discuss control in four of these participle adjunct constructions in detail. They are: -la participles, kotə participles, gamaŋ participles and participles of reduplicated verb forms. These constructions have been used in previous studies to demonstrate the existence of GRs in Sinhala. The Table 3-5 indicates a number of studies that we are aware of, which have employed these constructions to claim the existence of subject in Sinhala.⁴⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>-la</th>
<th>kotə</th>
<th>gamaŋ</th>
<th>reduplicated verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gair et al. (1989)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wijayawardhana et al. (1991)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kariyakarawana (1998)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inman (1993)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3-5: Previous studies which employed participle clauses as subjecthood tests**

We will demonstrate that not all the above constructions are useful in determining GRs in Sinhala, as some of them do not show a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles. A restricted neutralisation can be found only in gamaŋ clauses and participle clauses of reduplicated verbs.

### 3.3.10.2.1 -La Participle Construction

The suffix -la is the perfect tense marker, which can be added to verb bases as in (58). It has a meaning similar to English perfect tense. This is shown in (59). Further, when a -la clause occurs with another clause in the process of sentence-coordination, the meaning is temporal in such sentences. This construction is sometimes referred to as ‘conjunctive participle’ in literature (Gair et al. 1989). An example for this construction is given in (60), in which, Siri, the highest argument in the -la clause is coreferential with that of the main clause. Therefore, it is deleted and controlled by the

---

highest argument in the matrix clause. The problem with this argument for subject is that we also find sentences like (61), in which an argument need not be obligatorily deleted and controlled by another argument in the sentence.

\[(58)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kəɾə-} & \quad \text{‘do’ > kəɾəla} \\
\text{kapə-} & \quad \text{‘cut’ > kapəla} \\
\text{daa-} & \quad \text{‘put’ > daala} \\
\text{daki-} & \quad \text{‘see’ > dəkəla}^47 \\
\text{ya-} & \quad \text{‘go’ > gihilla}^48
\end{align*}
\]

\[(59)\]
\[
\text{Siri} \quad \text{pantiyəŋ} \quad \text{eliyə-fə} \quad \text{gihilla}.
\]
\[
\text{Siri.NOM} \quad \text{class.INST} \quad \text{out-DAT} \quad \text{go.PST.PTCP}
\]
‘Siri has gone out of the class room.’

\[(60)\]
\[
\text{Siri}, \quad [\text{pantiyəŋ} \quad \text{eliyə-fə} \quad \text{gihilla}] \quad \text{Gune-fə} \quad \text{bərna}.
\]
\[
\text{Siri.NOM} \quad [\quad \text{class.INST} \quad \text{out-DAT} \quad \text{go.PST.PTCP}] \quad \text{Gune-DAT} \quad \text{blame.PST}
\]
‘Siri went out from the class room and blamed Gune.’

\[(61)\]
\[
\text{a.} \quad \text{Siri} \quad \text{pantiyəŋ} \quad \text{eliyə-fə} \quad \text{gihilla},
\]
\[
\text{Siri.NOM} \quad \text{class.INST} \quad \text{out-DAT} \quad \text{go.PST.PTCP},
\]
\[
\text{guruwərəya} \quad \text{Gune-fə} \quad \text{bərna}.
\]
\[
\text{(cf. 60)} \quad \text{teacher.NOM} \quad \text{Gune-DAT} \quad \text{blame.PST}
\]
‘With Siri gone out of the class room, the teacher blamed Gune.’

\[
\text{b.} \quad \text{amma} \quad \text{gamə-fə} \quad \text{gihilla},
\]
\[
\text{mother.NOM} \quad \text{village-DAT} \quad \text{go.PST.PTCP},
\]
\[
\text{mamə} \quad \text{serəno} \quad \text{gedəwə-fə} \quad \text{kəranə} \quad \text{oona}.
\]
\[
\text{1SG.NOM} \quad \text{all} \quad \text{house-work.ACC} \quad \text{do.INF} \quad \text{must}
\]
‘With my mother gone to the village, I have to do all the housework.’
\[
\text{(Gair et al.1989:101)}
\]

It appears that in this construction the highest argument may be deleted if it is coreferential with another argument. In other words, -la clauses allow overt arguments if there are no coreferential arguments.

Gair et al. argue that the type of sentences in (61) belong to a construction that they call ‘absolutive participles’, which are said to be distinct from conjunctive

\[^47\] Depending on the verb class, the stem of some verbs can change when suffixed with -la (see Karunatillake 1992:160 and Fairbanks et al 1993:296).

\[^48\] Ya- ‘go’ is an irregular verb.
participles. Gair et al. point out that conjunctive participles have the following properties: ‘obligatory subject coreference’, ‘not having possible overt subjects’ and ‘being C-commanded by main subject’. On the other hand, absolutive participles are shown to lack these properties. However, we demonstrate below that even in so-called -la conjunctive participles the ‘Obligatory subject coreference’ does not always occur. First of all, we look at the difference between these two constructions on the basis of obligatory deletion (i.e. ‘no possible overt subjects’).

Compare the two sentences in (60) with (61a), which are considered conjunctive participles and absolutive participles by Gair et al., respectively. When an overt argument NP like guruwərəyə ‘teacher’ occurs filling the null argument position in (60), such a sentence can be treated as an absolutive type: see (61a). Therefore, the obligatory deletion can be best seen as a property that distinguishes the two types.

Gair et al. use sentences like (62) to illustrate the obligatory nature of deletion. Note that participle adjunct clauses in these sentences occur in the unmarked position.\(^{49}\) (a) sentence in (62) has a participle clause with an unrealised argument. However, (62b) and (62c) are unacceptable, since the participle contains a lexical NP.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(62) a. } & \text{mamə} & [\_\_ \text{gedərə} \text{gihilla}] & \text{kəəmə} & \text{kəəwə.} \\
& \text{1SG.NOM} & [ & \text{house.ACC} & \text{go.PST.PTCP}] & \text{food.ACC} & \text{eat.PST} \\
& \text{‘I went home and ate.’} & \quad \text{(Gair et al. 1989:99)} \\
\text{b.* } & \text{mamə} & [\text{Kalyani} \text{gedərə} \text{gihilla}] & \text{kəəmə} & \text{kəəwə.} \\
& \text{1SG.NOM} & [\text{Kalyani.NOM} & \text{house.ACC} & \text{go.PST.PTCP}] & \text{food.ACC} & \text{eat.PST} \\
& \text{For: ‘Kalyani went home and I ate.’} & \quad \text{(Gair et al. 1989:99)} \\
\text{c.* } & \text{mamə} & [\text{matə} \text{saddəyəkə} \text{ṭəhila}] & \text{diwəwə.} \\
& \text{1SG.NOM} & [\text{1SG.DAT} & \text{noise.IND.ACC} & \text{hear.INV.PST.PTCP}] & \text{run.PST} \\
& \text{For: ‘I heard a sound and ran.’} & \quad \text{(Gair et al. 1989:106 fn)}
\end{align*}
\]

On the basis of the ungrammaticality of (62b-c), Gair et al. argue that conjunctive participles do not allow ‘overt subjects’. However, we illustrate that the ungrammaticality is not due to them being conjunctive participles. Compare the ungrammatical (62b-c) with (63a-b), in which the same adverbial participles occur, but in a different order.

\(^{49}\) The unmarked constituent order is SOV. The unmarked is position for participle adjuncts is S[ ]OV.
a. Kalyani gedwar gihilla, mamakawawona.

Kalyani.NOM house.ACC go.PST.PTCP, 1SG.NOM food.ACC eat.PST

‘Kalyani went home and I ate/With Kalyani having gone home, I ate.’

b. matwar saddiyak awhila, mamadiwona.

1SG.DAT noise.IND.ACC hear.INV.PST.PTCP 1SG.NOM run.PST

‘I heard a sound and I ran.’ (Gair et al. 1989:106 fn)

In these sentences, the adverbial clauses do not occur inside the main clause constituent. When a participle clause does not have any unrealised arguments, it is not a controlled clause. Such clauses can be considered as finite clauses similar to that in (59). Therefore, they are not allowed to be embedded within the main clause. In other words, an embedded adverbial clause appears to be acceptable only when it is a controlled clause (see, for instance (62a)) or a finite clause, which is a subcategorised sentential complement of the main verb.

What can be considered as a conjunctive participle clause can easily be transformed into an absolutive type clause by filling the unrealised argument with a lexical NP: see for instance (60) and (61a). On the other hand, by replacing the highest argument in a -la clause (in 61b) with a null argument, what Gair et al. consider as an absolutive type clause can be turned into a conjunctive participle clause like (64). Thus, simply the absence or the presence of an overt NP distinguishes one type from the other.

(64) amma, gamwar gihilla,

mother.NOM village-DAT go.PST.PTCP,

_ l seranawar gawar warann oona. (cf. 61b)

all house-work.ACC do.INF must

‘The mother has to go to the village and do all the housework.’

The ‘obligatory subject coreference’, the second distinguishing property of -la clauses in Gair et al., does not seem hold true in some instances, as it will be shown

50 Gair et al. say that (63b) is “grammatical, though unlikely except in special circumstances given the general sparseness in pronoun use” (1989:106 fn. 4).

51 For instance, the following sentence has a sentential complement:

matwar [Siri sindu kiyowawa] awhuna.

1SG.DAT [Siri.NOM song.PL.ACC say.PRE] hear.INV.PST

‘I heard Siri was singing songs.’
-La clauses have been used as a subjecthood diagnostic in Sinhala (see Gair et al. and Wijayawardhana et al., among others).\textsuperscript{52} Consider examples like (62a) above from Gair et al. and (65) from Wijayawardhana et al. (1991:131):

(65) \[ \text{Devika-DAT hungry be.PST.PTCP, food ACC all eat.INV.PST} \]

‘Devika was hungry and (without meaning to) ate all the food.’

Examples such as these that were used to claim the obligatory subject coreference do not contain more than one potential controller in a single sentence. The unrealised (subject) argument is coreferential with highest argument in the other clause, since there are no other arguments that they can be coreferential with. Therefore, it is possible to show that there is an obligatory subject coreference in these sentences. However, we will below show that in sentences involving a number of potential controllers, the ‘obligatory subject coreference’ does not hold.

In certain inter-clausal constructions involving null arguments, the control or the coreferentiality between arguments may be contextually dependant, especially when there is more than one possible controller. Therefore, the control in such constructions cannot be argued to be strictly syntactic. In the following examples, the control or coreferentiality between arguments is determined by the context.

(66) a. \[ _{1/2} \text{ged`r `d`la }, \text{amma, lam`zin-j`r}; \]

[ house.LOC be.PST.PTCP], mother.NOM child.PL-DAT

‘Having stayed at home, the mother prepared the food for the children.’

b. \[ _{1/2} \text{nika`g ged`r `d`la }, \text{amma, lam`zin-j`r; h`anna.} \]

[ idly house.LOC be.PST.PTCP], mother.NOM child.PL-DAT blame.PST

‘The mother blamed the children, for being at home doing nothing.’

c. \[ _{1/2} \text{hor`kam_kar`la }, \text{polisive`y, miniha-w`r; atwa`gadw`r`g`a tatta.} \]

[ stealing do.PST.PTCP], police.INST man-ACC custody-DAT take.PST

‘The police arrested the man for stealing.’

Lit: ‘The police took the man into custody for stealing.’

\textsuperscript{52} Unlike Gair et al., Wijayawardhana et al. do not distinguish two subtypes within -la participles. They point out that a subject can only be deleted if it is conferential with the subject in the other clause.
b. John        miniha-wa   paagala,        hinaa_una.
            man-ACC   step_on.PST.PTCP,     laugh_become.PST

‘John stepped on the man and laughed.’ (The man was sleeping on the floor. John thought he would wake him up.)

The structure of (66a) and (66b) is the same. However, the controller is the highest argument in (66a), while the lower dative argument is the controller in (66b). Again in (66c), the context does not allow the matrix highest argument to be the controller. In (67), it is the choice of the verb or the event that tells us the controller of the null argument. With the verb hinaa_una ‘laughed’, the nominative argument, the agent in the matrix clause controls the null argument, as the man who has been affected in this incident is unlikely to be the one who laughed. On the other hand, the accusative patient in the matrix clause is the controller of the null argument with the verb tuwaaluna ‘injured’, as the man is the one who is most likely to get injured in this situation.

Thus, sentences considered so far illustrate that the context has a significant effect on control in these clauses. There is a neutralisation of semantic roles in controller and controllee positions. However, this neutralisation is not a restricted one, as any argument can be a controller depending on the context. This construction cannot, therefore be explained purely on the syntactic (or semantic) basis, and cannot be treated as a reliable subject test. Further, we have shown that the ‘obligatory subject coreference’ in conjunctive participles is only applicable when there are no other potential arguments that the null argument can be coreferential with.

3.3.10.2.2 Kot Participle Construction

These participles are formed by adding the particle kot to the present verbal adjectival form, and their tense is determined by the main verb. Kot participles denote actions simultaneous to that of the main verb. These participles are not required to have obligatory null arguments that must be obligatorily controlled by any argument in the main clause. When an argument is unrealised, it may be controlled by another argument. Sometimes, unrealised arguments may also have arbitrary control. For instance, consider (68) from (Gair et al. 1989:98):

(68) a. John        miniha-wa   paagala,        hinaa_una.
            man-ACC   step_on.PST.PTCP,     laugh_become.PST
This sentence is ambiguous as shown by the glosses. The control is not obligatory, rather it can be arbitrary. Example (69a) has two potential controllers. Therefore, either of them can be the controller of the null argument, hence, the ambiguity.

On the other hand, in (69b), the lower argument is the controller. Even with two potential controllers, this sentence is not ambiguous, since the context does not allow the highest argument to be the controller (i.e. one cannot do something like hitting, while sleeping).

This construction has also been employed as a subjecthood diagnostic in Wijayawardhana et al. (1991). The following are two examples from Wijayawardhana et al., and can be compared with those given above:

These sentences are perfectly acceptable. The control relations do show that the highest arguments in both clauses are the same regardless of the difference in case and
semantic roles they hold. These two examples further show a neutralisation of semantic roles (e.g. agent and experiencer) in the controller position. However, we argue that these sentences and the test itself illustrate no evidence for GRs in this language. The reason for the control relations as they are in these sentences is due to two reasons. Firstly, there are no other arguments in the sentence that can be controllers. So, there is no conflict as to which argument can and should control. Secondly, the context in each sentence determines the control relations.

3.3.10.2.3 *Gamag* Participle Construction

*Gamag* occurs with the present verbal adjectival form of the verb. This construction indicates a simultaneous action with that of the matrix clause. *Gamag* adjunct clauses require that the highest argument must be non-overt and obligatorily controlled by the highest argument in the matrix clauses. In this respect, they are similar to English *while* clauses and Malayalam *konto* clauses (Mohanan 1982).

The nature of this construction is illustrated in the following sentences:

(71) a. __ 1/*2 kæremo kanogamaŋ, Wimale1 Siri-t2 katícõ_kola. food.ACC eat.PRE.VADJ PTG Wimale.NOM Siri-DAT speech_do.PST

‘While eating, Wimale spoke to Siri.’

b. *Wimale1, kæremo kanogamaŋ, Siri __1/*1, katícõ_kola. Wimale.NOM food.ACC eat.PRE.VADJ PTG Siri.NOM speech_do.PST

For: ‘While Wimale was eating, Siri spoke (to Wimale/someone).’

c. *api kataa_károŋ gamag, lamča-t̬ paadam körımõ bò. 1PL.NOM speech_do.PRE.VADJ PTG child-DAT study do.INF can.NEG

For: ‘When we talk, the child cannot study.’

The highest argument, but not the lower argument in the matrix clause controls the unrealised argument position in the adjunct phrase (71a). The highest argument of the

53 For instance, the NP mother with the dative case is an experiencer in the adverbial clause of (70b). At the same time, it has an agent function in the main clause. It would be assigned nominative case if it appeared overtly as an argument of this main clause.

54 When it occurs with the perfect verbal adjective, it has the meaning ‘as soon as’, as in:

beet beepu gamag, lefd sannipó_wenne násõ. medicine drink.PST.VADJ PTG sickness.PL cure_become NEG

‘As soon as (one) takes medicine, the sickness is not necessarily cured.’
adjunct phrase cannot be controlled by an argument other than the highest one in the matrix clause (71b). Further, as (71c) illustrates, the highest arguments in the adjunct phrase and the main clause must be coreferential. Otherwise, the sentence is unacceptable.

Another characteristic of gamaŋ participles is that the highest argument in the main clause must occur overtly, and must control the unrealised highest argument of the participle clause. The following sentences help determine the structure of sentences that contain gamaŋ participles. Let us consider the case assignment of highest argument in (72a):

(72) a. lamɔya/*lamɔya, sellam kɔɔmɔ gamaŋ, sarpɔyek  pɔguna.
child-DAT/*child.NOM play do.VOL.PRE.VADJ PTG serpent.IND tread_on.INV.PST

‘While playing, the child accidentally stepped on a serpent.’

b. [lamɔya/*lamɔya, [__ sellam kɔɔmɔ gamaŋ], sarpɔyek  pɔguna ].
child-DAT/*child.NOM play do.VOL.PRE.VADJ PTG serpent.IND tread_on.INV.PST

c. [[__, sellam kɔɔmɔ gamaŋ], lamɔya/*lamɔya, sarpɔyek  pɔguna ].
play do.VOL.PRE.VADJ PTG, child-DAT/*child.NOM serpent.IND tread_on.INV.PST

d. sellam kɔɔmɔ gamaŋ, lamɔya/*lamɔya-ɔ mal gaha  pɔguna.
play do.VOL.PRE.VADJ PTG child-NOM/*child.DAT flower.ACC tread_on.VOL.PST

‘While playing, the child (purposely) trod on the flowering tree.’

In (72a-b), the matrix clause is in involitive mood, and the gamaŋ clause is in volitive mood. The NP child is the highest argument in both clauses. For this argument, only the dative case is acceptable, but not the nominative case, as shown in (72a). This indicates that the matrix verb (i.e. the involitive one) has assigned case to it, but not the embedded volitive verb. If embedded verb in the adverbial clause assigned the case to the NP in the question, we would expect it to be nominative, since the highest argument of a volitive verb must always be nominative. What this means is that the dative argument belongs to the main clause. Now, on the basis of the case assignment we assume that (72a) sentence has the structure given in (72b). (72c) is very similar to (72b), except that the participle is moved to the sentence-initial position. As these sentences suggest, the participle can occur in any position within the main clause. Sentences (72b-c) are the same in terms of meaning, and are equally acceptable. Now consider (72d), which confirms our assumption regarding the case assignment and the structure of these participle clauses. In (72d), the matrix verb is in volitive mood. In
this sentence only the nominative case is acceptable for the NP child, as it would be expected from a volitive verb. Therefore, on the basis of these sentences, we conclude that the structure of sentences containing gama\_\_ clauses is as in (73a) and (b), but not as in (73c).

(73)  a. [ NP\textsubscript{1} \(__\textsubscript{1}\) (NP) V-gama\_\_], (NP), V ] (e.g. 72a-b)  
   b. [ \(__\textsubscript{1}\) (NP) V-gama\_\_, NP\textsubscript{1}, (NP), V ] (e.g. 72c-d)  
   c.* [ NP\textsubscript{1} (NP) V-gama\_\_, \(__\textsubscript{1}\), (NP), V ] (see fn. 56)

Thus, the highest argument in the matrix clause is always the controller, and the unrealised highest argument in the adjunct clause is the controllee. Having determined the controller and controllee in these clauses, in the next section we move on to examine the syntax and semantics of control relations.

### 3.3.10.2.4 Controllee in gama\_\_ clauses

As the following sentences indicate, the controllee is semantically constrained, and must be an intentional agent, as was the case with the equi NP-deletion (§ 3.3.10.1). The following sentences in (74) have both volitive and involitive verbs in the gama\_\_ clause. The volitive clauses require an intentional agent, while involitive clauses require an unintentional participant, which can be a patient, a theme, an experiencer or a unintending agent. In these sentences, only the participle clauses containing an intentional agent are acceptable.

---

55 Note that there is no question as to which verb (i.e. the matrix verb or the one in the participle clause) assigned the nominative case to the NP in question in (72d), although both verbs are volitive. Due to the fact that the controllee must be volitive (see § 3.3.10.2.4), the participle clause cannot have an involitive verb to confirm our claim. However, we assume that (72a-c) provide sufficient information to ascertain that the participle verb does not assign case to the NP child; otherwise in (72a-c) we would expect volitive verbs in participle clauses to assign nominative case to the NPs in question.

56 * [api\_\_, kataa\_kar\_\_ gama\_\_, \(__\textsubscript{3}\) paadam\_kar\_\_ h:\_\_.  
  [1PL.NOM speech_do.VOL.VADJ PTG ] study_do.INF can.NEG].  
  Intended: ‘When we talk, we can’t study.’

The matrix verb h:\_\_ requires the dative case on the controller. Hence the ungrammaticality.
‘While causing (someone else) to fall from the tree, Gune was bruised’. Not Possible: ‘While falling from the tree, Gune was bruised’.

‘Father suddenly became sick, while working in the rain.’ Not Possible: ‘Father suddenly became sick, while staying in Colombo.’

‘While crying, the child fell to sleep.’ Not Possible: ‘While crying uncontrollably, the child fell to sleep.’

‘The child shouted, while stepping on the cloth.’

Intended: ‘The child shouted, while accidentally stepping on the serpent.’ (The child was already shouting as he accidentally stepped on the serpent.)

The controlled *gamaŋ* clause must always be in volitive mood. Consequently, the highest argument in the *gamaŋ* clause always has to be an intentional agent. No patients (74), themes (75), experiencers (76), and unintentional agents (77b) and (78b)

57 This is semantically incongruous because the act of washing dishes is not accidental.
are allowed as controllees. Therefore, there is no neutralisation of semantic roles in the controllee position.

3.3.10.2.5 Controller in gamag clauses

The controller, the highest argument, need not be a volitive agent. Thus, there is a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles for syntactic purposes in the controller position. There is sufficient evidence to illustrate that the controller can be a patient as well as an agent. The controller sometimes can be an intentional agent, as shown examples like (78a). Sentences in (79) provide further examples where a patient (79a-b) or an unintentional agent/experiencer (79c-e) controls the null argument position. This neutralisation is also restricted to the highest argument in the main clause. See for instance (71a), in which we showed that gamag clauses do not allow the lower argument to be the controller.

(79)  a. [_[karatte tallu_karo gamag], putaa-wo, wapuna.
   [cart.ACC push.PRE.VADJ PTG ], son.ACC fall.INV.PST
   ‘While pushing the cart, the son fell.’

b. [_[kolombo yango gamag], eyaa-wo, waaheeko hapuna.
   [Colombo.ACC go.PRE.VADJ PTG ], 3SG-ACC vehicle.LOC hit.INV.PST
   ‘While going to Colombo, he was hit by a vehicle.’

c. [_[sellam_karo gamag], lamoya-ta, kalantyak haduna.
   [play_do.PRE.VADJ PTG ], child-DAT faint.IND make.INV.PST
   ‘While playing, the child fainted.’

d. [_[chithrpyiyo balo gamag], Chitra-jo, e'duna.
   [movie watch.PRE.VADJ PTG ], Chitra-DAT cry.INV.PST
   ‘Chitra cried, while watching the movie.’

e. [_[sellam_karo gamag].
   [play_do.PRE.VADJ PTG ],
   lamoya ati, aacci-ge, e'ge-ta, weli wisiwuna.
   child INST grandma-GEN body-DAT sand throw/spray.INV.PST
   ‘While playing, the child accidentally scattered sand over his grandmother’s body.’

Thus, controllers in these adverbial clauses cannot be explained in terms of semantic relations, as they are neutralised in this position for the syntactic purpose of controlling null arguments. The behavioural properties of gamag adverbial clauses
can, therefore, be considered as evidence in support for the existence of the subject in Sinhala.

3.3.10.2.6 Interaction between causatives and *gama* adverbials

In this section, we discuss the interaction between causatives and the control in *gama* clauses, which further confirms the observation made above regarding syntactic conditioning of controller. The highest argument of a transitive or intransitive clause becomes a lower argument (object) in the causee position, when causativised. The newly added causer becomes the highest argument. Consider sentences in (80). The *child*, which is the Actor in (80a) becomes an Undergoer in causativised (80b). This causee can no longer control the null argument in adjunct phrase, even though the context would force it to do so.

(80)  a. [-rise N] *gama* ], lam*y*a, ass*y*a-wo p*dd*a.
     cry.PRE.VADJ PTG ], child.NOM horse-ACC ride.PST
     ‘While crying, the child was riding the horse.’

b. [rise N] *gama* ], taatta, lam*y*a-wo, ass*y*a-wo p*dd*uwa.
    cry.PRE.VADJ PTG ], father.NOM child-ACC horse-ACC ride.CAU.PST
    ‘While (the father is) crying, the father got the child to ride the horse.’
    ≠ ‘While (the child is) crying, the father got the child to ride the horse.’

Again, this confirms that the lower argument (object) cannot be a controller, and that the controller is restricted to the highest argument of the main clause.

These causative sentences given above illustrate another fact regarding the interaction between syntax, semantics and pragmatics with regard to subjecthood diagnostics. According to the context, the *child* is expected to control the null argument position, since the father may have tried to console the crying child by making him/her ride the horse. However, syntax does not allow such a control relation, and syntactically only the highest argument (subject) must be the controller providing a grammatically acceptable, but semantically or pragmatically odd meaning. Thus, *gama* adverbials prove to be a reliable subjecthood diagnostic.

3.3.10.2.7 Participles formed with reduplicated verbs

These participles are formed by reduplicating the verbal base, (although it may not be the complete verb base in the case of some verbs): see (81). Reduplicated participles
indicate actions that are simultaneous with that of the main verb. The participle clause does not indicate tense marking, but its tense is determined by the main verb.

(81)  

\[
\begin{align*}
  k\text{̣r}\text{̣r} & \quad \text{‘do’} \quad > \quad k\text{̣r}\text{̣r}k\text{̣r}k\text{̣r} \\
  kap\text{̣r} & \quad \text{‘cut’} \quad > \quad kap\text{̣r}kap\text{̣r} \\
  daa\text{̣r} & \quad \text{‘put’} \quad > \quad dadaa \\
  daki\text{̣r} & \quad \text{‘see’} \quad > \quad daki\text{̣r}daki\text{̣r} \\
  ya\text{̣r} & \quad \text{‘go’} \quad > \quad gihi\text{̣r}gihi\text{̣r} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Examples for reduplicated participles are given in (82). (82a) is a simple example containing a reduplicated participle. The highest argument in this clause must be obligatorily coreferential with and controlled by the highest argument in the matrix clause. As (82b) illustrates, the realised argument cannot be controlled by any argument other than the highest one in the matrix clause, nor can it be replaced by any lexical NPs, even if they are coreferential with the controller in the main clause. In terms of the functions, these participles are similar to gamaj participles discussed previously. Further, in this construction, we find that semantic roles are neutralised in both controller and controller positions, providing evidence for GRs. The controller is an intentional agent in (82a-b), a patient/theme in (82c-d) or an experiencer in (82e). Likewise, the controller also can be an intentional agent (82b-c), a patient (82d) or an experiencer (82e). Further, the neutralisation is a restricted one, and only the highest argument can be a controller, as shown by (82b).

(82)  

a.  

\[
\begin{align*}
  mat\text{̣r} & \quad [\quad \quad \text{speech_do.VOL.REDUP} \quad] \\
  \quad & \quad \text{this.ACC} \quad \text{write.INF} \quad \text{can.NEG} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘I can’t write this letter, while talking.’ (Karunatillake 1992:197)

b.  

\[
\begin{align*}
  \quad & \quad \text{man-ACC} \quad \text{push_do.VOL.REDUP,} \\
  Gune & \quad \text{ledaa-w\text{̣r}} \quad \text{genaawa.} \\
  Gune.NOM & \quad \text{patient-ACC} \quad \text{bring.PST} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘While pushing the man, Gune brought the patient.’

c.  

\[
\begin{align*}
  \quad & \quad \text{run.VOL.PST} \\
  \text{man.NOM} & \quad [\quad \text{fall.INV.REDUP} \quad] \quad \text{run.VOL.PST} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘The man ran, stumbling’ (lit: falling).

\[Ya\text{̣r} \quad \text{‘go’} \quad \text{is an irregular verb.}\]

1SG.ACC  roof.INST  roll.INV.REDUP  ground-DAT  fall.INV.PST

‘I rolled off the roof and fell onto the ground.’

e. *lambəyi* [ˌædiədəi]  kæxə  kæxuna.

child-DAT  cry.INV.REDUP  food.ACC  eat.INV.PST

‘While crying, the child ate food.’

Thus, reduplicated participles are another reliable behavioural test for the subject grammatical relation in Sinhala. As demonstrated above, there is a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles in both controller and controllee positions for syntactic purposes.

3.3.10.3 Control Constructions: Summary and Observations

We surveyed a large number of control constructions involving infinitives and participle adjunct clauses. Each construction has different properties, control relations and requirements. We observed that some constructions are sensitive to syntax; others to semantics.\(^{59}\) For instance, the control in reduplicated participles is based on syntactic relations, while the equi NP deletion is semantically based. We also find constructions like, *gamaŋ* participles in which the controller is syntactically conditioned, while the controllee is semantically conditioned. The control relations in *kɔjə* and *-la* participles are not governed by syntactic or semantic conditions, but rather by the context or discourse factors. The Table 3-6 presents a summary of all the control relations discussed in infinitive and participle clauses above. It also shows if the controller/controllee is syntactically or semantically conditioned, and whether there a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles in the controller or controllee position in each construction.

\(^{59}\) According to our data, we are not aware of any syntactic phenomenon that is conditioned by pragmatic roles in colloquial Sinhala. Therefore, for the simplicity of the analysis and explanation, we continue to talk of only a neutralisation of semantic roles.
<table>
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Table 3-6: Control Constructions: Summary

We have shown if a particular controller or controllee relation is semantically or syntactically conditioned on the basis of two factors: (a) presence or absence of a neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to the position in question; (b) the neutralisation of semantic roles is a restricted one or not. As mentioned before, when there is a neutralisation of semantic roles in a given position of a particular syntactic phenomena, the contrast between different semantic roles (e.g. agent, patient, experiencer and so on) are neutralised, and therefore such semantic roles are irrelevant for explaining the conditions that govern the construction. In other words, the grammatical relation of this position cannot be reduced to, or explained in terms of, semantic roles. By ‘restrictiveness’, we mean the neutralisation of semantics roles should be restricted to a particular argument position. For instance, let us consider an unrestricted controllee position, for which there is a neutralisation of semantic roles. Since this controllee position is not restricted to any argument position within the clause, the highest argument (i.e. subject), the lower argument (i.e. object) or even an adjunct can become the controllee in this clause. This particular situation (i.e. ‘the unrestricted neutralisation’), therefore, does not help determine the grammatical relation of the controllee. When we combine these two factors, we can determine a particular controller/controllee is syntactically or semantically conditioned: ‘a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles’ results in the position in question being syntactically conditioned; ‘restriction, but no neutralisation of semantic roles’ indicates the position is in question is semantically conditioned. Now, let us look at the
controller and controller positions given in Table 3-6. First, consider the three semantically conditioned controllers (i.e. those of the infinitive construction and the one in gama nj participles). As shown before, these controllers are always volitive agents, hence no neutralisation. Further these controllers are restricted to the highest argument position of the infinitive/participle clause. These controllers are therefore semantically conditioned. On the other hand, controllers in infinitival complements, and controllers and controlleres in kotσ and -la participles have unrestricted neutralisations. This means that these arguments are open to any semantic role, and can occur in any argument position within the clause. Consequently they cannot be explained in terms of semantic or syntactic conditions. Now consider the controllers in gama nj participles, and controller and controller positions in reduplicated participles. There is a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles in all these positions, which cannot be reduced to a particular semantic role. Therefore, they are syntactic subjects, thus providing evidence for the subject grammatical relation in colloquial Sinhala.

In what follows we make a number of observations regarding the characteristics of control constructions.

In adverbial participles, when the ellipses are obligatory (i.e. when no overt arguments are allowed), the null argument position is always obligatorily controlled by an argument in the main clause. In this instance, the control relation can be explained either in terms of semantic roles or syntactic functions. In other words, the control relation is predictable. For instance, in gama nj and reduplicated participle types, the controller cannot occur overtly, and is always obligatorily controlled by the highest argument in the main clause. Thus, these controllers are syntactic subjects. Likewise, the controller of gama nj participles are too predictable: they are always volitional Actors. Thus, obligatorily controlled participle constructions are very strict as to what the controller and controller can be.

On the other hand, in adverbial participles in which the ellipsis is not obligatory, there is no fixed control relation even when a null argument is present. The null argument may be controlled by an argument in the same sentence or by a discourse participant depending on the context, in which the event has taken place. Such a control relation is not syntactically and/or semantically governed. Kotσ and -la participles possess these characteristics. In these constructions, there is a neutralisation
of semantic roles, but it is not a restricted one (see Table 3-6). Therefore, the controller and controllee can bear any semantic role (or any syntactic function). Consequently, they are not predictable, and cannot be explained in terms of semantic or syntactic rules, as is the case with the former group, in which either syntactic or semantic conditions determine the control relation. Therefore, there can be instances where the context cannot precisely determine the control relation, resulting in ambiguity. Such instances with ambiguity in meaning resulting from the coreference suggest that there are no syntactic constraints on control or coreference relations between the arguments in question. This was shown by examples like (69a), repeated below as (83), which has two possible readings depending on the context.

(83) \[ \text{TV.ACC} \_\text{watch.PRE.VADJ PTK}, \_\text{father.NOM} \_\text{ISG.DAT blame.PST} \]

‘The father blamed me, when I was watching TV.’ (Because I was supposed to be studying.)

‘The father blamed me, when he was watching TV.’ (Because I was making too much noise.)

60 This does not include instances of structural ambiguity. Consider the following, which can have two readings depending on the structure:

a. \( \_\text{mat} \_\text{speech.do.REDUP} \) (\_\text{kataa_k\text{speech_do}}) \(
\_\text{father-DAT this letter.ACC write.INF can.NEG} \)

‘I can’t write this letter to the father, while talking (to someone).’

b. \( \_\text{mat} \_\text{kataa_k\text{speech_do}} \)

‘The father can’t write this letter, while talking to me.’

This sentence has two overt dative NPs: (a) \text{mat} ‘to me’, indexed with the subscript ‘1’; and (b) \text{taatta-f\_2} ‘to father’, which is indexed with the subscript ‘2’. These two arguments can take any of the three argument positions requiring a dative NP: (a) ‘the person who writes the letter’ (the main verb \text{ba\_4} ‘cannot’ assigns the dative case); (b) the person spoken to (the object of \text{kataa_k\text{speech_do}} ‘speech_do’); and (c) the person to whom the letter was written (the indirect object of ‘write’). The fourth position to be filled is the subject position of the verb ‘speech_do’ in the adverbial phrase, which does not need to be a dative NP. This is only a structural ambiguity, which is not caused by moving constituents within the sentence. (It is worth noting here that the highest argument of the main clause always obligatorily controls the highest null argument (subject) position in the adverbial clause, regardless of the two possible structures: (a) and (b)).
We can make an interesting comparison between non-obligatorily controlled kot participles and obligatorily controlled gamma participles to illustrate control relations conditioned by competing discourse and syntactic factors. Now, consider sentence (84), repeated from (69b), in which the lower argument of the main clause controls the null argument position in the kot participle. This was because the particular situation in question does not allow the highest argument (lam\text{\textcopyright}ya `child') to be coreferential with the null argument. We can compare this sentence with (85).

(84) \texttt{lam\text{\textcopyright}ya1} balla-\texttt{\textcopyright}2 g\texttt{\textcopyright}huwa, [\_\_\_ mad\texttt{\textcopyright}we nida\texttt{\textcopyright}gen\texttt{\textcopyright}inn\texttt{\textcopyright} kot\texttt{\textcopyright}].
    child.NOM dog-DAT hit.PST, [ hut.LOC sleep\_be.PRE.VADJ PTK]

'The child hit the dog, while it was sleeping in the hut.'

(85) \# \texttt{lam\text{\textcopyright}ya1} balla-\texttt{\textcopyright}2 g\texttt{\textcopyright}huwa, [\_\_\_\_ mad\texttt{\textcopyright}we nida\texttt{\textcopyright}gen\texttt{\textcopyright}inn\texttt{\textcopyright} gamma\texttt{\textcopyright}].
    child.NOM dog-DAT hit.PST, [ hut.LOC sleep\_be.PRE.VADJ PTG]

'The child hit the dog, while sleeping in the hut.'

The kot participle of (84) has been replaced with gamma in (85). This sentence is grammatically correct, but semantically incongruous, since it is impossible for one to hit another while sleeping. The gamma clause in (85) requires the null argument be controlled by the highest argument in the matrix clause (i.e. matrix subject). This syntactic requirement is in place, even when the context does not allow such a coreference. This illustrates that the control in the gamma construction is based on syntactic conditions, and has no impact from pragmatic or discourse factors. On the other hand, pragmatic or discourse conditions govern the control relations in -la and kot participles, as shown in § 3.3.10.2.1 and § 3.3.10.2.2.

Finally, among all the control constructions surveyed above the equi NP deletion, gamma clauses and reduplicated participles can be considered as reliable inter-clausal processes that can be used to define control relations systematically either in terms of syntax or semantics. The equi NP deletion does not provide any evidence for the existence of the subject grammatical relation in this language, as it is a semantically constrained construction. However, the other two, namely gamma and reduplicated participles, do illustrate a restricted neutralisation of semantic relations for syntactic purposes suggesting that GRs exist in colloquial Sinhala.
3.3.11  Colloquial Sinhala Subject: Concluding Remarks

We discussed a large number of different subjecthood diagnostics some of which were previously used as evidence for the subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala. Some of these tests are sensitive to the notion of subject in many languages. However, as the discussion reveals, among the 14 subjecthood diagnostics we examined, only two syntactic processes—control in \textit{gama}ṇ participle and reduplicated participle—can be considered as reliable subjecthood diagnostics. Thus, the evidence for the existence of subject in colloquial Sinhala is weaker than it has been previously claimed.

A larger number of subjecthood diagnostics are unreliable and of no use in determining the subject grammatical relation mainly due to the lack of restricted neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to the subject argument position. Some constructions like \textit{–la} participles and \textit{kot=ā} participles do not always point to the same argument as the subject in two structurally similar sentences, in other words they randomly point to different arguments as potential subjects. Further, the semantic conditioning in morphosyntax was clearly evident in a significant number of constructions. For instance, NP-marking, equi-NP-deletion and controlee relations in \textit{gama}ṇ participle constructions are constrained by semantic factors (e.g. semantic roles and volition), and do not reflect grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala.

Among various coding strategies and behavioural processes, only the control construction in colloquial Sinhala provides reliable evidence for grammatical relations in this language. As we observed, some pivots (i.e. NPs to which a particular grammatical process is sensitive) are sensitive to semantic roles, while others are not. The former are restricted to volitive agents (see Table 3-7), while the latter have a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles (see Table 3-8). Syntactic pivots in \textit{gama}ṇ participles and reduplicated participles provide evidence for the syntactic subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala, as they cannot be reduced to a particular semantic (or pragmatic) role. Further, non-nominative subjects in colloquial Sinhala also share the same subjecthood properties displayed by nominative subjects. Therefore, they too are syntactic subjects in respective constructions.
We noted that in –la participles and kot=´ participles, the coreference or control relations are not constrained by syntactic and/or semantic factors. Therefore, such relations are determined on the basis of discourse or context in which the event has taken place. However, pragmatics notions (i.e. topic) do not appear to be conditioning the syntactic subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala.61

### 3.3.11.1 What is the subject in colloquial Sinhala?

Now that we have established that the subject grammatical relation exists in colloquial Sinhala, we can make another important observation regarding the nature of the colloquial Sinhala subject. Although the syntactic subject that we just established cannot be reduced to a semantic role due to the neutralisation of semantic roles it has, it still can be defined in terms of the a-structure. Recall that the syntactic subject or the three pivots in Table 3-8 correspond to what has been referred to throughout in this study as ‘the highest argument’ in a clause. The term ‘highest argument’, in terms of the use and its function, is synonymous with the ‘logical subject’ in literature as used in Bresnan and Kanerva (1989), T. Mohanan (1990), Alsina (1996) and Bresnan (2001) among others. The logical subject is the most prominent entity of the a-structure. What this means is that the syntactic subject in colloquial Sinhala always corresponds to the logical subject (L-SUBJ).

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61 For instance, the subject need not be definite in Sinhala, as is the case with some languages (see Keenan (1976b), Andrews (1985)). Further, the topic is morphologically marked (examples can be found in § 5.4.4).
With regard to the nature of the subject in colloquial Sinhala, it is worth noting the two universal notions of subjecthood proposed by Manning (1996). They are ‘a-subject’ and ‘gr-subject’. The a-subject is the most prominent role in the level of syntacticised a-structure, while the ‘gr-subject’ is the most prominent entity in the grammatical relations structure (gr-structure). These two are viewed as two different notions of subjecthood with core set of properties cross-linguistically applicable to each type. Thus, such things as the antecedent of reflexives, controller of a gap in adverbial clauses and the imperative addressee are shown to be sensitive to the a-structure, while processes like relativisation, restrictions on topicalization, focussing or cleft formation, restrictions on question formation, launcher of quantifier float, coreferential omission in coordination, raising etc., are argued to be applicable to the gr-structure.

What Manning refers to as ‘a-subject’ can also cover the subject in colloquial Sinhala. Throughout this study, we discussed a number of phenomena that are sensitive to the a-structure in this language: see Table 3-9. These phenomena include not only those that prove to be reliable subjecthood diagnostics (i.e. those with a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles), but also others like the nominalisation and reflexive binding that do not fully qualify to be reliable subjecthood diagnostics in colloquial Sinhala. The controller in gamapth participles and controllers and controllees in reduplicated participles are always restricted to L-SUBJ. Other arguments, for instance the logical objects, cannot be those controllers or controllees, as it was shown earlier.

62 Some clarification with regards to the use of the term a-subject is required. While all logical subjects are a-subjects, not all a-subjects are logical subjects, since the a-subject can include the object promoted to the subject in an argument structure of a passive verb, as well the demoted agent (logical subject). In other words, a-subjects, as defined by Manning (1996), are ‘most prominent (first) on some level of argument structure’ (p. 50). This is not going to be a problem for us, and we can use both terms ‘logical subject’ and ‘a-subject’ interchangeably, since colloquial Sinhala lacks passive. However, we continue to refer to Sinhala subjects as ‘logical subjects’ (instead of a-subjects).
Although there is a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles in the genitive NP position, nominalisation, as a subjecthood diagnostic, has limited applicability in some clause constructions (see § 3.3.6.1). As for reflexive binding, the binder is always restricted to the L-SUBJ either in the matrix clause or in the embedded clause (in multi-clause sentence structures) depending on the characteristics of the predicate and the reflexive pronoun (see § 3.3.8). Therefore, in previous sections we did not consider them to be reliable subjecthood diagnostics. However, both the nominalisation and reflexive binding are clearly sensitive to the L-SUBJ and the a-structure: in the case of nominalisation, only the L-SUBJ of a verb can be genitive-marked when the verb is nominalised; and in reflexive binding, only the L-SUBJ of a clause can bind the reflexive. Thus, they cannot be explained in terms of any other means like semantic roles.

There are two other constructions that might also be considered as applicable to the a-structure in colloquial Sinhala, namely the unmarked constituent order and the pattern of verb marking related to volitionality. In the unmarked word order what can be considered as the L-SUBJ is always the left most argument, and the rest follow it. As for the morphological marking on verbs, it can also be seen as having a connection to the L-SUBJ. As mentioned earlier (§ 1.6.1), verb contains volitive and involitive inflections signalling if the L-SUBJ is acting intentionally or unintentionally. However, the verb morphology does not make any reference to the volitivity involved with other arguments in a clause.
Manning (1996:74) states that the controlleehood in adverbial and complement clauses is cross-linguistically sensitive to the a-structure. A remark regarding controllees in Table 3-7 and their association with the agent role is due here. There is no neutralisation of semantic roles in these controllee positions, and they are always agents. Further, they must also be volitive; unintentional/involitive agents cannot be controllees in such constructions, as it was shown earlier (see § 3.3.10.1.1, § 3.3.10.1.3 and § 3.3.10.2.4). Although they are logical subjects in these constructions, the controlleehood in these constructions is best viewed as being restricted to a particular semantic role and to other factors such as volitionality, but not as sensitive to the a-structure (or, to the L-SUBJ).

Thus, not only some behavioural properties (i.e. reflexive binding and nominalisation) but also the verb morphology and the unmarked constituent order make special reference to the L-SUBJ in colloquial Sinhala. Interestingly, there appears to be no construction in this language that is sensitive to the gr-structure, as far as all the subjecthood diagnostics are concerned. Constructions such as passive and raising to subject are absent in colloquial Sinhala. On the other hand, constructions that are present in Sinhala, and that are said to be sensitive to the gr-subject in other languages, such as relativisation (§ 3.3.4), restrictions on topicalization (§ 5.4.4), focussing or cleft formation (Chapter 5), restrictions on question formation (Chapter 5), and quantifier float (§ 3.3.5) do not provide any evidence for the subjecthood in colloquial Sinhala, as we observed earlier.

Crucially, the lack of grammatical functions changing processes in colloquial Sinhala, in particular passive, makes it even more difficult to establish a surface grammatical subject. If a passive construction were present in colloquial Sinhala, the promoted patient would become the surface grammatical subject (or, the gr-subject in Manning (1996)), and the demoted agent would be marked differently (say, as an oblique). This situation (of switching GFs and semantics roles) gives us the opportunity to test if the surface grammatical subject in passive (i.e. the promoted

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63 For instance, the equi target is an ‘Actor’ property in Inuit (Manning 1996:14) and in Tagalog (Kroager 1993), in other words, it is sensitive to the a-subject.

64 Active: SUBJ agent OBJ patient → Passive: SUBJ patient OBL agent (L-SUBJ) (L-SUBJ)
patient) is picked out by any subjecthood diagnostics, and which grammatical
phenomenon is sensitive to which subject (i.e. logical subject or gr-subject). Most
languages make a distinction between the two types of subjects on the basis of
different syntactic phenomena, which can distinguish one type from the other. For
instance, the interaction between English passive and while + gerund clauses (from
Andrews 1985:109) illustrates that it is the surface grammatical subject that is always
picked out as identical to the unrealised surface subject in the while clause: see (86). In
this example and from now on, we use SUBJ to refer to the surface or grammatical
subject, also known as the GF-SUBJ in LFG.

(86)

a. The student_{SUBJ} watched the guard while ___{L-SUBJ} killing the prisoner.

b. The student_{SUBJ} watched the guard while ___{SUBJ} being killed by the prisoner_{L-SUBJ}.

c. The student_{SUBJ} was watched by the guard_{L-SUBJ} while ___{SUBJ}^{*}_{L-SUBJ} killing the prisoner.

d. The student_{SUBJ} was watched by the guard_{L-SUBJ} while ___{SUBJ} being killed by the prisoner_{L-SUBJ}.

Thus, the L-SUBJ in English can be easily distinguished from SUBJ. In Malayalam, the
antecedent of the reflexive must be the SUBJ, but not the L-SUBJ, as shown by the
following active and passive examples from Mohanan (1981:24).

(87)  a. Jooni Meeri tante/swantam wiittil weccο nulli.
     John Mary.ACC self’s house.LOC at pinch.PST
     ‘John pinched Mary at self’s house.’

b. Jooniyaal Meeri tante/swantam wiittil weccο nullappettu.
     John_INST Mary.NOM self’s house.LOC at pinch.PAS.PST
     ‘Mary was pinched by John at self’s house.’

In (87a) the antecedent ‘mother’ is the SUBJ as well as the L-SUBJ. However the passive
clause shows that only the SUBJ can bind the reflexive (87b). Furthermore, the
interaction between passive and control in kontο ‘while’ adverbial clauses and
causatives in Malayalam also help distinguish the SUBJ from L-SUBJ (Mohanan
1982:583-586). In Hindi, both the controller of an obligatory null argument of a

65 Also see Mohanan (1982).
participle adjunct and the obligatory null argument must be the SUBJ (T. Mohanan 1990).66,67

Thus, in these languages there is a clear distinction between the SUBJ and L-SUBJ. And, these distinctions are manifest in various syntactic phenomena, thereby motivating the level of surface grammatical relations (or, gr-structure in Manning’s terms). However, colloquial Sinhala does not appear to have any syntactic phenomena that can distinguish the SUBJ from L-SUBJ. The L-SUBJ plays an important role in the clause structure of this language, and there are no syntactic phenomena that we discussed in this study that cannot be explained in terms of the L-SUBJ and a-structure.

3.4 Object and other Grammatical Relations

In what follows, our objective is to see if there is any evidence for postulating the object and other grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala. As demonstrated in previous sections, colloquial Sinhala has very few syntactic phenomena that can be considered as evidence for the notion of subjecthood. There is even less evidence for the notion of objecthood and other grammatical relations. Among the coding properties and behavioural properties discussed earlier, none of them appear to be sensitive to the object. In other words, all those that can be used for establishing GRs in colloquial Sinhala point to the subject, to be precise the L-SUBJ.

Apart from the subject, the other two core grammatical functions in LFG literature are the primary object (OBJ) and the secondary object (OBJØ). The oblique family (OBLØ) of arguments are called non-core arguments. In this study, we will not attempt to discuss all the grammatical functions, but will mainly focus on the primary object. It is to be noted that when we use the term ‘object’ in the following sections, we will be referring to the ‘primary object’ function.

66 However, in Hindi, the antecedent of reflexive apnaa can be either the L-SUBJ or the SUBJ in passive (T. Mohanan 1990:165).

67 Also see Dalrymple (1993:11-13) and Joshi (1993) for a similar distinction between L-SUBJ and SUBJ in Marathi.
3.4.1 Why is it difficult to establish the object?

Although the object occurs preverbally in the unmarked word order (SOV), the flexibility in colloquial Sinhala word order means that the subject, object and other grammatical relations may occur in any position. In Chapter 7, we show that colloquial Sinhala lacks a VP, and that the configurational assignment of grammatical functions is not available.

The case marking of the object exhibits the following dichotomy: most verbs mark the object in accusative; the rest take dative objects, as shown in § 3.3.1. Further, the same case in more than one argument in a clause, as in (88), suggests that case is by no means indicative of the grammatical function.

(88) a. \texttt{miniha-t} \texttt{lam} \texttt{ya-t} \texttt{bənuna}. \texttt{(=10c)}
   man-DAT child-DAT blame.INV.PST
   ‘The man happened to blame the child.’

b. \texttt{amma Sena-w} \texttt{a} \texttt{pədhuwa}.
   mother.NOM Sena-ACC horse-ACC ride.CAU.PST
   ‘The mother got Sena to ride the horse.’

Thus, the constituent order and the case marking do not suggest a grammaticalisation of the object argument in colloquial Sinhala clause structure.

There is a strong correlation between semantic roles and case: beneficiary and goal/experiencer generally get the dative case, while patient/theme is generally accusative.\(^{68}\) It is because of this reason that colloquial Sinhala does not have such alternations (e.g. ‘dative shift’) that we find English: see (89).


b. John baked a cake for Nancy. \leftrightarrow John baked Nancy a cake.

c. John sprayed the paint on the wall. \leftrightarrow John sprayed the wall with the paint.

In Sinhala, arguments or adjuncts bear a particular case, and are realised in the form of NPs or PPs depending on the semantic roles that they hold, and requirements of individual predicates. Such arguments or adjuncts do not change their case and

\(^{68}\) However, this is not always the case, as some verbs may assign different cases to their object arguments. For instance, verbs such as \texttt{gahanəwa ‘hit’, wedi_tiyənəwa ‘shot’ and baninəwa ‘blame’, etc. always assign the dative case to their objects: see (10).
grammatical category, unless they undergo a syntactic process like causativisation, which can affect their semantic role.

Argument structure changing operations like passives can result in alternations of grammatical functions in a clause. Andrews (1985) states that passivisation is one of the widely available diagnostics for the primary object in many languages. The lack of a passive construction in colloquial Sinhala is another reason why it is difficult to establish object (and subject).

In preceding sections, we discussed the following behavioural properties namely: Relativisation, Quantifier Float, Nominalisation, Predicate Gapping, Control in infinitive clauses and participle adjuncts, and Reflexive Binding. We did not find a restricted neutralisation of semantic roles with regard to the object, nor did we find any construction that is sensitive to any other grammatical relation in colloquial Sinhala. Therefore, these constructions are of no use to establishing the object and other grammatical relations. However, recall that in nominalisation (§ 3.3.6), only the highest argument (i.e. the L-SUBJ) of a clause can be genitive-marked under nominalisation, and that genitive marking on what corresponds to the object was not acceptable. In the next section, we briefly revisit nominalisation in order to see if it can be used to distinguish the other grammatical relations from the subject.

3.4.2 Nominalisation and Genitive-marking

As it was shown in § 3.3.6, only the highest argument of a sentence can be genitive-marked under nominalisation. The following sentences illustrate this:

(90) a. Gunapala **Siri-w** tallu_keruwa.
       Gunapala.NOM Siri-ACC push_do.PST.VOL
       ‘Gunapala pushed Siri.’                         (Kariyakarawana (1998:75)

       b. Gunapala-ge **Siri-w** tallu_kiriim.
           Gunapala-GEN Siri-ACC push_do.NOMIN
           ‘Gunapala’s pushing Siri’.                    (Kariyakarawana (1998:75)

       c.* Gunapala **Siri-ge** tallu_kiriim.
           Gunapala-NOM Siri-GEN push_do.NOMIN.         (Kariyakarawana (1998:75)

What corresponds to the highest argument in the declarative sentence (90a) can be genitive-marked, as in (90b), when the verb is nominalised. However, this is not possible with the patient argument of the clause (90c). We observe the same
nominalisation pattern with ditransitive verbs like \textit{den\textsubscript{wa}} ‘give’ (91), in which, too, only the highest argument gets the genitive marking. Finally, with intransitive verbs (92-93), the sole argument can be genitive-marked. Particularly (93), which is unaccusative, is interesting since the nominalised argument corresponds to a patient/theme in the declarative sentence, but not to an agent, unlike the ones considered so far.

(91)  
\begin{itemize}
  \item a. Sena \textit{Sita-t} \textit{balu\textsubscript{p}\textsubscript{w}i}ya-w\textsubscript{o} \textit{dunna}.
    \begin{tabular}{llll}
    Sena.NOM & Sita-DAT & puppy.ACC & give.PST
    \end{tabular}
    \hspace{1cm}
    ‘Sena gave the puppy to Sita.’
  
  \item b. \textit{Sena-ge} \textit{Sita-t} \textit{balu\textsubscript{p}\textsubscript{w}i}ya-w\textsubscript{o} \textit{diim\textsubscript{o}}.
    \begin{tabular}{llll}
    Sena.GEN & Sita-DAT & puppy.ACC & give.NOMIN
    \end{tabular}
    \hspace{1cm}
    ‘Sena’s gift of the puppy to Sita.’
  
  \item c.* Sena \textit{Sita-ge} \textit{balu\textsubscript{p}\textsubscript{w}i}ya-\textit{diim\textsubscript{o}}.
    \begin{tabular}{llll}
    Sena.NOM & Sita-GEN & puppy.ACC & give.NOMIN
    \end{tabular}
  \item d.* Sena \textit{Sita-t} \textit{balu\textsubscript{p}\textsubscript{w}i}ya-\textit{diim\textsubscript{o}}.
    \begin{tabular}{llll}
    Sena.NOM & Sita-DAT & puppy-GEN & give.NOMIN
    \end{tabular}
\end{itemize}

(92)  
\begin{itemize}
  \item a. \textit{Sena} \textit{n\textsubscript{\textcircled{a}}\textsubscript{b}w}a. \textit{b. Sena-ge} \textit{n\textsubscript{\textcircled{a}}\textsubscript{b}w}i\textsubscript{i}m\textsubscript{o}.
    \begin{tabular}{llll}
    grandpa.NOM & dance.PST.VOL & grandpa-GEN & dance.NOMIN
    \end{tabular}
    \hspace{1cm}
    ‘Sena danced.’ \hspace{1cm} ‘Sena’s dancing’
  
  \item a. \textit{aata-w\textsubscript{o}} \textit{\textcircled{a}\textsubscript{b}\w}i\textsubscript{t}ua. \textit{b. aata-ge} \textit{\textcircled{a}\textsubscript{b}\w}i\textsubscript{t}i\textsubscript{m\textsubscript{o}}.
    \begin{tabular}{llll}
    grandpa-ACC & fall.PST.INV & grandpa-GEN & fall.NOMIN
    \end{tabular}
    \hspace{1cm}
    ‘The grandpa fell.’ \hspace{1cm} ‘grandpa’s falling’
\end{itemize}

We did not consider nominalisation as a subjecthood diagnostic in § 3.3.6, as the process of nominalisation cannot be reliably applied to all the different subject constructions. However, we have ample evidence to see that only the highest argument can be genitive-marked under nominalisation. What this really means is that the nominalisation can distinguish the L-SUBJ (i.e. the potential syntactic subject) from other arguments/grammatical relations in a clause.

Though we observed a number of syntactic phenomena applying to the L-SUBJ, there appears to be no syntactic phenomenon that is applicable to the logical object. Further, we are not aware of a grammatical process that is exclusively sensitive to other grammatical relations like the secondary object and obliques.
3.5 Conclusion

There is a restricted neutralisation of semantic (and pragmatic) roles for syntactic purposes with regard to the subject position in colloquial Sinhala. This restricted neutralisation is found only in three instances in two participle control constructions. Although evidence for subjecthood is weaker than it has been shown in previous studies, the colloquial Sinhala subject cannot be reduced to a semantic role. The majority of morphosyntactic phenomena, which are generally sensitive to the subject in other languages, do not provide evidence for the syntactic subject in colloquial Sinhala. Further, there appear to be no morphosyntactic phenomena that pick out objects and other grammatical relations. Therefore, it is not possible to make a distinction between core GRs and oblique GRs in colloquial Sinhala, as it is the case in some languages (see Andrews 1985).

The L-SUBJ plays a less significant role than the surface subject in inter-clausal constructions of some languages like English. However, in colloquial Sinhala, due to the lack of evidence for the surface subject, the L-SUBJ plays an important role in inter-clausal constructions, as evident in a number of morphosyntactic phenomena. Thus, the notion of subject in colloquial Sinhala can be defined in terms of the logical subject or the argument structure. Manning (1996) shows that some syntactic phenomena in a language pick out the most prominent entity in the argument structure, while others pick out the most prominent one in the grammatical relations structure. Interestingly, colloquial Sinhala appears to lack syntactic phenomena that are sensitive to the most prominent entity in the grammatical relations structure.

It is worth noting the lack of such syntactic phenomena as raising, passive, anti-passive and pleonastic subjects, and the lack of evidence for the surface subject. Perhaps there is an interesting correlation between these aspects in grammar. Other languages like Acehnese (Durie 1985, 1987) and Manipuri (Bhat 1991) that do not have such constructions like passive are also shown to lack evidence for the surface subject.

We have also shown that there is no evidence to postulate two different types of subjects as inner and outer subject in colloquial Sinhala, as was claimed by Kariyakarawana (1998). In Chapter 7, we investigate verbal and non-verbal clauses and show that there is no significant difference between them in terms of the clause structure.
Chapter 4 Volitionality, Valency and Argument Structure

4.1 Introduction

The volitive/involitive distinction is a salient characteristic in Sinhala and its effects can be seen morphologically, syntactically and pragmatically. The involitive construction has been well documented in the literature, and has been variously referred to as ‘medial’, ‘passive’, ‘inactive’, ‘involitive, ‘impersonal, ‘reflexive’ and ‘semantic passive’ in the literature (see Gair (1970), Reynolds (1980) and Gunasinghe and Kess (1989) and others). Further, sometimes the volitive/involitive distinction is seen as parallel to the transitive/intransitive distinction. Some studies treat volitivies as transitive or intransitive, and involitives as intransitive (see, for instance, Gunasinghe (1985) and Gunasinghe and Kess (1989)). Thus, the involitive construction is assumed to have an effect of valency reduction. There is also another construction, which is sometimes referred to as a ‘detransitivisation construction’ (Gair 1990:16) or ‘agentless involitives’ (Inman 1993: 96, 147). Henceforth, to refer to this construction, we use the term ‘agentless construction’ or ‘decausative construction’ for reasons to be explained later. The agentless construction is assumed to be a subtype of the involitive construction in these studies (and others) due to the superficial resemblance between the two.  

The aim of this chapter is to explore the effect of volitionality (i.e. the involitive construction) on some aspects of grammar, as it is relevant to the present study. Morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of the involitive construction are complex and beyond the scope of this chapter. For the present task we limit ourselves to the agentless construction and some aspects of the involitive construction.

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69 All the studies that discuss the agentless construction that we are aware of consider it a type of involitive.
In doing so, we intend to answer the following questions and offer explanations for these constructions as they relate to the present study.

- Is the involitive construction or agentless construction a passive construction?
- Is the agentless construction really involitive (i.e. unintentional) or is it related to the involitive construction? How can it be characterised?
- Is the argument structure of involitive verbs different from that of volitive verbs?
- Is the involitive construction intransitive? Is there a correlation between the volitive/involitive distinction and the transitive/intransitive distinction?

While the involitive construction has been the subject of many studies, the aspects of grammar related to the agentless constructions and valency alternations have not received a proper treatment. The agentless construction has been treated as a part of the involitive construction by previous studies due to some similarities in the morphological marking on verbs. However, as we will show at the end, agentless clauses are completely different from involitives. The agentless construction and related aspects of valency alternation will be discussed in detail in § 4.4.

After the analysis of grammatical relations in the previous chapter, a discussion of the relationship between the involitive construction and a-structure is desirable, especially because of the nature of the colloquial Sinhala subject, which is, as argued in Chapter 3, definable on the basis of a-structure. The agentless construction has some effects on a-structure. This is because verbs that appear in this construction undergo a valency alternation. However, there appears to be no such effect of involitives on the a-structure or the transitivity value of verbs. Further, in the light of the present study we will show that the volitive/involitive distinction is not in any way correlated with the transitive/intransitive distinction.

In Chapter 3, we also mentioned that colloquial Sinhala has no passive, in contrast with some earlier claims made in the literature. It is, therefore, essential for us to provide an explanation of involitives and related aspects as to why they are not passive. This is discussed in § 4.3.1.

In § 4.2 we outline relevant aspects of the involitive construction and the agentless construction as presented in previous studies. We discuss problematic views of previous studies in § 4.3.
In the next section, we present an outline of the agentless construction which sets the background for the discussion that follows.

4.1.1 Agentless Construction & Valency Alternation: An Overview

In this construction, the agentive NP that appears in the transitive clause is not present, hence the name ‘agentless’. These sentences describe an event or happening, with no agency implied. This is illustrated by (c) sentences in (1-2). The (a) sentences have two arguments: an intentional agent and a patient argument. The (b) sentences, which are the involitive counterparts of (a) sentences, also have two arguments: unintentional agent and a patient argument. Now compare sentences in (a) and (b) with the (c) sentences, which have only one argument that corresponds to the object argument in (b) and (c).

(1)  a. balzə miiɣo marənəwa.
    cat.NOM mouse.ACC.PL kill.VOL.PRE
    ‘The cat kills mice.’
    (Paolillo 1992:62)

    b. dostə atig ledger=ə mərənə.
    doctor INST patient-ACC kill.INV.PST
    ‘The doctor accidentally killed the patient.’

    c. miiɣo mərənəwa.
    mouse.ACC.PL kill.INV.PRE
    ‘Mice die.’

(2)  a. Siri dorə ərəiya.
    Siri.NOM door open.VOL.PST
    ‘Siri opened the door.’

    b. Siri atig dorə ərəuna.
    Siri INST door open.INV.PST
    ‘Siri involuntarily opened the door.’

    c. dorə ərəuna.
    door open.INV.PST
    ‘The door opened.’

The (c) sentences illustrate the agentless construction. Following previous studies (e.g. Inman (1993), among others), we also treat (c) sentences as intransitive, as opposed to (a) and (b) sentences, which are transitive.
Note that the verb appears in volitive form in (a) sentences, while it is in involitive form in (b) and (c) sentences. Note also that the only difference between the (b) sentences and the (c) sentences is the agentive participant marked by the atiŋ phrase in (b) sentences.\textsuperscript{70} Due to the similarity in the verb form in (b) and (c) sentences, it has sometimes been assumed that the agentive constituent, the atiŋ phrase, in such involitive clauses is optional and can be deleted (see Gunasinghe and Kess (1989:68)).\textsuperscript{71} Sometimes, the (b) sentences have been treated as the expanded form of (c) sentences (Wijayawardhana et al. 1991). Thus, in these studies (and others like Gair (1970), the (b) sentences and the (c) sentences are treated as involitives and hence related to each other. We argue that the intransitive clauses given in (c) are decausatives, not involitives (see below).

We also argue that verbs marked with the involitive morpheme can sometimes be transitive, as in the (b) sentences, or intransitive, as in the (c) sentences. The agent argument is not even implied in the (c) sentences. Whereas with their volitive counterparts, the agent is always implied, when it is not overtly present in the sentence. For instance, (3) can only be considered as an instance of pro-drop, as there is an understood agent, unlike in the case of (2c).

(3) \textit{dorə ariya}.  
door open.VOL.PST  

‘[Someone] opened the door.’  
\neq ‘The door opened.’

Thus, the volitive form of the verb cannot be used intransitively. In § 4.4.1, we use a number of diagnostics to distinguish clauses with implied or suppressed agents, such as (3), from clauses with an agentless interpretation, such as (1c) and (2c).

The agentless construction is possible with only some transitive verbs. Some verbs, such as \textit{kanəwa} ‘eat’ for instance, do not appear to undergo a valency alternation (see (4a-c)).

\textsuperscript{70} Following Henadeerage (1995), in this study we treat NPs marked with atiŋ phrase as a realisation of instrumental case due to similarity in meaning and function. Also see Wijayawardhana et al. (1991) who also treat it as an NP in instrumental case.

\textsuperscript{71} Further, Gunasinghe (1985) and Gunasinghe and Kess (1989) also treat it as an adverbial constituent, not the subject of the clause (see § 3.2.1 for a discussion of Gunasinghe (1985)).
(4)  a. Andhare  kāwum  kañāwa.
    Andhare.NOM  rice_cake  eat.VOL.PRE
    ‘Andhare eats rice cake.’

b. Andhare-ta  wāli  kāwemāwa.
    Andhare-DAT  sand  eat.INV.PRE
    ‘Andhare eats sand (mistakenly).’ (Inman 1993:158)

c. wāli  kāwemāwa.
    sand  eat.INV.PRE
    ‘[Someone] eats sand (mistakenly in rice).’

The agentive participant in (4b) occurs in dative case.\footnote{72} The sentence in (4c) is marginally acceptable as it is, but it would require an appropriate context. With the absence of an overt agent, it generally implies an understood agent. It could be best described as an instance of pro-drop, a very common occurrence in colloquial Sinhala. (4c) poses the question as to why only some verbs allow a valency alternation. We argue in § 4.4.2 that lexical semantics of predicates is the key to distinguishing verbs undergoing a valency alternation. Further, (4c) goes against the view of some studies that consider involitives to be intransitive.

Finally, an important aspect of our study is the kind of explanation we provide for sentences such as (1c) and (2c). We argue that they are decausatives and crucially differ from involitive clauses. Consider following sentences:

(5)  a. lamāya  roodēyō  kærākuna.
    child.NOM  wheel  turn.VOL.PST
    ‘The child turned the wheel.’

b. lamāya  atop  roodēyō  kærākuna.
    child  INST  wheel  turn.INV.PST
    ‘The child accidentally turned the wheel.’

c. lamāya-wa  kærākuna.
    child-ACC  turn.INV.PST
    ‘The child (uncontrollably) turned’ (as he fell from the roof).

\footnote{72}{The different case marking in the subject argument, such as instrumental, as in (1b) and (2b), dative, as in (4b), nominative or accusative, has to do with various semantic properties constraining the subject case assignment in colloquial Sinhala (see Inman (1993) and Henadeerage (1995)). Such case marking differences in the agent argument, as we observed in the text, have no impact on the present analysis of the agentless construction or the valency alternation phenomenon.}
The child turned’ (as he was playing).

The sentences in (5a-c) are similar to those given (1a-c) and (2a-c). (5a) has a volitive verb, while all the others have the involitive form of the verb. (5b-c) have non-volitional subjects just like in any other clause with an involitive verb. The important sentence is (5d), in which the subject is an intentional actor who is willingly doing the act of turning. Note also that the subject is marked with the nominative case, which is consistent with intentionality on the part of the subject. Thus, in (5d) the verb marking and the case marking in relation to volitionality are inconsistent: the verb is morphologically involitive while the subject NP is semantically volitive. There is a large class of verbs with involitive form and volitional meaning when the subject is nominative. We argue that the involitive form of the verb appears in two different constructions: one is in involitics as in (5b), which can be transitive or intransitive; and the other is in agentless constructions or decausatives, as in (5c-d), which are intransitive and can be intentional or unintentional acts. From now on we use the term decausative to refer to verbs in (5c) and (5d), which are intransitive and morphologically involitive, but semantically volitive or involitive. Our claims differ from previous studies in two ways. First, we show that involitive verbs are not necessarily intransitive, because of the presence of transitive involitive clauses, such as (4a) and (5b) (cf. Gunasinghe (1985) and Gunasinghe and Kess (1989)). Secondly, decausative verbs are not necessarily involitive, because the agentless construction can have intentional or unintentional subjects (cf. Gair (1970), Inman (1993) among others). The second claim, which also means that the agentless construction is not a part of involitics, differs from all the previous studies, which discuss the agentless construction.

4.2 Previous Studies

In this section, we will briefly summarise several previous studies, which have made some remarks on the construction in question. First, we provide a very brief summary of a number of earlier studies, which appear to be based on traditional grammar. These studies, namely Charter (1815), Lambrick (1834), Geiger (1900) and Godakumbura (1950) are discussed in Inman (1993), and were not available for us to review.
According to Inman (1993), Charter (1815) treats involitives as passive voice, and volitives as the active in Sinhala. Further, involitive verbs are associated with intransitive use, while their corresponding volitive verbs are transitive. Lambrick (1834) is another handbook of Sinhala. Lambrick mentions that Sinhala lacks a passive voice. However, his examples of transitive volitive verbs and intransitive involitive verbs of the same root implicitly indicate a transitivity alternation, although he has not explicitly mentioned it. Geiger (1900), discussed in Inman (1993), groups Sinhala verbs into three conjugation classes. The involitive verbs belong to the third conjugation, which are classified either as passive or intransitive, and can be derived from every first and second conjugation of transitive verbs. Godakumbura (1950), according to Inman (1993), refers to involitive clauses as middles, and mentions that they do not ‘exactly’ correspond to passives in languages like English.

The following are some recent studies which discuss the issue at hand.

4.2.1 Gair (1970, 1990)

Gair (1970) refers to volitive verbs as active and involitive verbs as impersonal. Active verbs, also referred to as A(CTive) verbs, occur in active clauses, have subjects, and can be transitive or intransitive. On the other hand, impersonal verbs (i.e. all involitive ones), also referred to as P(assive) verbs, do not have subjects, and are divided into three subgroups: passive, inactive and involitive. The relationship between these clause types is expressed transformationally, and all the impersonal clauses are claimed to be derivable from their corresponding active clauses, as shown by the following examples:

(6)  
   a. *ląma *ya kurulla-wə məraawi.  
      child.NOM bird-ACC kill.VOL.FUT  
      ‘The child might kill the bird.’  
      (Gair 1970: 74)

   b. *ląma atig *ya kurulla-wə məreewi.  
      child INST bird-ACC kill.INV.FUT  
      ‘The bird might be killed by the child.’  
      (Gair 1970: 74)

Passives may contain an agentive constituent, the *atig phrase, and (6b) illustrates this.

Gair does not use the term ‘agentless construction’. However, those clauses that we earlier referred to as agentless would fit into Gair’s ‘inactive’ subgroup of
Involitives. It is to be noted that not all inactive clauses in Gair’s study can be treated as agentless constructions. This is because the inactive subgroup also consists of intransitive verbs that do not undergo a valency alternation (i.e. that do not have transitive counterparts). Gair states that inactive clauses often imply “a participant acting without volition as a result of some external force or agency” (p.78). Gair also notes that a very small number of A-verbs (i.e. volitive ones) can appear in inactive clauses “serving as optional variants” (p.79).

In a later study, Gair states that involitive constructions are not passives, and the subject is present in involitive clauses as well (1990:19-20). Further, he refers briefly to the agentless clauses as a detransitivisation process with the following the example.

(7)  

a. *lam ça ya wëli_kandak həzəhuwa.*
   
   child.NOM sand_hill.IND make.VOL.PST
   
   ‘The child made a sand pile.’ (Gair 1990:16)

b. *(sulə̆ge) wëli_kandak həzəhu.*
   
   (wind.INST) sand_hill.IND make.INV.PST
   
   ‘A sand pile formed (because of the wind).’ (Gair 1990:16)

Note that in both studies (Gair 1970, 1990), those intransitive clauses that we refer to as the agentless construction have been described as involitives. Although Gair (1990) has noted a valency alternation, he does not discuss further as to what verbs allow the valency alternation, nor does he discuss the conditions affecting the detransitivisation.

4.2.2 Gunasinghe and Kess (1989)

Gunasinghe and Kess argue for recognition of two major passive types in Sinhala: grammatical passive and semantic passive. The two passive types are recognised on the basis of the separation of agency and voice. Grammatical passives, which are absent in colloquial Sinhala, but present in literary Sinhala, are regarded as non-basic, derived structures which have underlying correspondences with active transitive structures via a process of passivisation. These structures are similar to the English passive. On the other hand, semantic passives, only present in colloquial Sinhala, are basic intransitive structures which do not have agents overtly or tacitly. They, unlike the grammatical passive, do not entail an active/passive relationship. Further,
Gunasinghe and Kess claim that the overall linguistic organisation in Sinhala is governed by the agency criterion, which creates a dichotomy between involitives and volititives. Another argument crucial to, but not new to, their view is the use of three way verb classification: Class I (i.e. ones with the volitive morpheme) and III (i.e. ones with the causative and volitive morpheme) are volitive and can be transitive or intransitive, while the Class II is involitive and “essentially intransitive” (Gunasinghe and Kess 1989: 55-59).\(^{73}\) Examples are given in Table 4-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS I Transitive or Intransitive</th>
<th>CLASS II Intransitive</th>
<th>CLASS III Causative or Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maran`wawa  ‘kill’</td>
<td>maran`wawa  ‘die’</td>
<td>maran`wawa  ‘cause to kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basin`wawa  ‘fry’</td>
<td>basen`wawa  ‘be/get fried’</td>
<td>basen`wawa  ‘cause to fry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yan`wawa  ‘go’</td>
<td>yeven`wawa  ‘go instinctively’</td>
<td>yan`wawa  ‘send’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4-1: Verb Classification by Gunasinghe and Kess (1989)**

Here we want to draw attention to their treatment of volitive and involitive verbs. Note that all the involitive are verbs in Table 4-1 are treated as intransitive, while their volitive counterparts are transitive. Gunasinghe and Kess state that involitive verbs are “by their very nature intransitive” (p.59). However, we disagree with this position as it incorrectly sees the distinction between volitive and involitive verbs as parallel to the transitive/intransitive distinction. Further, not all involitive verbs are intransitive, as we mentioned earlier.

Gunasinghe and Kess also treat the involitive construction as derivative of the volitive construction. Furthermore, they follow the same controversial view on the nature of subject that is advanced in Gunasinghe (1985).\(^{74}\)

### 4.2.3 Wijayawardhana et al. (1991)

This study analyses volitive and involitive construction in colloquial Sinhala along the lines of grammatical voice following Shibatani (1985). Under Shibatani’s approach to passive, *defocusing of agent* is considered the fundamental function of the passive.

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\(^{73}\) See § 1.6.2 for Sinhala verb classifications.

\(^{74}\) See the discussion of Gunasinghe (1985) in § 3.2.1.
Agent defocusing may involve deletion of it or demotion of it to an adjunct status. In the case of colloquial Sinhala, Wijayawardhana et al. state that:

“[c]olloquial Sinhala … in fact employs passive morphology far more widely and more systematically than any of the languages in Shibatani’s discussion. It is employed for demoting an agent not only syntactically and pragmatically but also semantically by disassociating agenthood from full control as when, in the speaker’s view, a human (or animate) being sets off some event incidentally, as a so-called ‘accidental agent’, or when it is simultaneously the actor and the affected party” (p.106).

Thus, under this approach, the volitive and involitive constructions are treated as two voice constructions based on case marking and verb morphology. Wijayawardhana et al. group verbs into two: action verbs with ‘active morphology’; and verbs of states with ‘passive morphology’. In ‘active clauses’, the syntactic subject is the volitive agent in nominative, who is in control of the action or event. On the other hand, ‘passive clauses’ have either animate subject or inanimate subjects with morphologically marked case and with the passive morphology on the verb.

Shibatani argues that, apart from its primary function of agent defocusing, a passive morpheme expresses various meanings cross-linguistically. Wijayawardhana et al. claim that colloquial Sinhala employs passive morphology (i.e. involitive form) to convey such meanings as ‘spontaneous’ and ‘potential’ etc. that are available in some involitive clauses.

Wijayawardhana et al. note that some transitive verbs (e.g. *kādenowa* ‘break’) can occur with or without an agent. The ones with the agent have the meaning of “intentionally bringing about a state of affairs on an agent”, while those without an agent argument, called ‘anti-causative’, are “characterised by agent defocusing” (p.113). In relation to the involuntary agent in involitive transitive clauses, they further mention that “the basic P-clause [i.e. involitive ones without an agent] has an expanded form, …, characterised by the addition of a noun phrase in the instrumental case” (p.113). The difference between the A-clause (i.e. volitive transitive one) and the expanded P-clause is assumed to be control: intentional versus unintentional/incidental involvement.
The active passive division in their study is based on the traditional verb classification (see Geiger (1990) and Gair (1970)). Under this method verbs are classified into different groups strictly based on morphological marking (e.g. volitive, involitive and causative). One of the problems with this approach, as we argue, is that while the morphologically marked volitionality on the verb can be consistent with (un)intentionality expressed on the part of the subject/agent for most instances, there are instances, particularly related to the agentless constructions, in which semantically volitive subjects/agents do appear in morphologically involitive clauses. We assume that this is an important issue that should have been addressed by a study such as Wijayawardhana et al., which strongly focuses on the semantic notion of control on the part of subject/agent and its morphosyntactic expression in the clause (i.e. case marking and verb marking).

Wijayawardhana et al. correctly observe that some transitive verbs may be used intransitively. However, their explanation in relation to such an alternation in valency does not appear to be correct. This is because the semantic notion of control is seen as the basic distinction between such transitive (realised in the form of volitive) and intransitive (realised in the form of involitive) pairs. Their notion of control appears to be a very broad generalisation on semantics of these clause types (also see Inman (1993)). As we will show in § 4.4, the distinction between some volitive and involitive verbs (i.e. that undergo valency alternation) is not the notion of control or volitionality, but rather the alternation of valency.

4.2.4 Inman (1993)

Unlike many other works we looked at so far, Inman (1993) is a thorough investigation of involitive verbs in colloquial Sinhala in terms of semantics and pragmatics. This study also offers an explanation of the agentless construction, and argues against involitives as passive.

Inman has also pointed out that not all involitives allow an agentless interpretation. For example, sentence (8) is argued to have an implied agent. The existence of the implied agent, according to Inman, is the reason for the unacceptability, when the adverb *ibeem*: ‘by itself’ is present.

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75 See § 1.6.2.
Inman’s explanation for the alternation of valency between volitive and involitive verbs is that volitive verbs have a fixed argument structure while involitive verbs have a variable argument structure. This is said to be the reason why only the involitive verbs are intransitivisable. He claims that involitive verbs, but not volitive verbs, are subject to what is called the Minimal Argument Constraint:

(9) Minimal Argument Constraint:

Posit the fewest number of arguments allowed by a given verb, consistent with (a) the number of expressed arguments, (b) the given contextual information, and (c) the plausibility of doing so. (Inman 1993: 148)

According to this constraint, for example, the fewest number of arguments allowed for a two-argument predicate, like ‘kill’, is two (9a). When an argument is not overtly present, it may be contextually determined. Thus, even when the agent (killer) of ‘kill’ is not overtly present in a clause, the minimal number of arguments that should be posited for ‘kill’ is two (9b). The matter becomes complicated when we consider a non-agentive intransitivised clause, as in (10). The plausibility of interpreting a given involitive verb as intransitive, as Inman believes, depends on the ‘Inference Rule’,\(^\text{77}\) which was proposed elsewhere to account for two semantic modal bases: ‘the doxastic model’ (related to “states-of-affairs in which it is improbable to imagine the agent act unintentionally” (1993:138)) and ‘the intentional model’ (related to “states-of-affairs in which it is more likely that the agent did not act intentionally” (p.138)). As Inman points out, (10) belongs to the intentional model.

(10) \(\text{pi}'\text{ggaan} \quad \text{bi}'\text{duna.}\)

plate break.INV.PST

‘The plate [broke].’ (Inman 1993: 148)

\(^{76}\) Inman uses the bracket to indicate that no exact translation of the involitive verb is possible in this sentence.

\(^{77}\) Inference Rule:

“Informally, given a state-of-affairs \(s’\) which subsumes a state-of-affairs \(s\) denoted by some formula \(\emptyset\), it is to be inferred that \(s\) involves the activity of an intentional agent iff all states-of-affairs \(s”\) which are typical instances of \(s’\) involve the activity of an intentional agent.” (Inman 1993: 139)
The sentence (10) is interpreted as an instance of an agentless clause, “[a]ssuming that typical instances of plates breaking do not involve the activity of an intentional agent, [therefore] the existence of an (implicit) intentional agent is not inferred” (1993:149). (8), repeated below as (11) belongs to the doxastic modal, and is claimed to have an implied agent.

(11)  \begin{verbatim}
  \text{food} \quad \text{make.INV.PST}
  \# ‘The food [made].’
\end{verbatim}

Inman writes “[a]ssuming that typical instances of cooking food involve the activity of an intentional agent, then according to the Inference Rule [see the footnote 77, DKH] we are entitled to infer the existence of such an agent” (p.148).

Inman’s study is important in a number of ways. He correctly points out that the agentless construction is not possible with every involitive verb. This also means valency alternation is not possible with every verb, as we claim. Further, he proposes some tests to capture agentless clauses from agentive clauses.

However, there are problems with some of his claims, in particular, that involitive verbs have a variable argument structure unlike volitive ones, and consequently only involitive verbs are intransitivisable. These claims incorrectly imply that there is a correlation between valency alternation and involitive construction or involitivy in general. The term ‘agentless involitives’ that he uses to refer to the agentless construction also suggests a connection between the agentless construction and involitives. However, as we argue in this study, valency alternation and the involitive construction are not related and the agentless construction is not necessarily involuntary.

Further, since not all “involitive” verbs undergo valency alternation, it may seem unnecessary to propose that involitive verbs have a variable argument structure. Therefore, such a proposal would be best suited to those verbs that can be intransitivised, regardless of volitivity.

It is not clear to us as to how the Minimal Argument Constraint (9) and offered explanations can account for intransitivisation of involitives semantically or syntactically. Omitting an implicit argument requires a change of the meaning, and there is no explicit account of what kind of change in meaning will be allowed by this
principle. Further, Inman’s proposal is not a syntactic solution usually applied for the argument structure operations and the valency variation. The rule simply interprets or predicts a situation that a given verb describes.

4.3 Problems with Previous Studies

All the descriptions and analyses previously examined have remarked on the fact that transitive volitive verbs tend to be intransitive in involitive forms. In most accounts, involitive clauses, in particular the ones with and without an agentive constituent have been interpreted as passive, simply on the basis of their superficial nature, i.e., the presence of the atig phrase which corresponds to the agent of volitive clauses and to the ‘by phrase’ when translated as English passives.

We find a number of problems with regard to the treatment of involitives and agentless clauses in these studies.

Firstly, some studies have incorrectly identified involitives as passive, while others do not offer a clear explanation as to the use of the term passive. As it will be shown in § 4.3.1, involitives do not have the characteristics of a prototypical passive.

Secondly, some studies incorrectly assume that valency reduction is associated with all involitive forms. Nearly all of the studies do not provide a sufficient explanation for the valency alternation exhibited by some verbs and what conditions it.

Thirdly, all these studies lack information on clauses in which intentional subjects appear with (morphologically) involitive intransitive verbs.

Fourthly, all the studies assume that transitive volitive verbs tend to be intransitive in the involitive form. Also, some studies (e.g. Gunasinghe and Kess 1989) appear to suggest a correlation between the volitive and involitive distinction and the transitive and intransitive distinction. We argue that this is not the case.

In what follows, we address a number of the major problems in previous studies.
4.3.1 Against a Passive Analysis

As we have seen in many earlier studies, involitives are treated as passive. However, the dichotomy between involitive and volitive verbs cannot be reduced to an active passive alternation. This is because involitive construction in colloquial Sinhala does not have the characteristics of a prototypical passive that is found in such languages as English. By ‘prototypical passive’, or simply by the term ‘passive’, in this study we refer to the syntactic construction in which object of active clause is promoted to the subject in passive, and the active subject is demoted or deleted in the passive clause. In other words, our use of the term passive can be interpreted as a process of grammatical function alternation (i.e. $\text{SUBJ} \rightarrow \emptyset$; $\text{OBJ} \rightarrow \text{SUBJ}$). On this basis, colloquial Sinhala involitives cannot be treated as passives. This claim is not new, and as mentioned earlier, some previous studies (e.g. Inman 1993) also hold the same view. In this section, we discuss the evidence against involitives as passives.

Apart from the semantic differences, the observable difference between volitive and involitive clauses in (12-14) is morphological: volitive ones in the (a) sentences differ from the involitive ones in the (b) sentences in terms of verb morphology and case marking of subjects. The subject of a volitive clause is nominative while the subject of an involitive clause can be instrumental, dative or accusative. As can be seen in the following examples, the subject of a volitive clause is not deleted or demoted in the corresponding involutive clause.

(12) a. amma $\quad$ sinhəlo $\quad$ kawənə $\quad$ ho’dərə $\quad$ hadənəva.
    mother.NOM Sinhala food well make.VOL.PRE
    ‘Mother (always) makes Sinhala food well.

b. amma atiŋ $\quad$ sinhəlo $\quad$ kawənə $\quad$ ho’dərə $\quad$ hadənəwa.
    mother INST Sinhala food well make.INV.PRE
    ‘Mother (always) makes Sinhala food well.’

(Henadeerage 1995:36)

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78 We do not discuss the semantics of volitive and involutive as it is beyond the scope of the present study. We refer the reader to Inman (1993) and Henadeerage (1995) for semantic aspects of these constructions.

79 For example with an accusative subject in an involitive clause, see (5c).

80 See footnote 8 in p.15.
The instrumental NPs, dative NPs and accusative NPs in involitive clauses (as well as nominative NPs in volitive clauses) are subjects of these constructions, and objects in volitive clauses do not become subjects in involitive clauses. In Chapter 3, we showed that nominative NPs and non-nominative NPs in these clauses can be considered as grammatical subjects on the basis of a number of subjecthood diagnostics. One such diagnostic was the control in *gamaŋ* participle clauses (§ 3.3.10.2.3). Instrumental NPs and dative NPs can control the null argument position in adverbial clauses, as shown by the following sentences:

a. `[__, __] selam_ karma, gaman].
   play_do.PRE.VADJ PTG,
   lam_ aacci-ge, _weli_wisiwu.
   child INST grandma-GEN body-DAT sand throw/spray.INV.PST

   ‘While playing, the child accidentally scattered sand over his grandmother’s body.’

b. `[__, selam_ karma, lam_ kalant_yak] haxhuna.
   play_do.PRE.VADJ PTG, child-DAT faint.IND make.INV.PST

   ‘While playing, the child fainted.’

Further evidence against involitives as an agent deletion operation, valency reduction operation or a process of passivisation or detransitivisation come from intransitive volitive and involitive clauses: see (16). The valency of these intransitives is the same in both volitive and involitive clauses.
(16) a. laməya əɖuwa/nəʒuwa.
   child-NOM cry.VOL.PST/dance.VOL.PST
   ‘The child cried/danced.’

   b. laməya-t əɖuına/nəʒuna.
   child-DAT cry.INV.PST/dance.INV.PST
   ‘The child cried/danced’ (he could not help).’

Again in such involitive clauses, the non-nominative NP is the subject, as shown by (79d) in Chapter 3, repeated below as (17).

(17) [___ chithrəpatiyə hələnə gaməŋ], Chitra-t əɖuına.
     [ movie watch.PRE.VADJ PTG], Chitra-DAT cry.INV.PST
     ‘Chitra cried, while watching the movie.’

Thus, there is no grammatical function alternation associated with volitive and involitive clauses. In addition the same argument in both clause types passes the subject test. Further, passivisation generally results in syntactic valency reduction in languages like English. However, in the case of the colloquial Sinhala examples, which we have looked at, the syntactic valency remains constant in both volitive and involitive clauses. In these clauses what appears to have taken place in terms of syntax is that the case of the highest argument has changed from nominative in volitive clauses to non-nominative in involitive clauses. One can consider this as a defocusing of the agent (or the highest argument), as Wijayawardhana et al. (1991) argue in their analysis of involitive as passive (see § 4.2.3). However, no change has taken place syntactically or semantically as far as the status of the object is concerned in involitive clauses.

4.3.2 Misanalyses of Agentless Clauses

As mentioned earlier in § 4.1.1, the agentive participant is absent in agentless clauses, which are intransitive. Although there is a valency decrease in both agentless clauses in colloquial Sinhala and in prototypical passives in other languages, there is a crucial difference between the two constructions. In a prototypical passive, even when the agent is deleted it is still semantically present, since the prototypical passive does not affect the semantic valency. On the other hand, in agentless clauses, this agentive participant is completely absent not only syntactically but also semantically. It is because of this reason that agentive participant is not even implied. Thus, neither involitives nor agentless clauses resemble the prototypical passive.
All the previous studies have suggested that transitive verbs tend to be intransitive in involitive form. This observation, which we argue to be a misinterpretation of the facts, requires an explanation. Some studies (e.g. Inman (1993), Gair (1990) and Wijayawardhana et al. (1991)) do not treat the agentless construction as a separate construction from involitives, while others, such as Gunasinghe (1985), do not recognise such a construction. Thus, in these studies the agentless or decausative construction is also considered a part of the involitive construction. Combining the characteristics of the two constructions has resulted in the interpretation of involitives as intransitives and the agentless construction not receiving a proper treatment in previous studies.

The superficial resemblance between involitives and decausatives appears to be the reason why previous studies have not identified decausatives as a different construction. We suspect that the presence of the involitive morpheme in involitives and decausatives may have led these studies to treat decausatives as involitives. The presence of transitive involitives, such as (4b), is itself clear evidence against the treatment of involitives as intransitives. Among the previous studies, Inman (1993) and Wijayawardhana et al. (1991) are important in this regard, as these studies correctly observe the presence of transitive involitives. As we will show in § 4.4, there are also other reasons to treat them as separate constructions.

4.3.3 Difference between Middles, Involitives, and Agentless Clauses

Whether Sinhala involitives and agentless constructions can be treated as a type of middle voice (as in English) is an interesting question. In this section, we briefly compare involitives and agentless constructions in colloquial Sinhala with English middles. In the English middle voice, agents are not completely excluded, but are implied as volitional instigators of the action referred to (Fellbaum 1986; Levin 1993). According to Levin, English middles have properties such as lack of time reference, presence of an understood but unexpressed agent, and the presence of adverbial modal elements etc. Involitives and agentless constructions in Sinhala, however, indicate tenses and need not occur with adverbs. Further, in involitive clauses the (involitive) agent is expressed, unless it is dropped as an instance of pro-drop. But with agentless constructions, the agent argument is not even implied (i.e. it is not part of the semantic
valency). Thus, there are a number of differences between the middle construction, involitives and the agentless construction.

4.4 Towards An Analysis

In what follows, we discuss the agentless construction and the valency alternation phenomena in detail.

4.4.1 Distinguishing Agentless Clauses

In this section, we present a number of tests to distinguish agentless constructions from agentive ones. These tests enable us to find out if some agents are absent or simply implicit, when they are not overtly expressed for pragmatic reasons.

First consider the following a dialogue from Coates (1972: 471), which further illustrates the contrast between volitive and decausative verbs with regard to valency. In this dialogue, volitive clauses are transitive, while their decausative counterparts are intransitive; consider pairs: (19) and (21), (22) and (24a), (23a) and (23b), (25a) and (25b), and (26a) and (26b).

(18) Noona: Banda, mokak də ee binde?
   Banda, what Q that break.VOL.PST.E
   Madam: ‘Banda, what Q that (you) broke?’

(19) Banda: binde nəxe, noona.
       break.VOL.PST.E NEG, Madam
       Banda: ‘(I) did not break (anything), Madam.’

(20) Noona: ehenam mokak də ee saddəyak xhune?
   if_so what Q that noise.IND hear.INV.PST.E
   ‘Then, what was that noise (I) heard?’

(21) Banda: wiiduruwak bĩduṇa, noona.
       glass.IND break.INV.PST, Madam
       ‘A glass got broken, Madam.’

(22) Noona: kohomə də eekə binde?
       how Q it break.VOL.PST.E
       ‘How did (you) break it?’
In these examples, volitive clauses with the verb ‘break’ and ‘drop’ have agents, which may be overtly present in the sentence or implicit in the discourse. However, the corresponding decausative clauses of such verbs do not have agent arguments. Here, what make the matter further complicated are suppressed arguments. Sinhala allows pro-drop in all argument positions in a sentence, and the non-appearance of the agent and the patient in (19) (and also in some others) are merely examples of this.\textsuperscript{81} The volitive sentences in (18) and (22) have suppressed agents. However, they do not qualify as ‘agentless’ constructions proper because the suppression of the agent is

\textsuperscript{81} For a brief description of pro-drop, see §7.3.2.
crucially licensed by pragmatic factors; in other words, the agent is merely implicit rather than absent. On the other hand, the absence of agentive interpretation in decausative clauses is further illustrated by the presence of adverbials, nikammə ‘without a reason’ and ibeemə ‘by itself’ in (24a) and (26b). The meanings of these adverbials are inconsistent with the agentive interpretation, and as a result such adverbials are not possible constructions with implied agents, as we will show below. So there is a correlation between agentlessness and decausative clauses versus implicit agentivity and volitive transitive clauses respectively.

There are a number of diagnostics to distinguish agentless sentences from those with implicit agents. The aim of this section is to demonstrate that there is a difference in the transitivity value in some volitive and decausative verbs.

**Adverbial ibeemə:** We begin our discussion with a simple adverbial test. Fagan (1992:52) makes use of the adverbial ‘all by itself’ to show the lack of implied (agent) argument in English middle constructions. Inman (1993) uses the insertion of the adverbial ibeemə ‘by itself’ as a test for agentless clauses in colloquial Sinhala. As seen in example (26b) above, ibeemə often appears with such decausative clauses when an agent is absent. Although (26b), repeated below as (27), is acceptable with ibeemə, its corresponding transitive clause (28) is semantically odd with ibeemə, as is the English gloss. Sentences with implicit agents thus become unacceptable with the adverb ibeemə because the implicit agent interpretation is not compatible with the meaning of ibeemə, as Inman notes.

(27) eewa okkom ibeemə bi’denwa.
3PL.INAN all by_itself break.INV.PRE
‘They all just break by themselves.’

(28) # eewa okkom ibeemə bi’dinwa.
3PL.INAN all by_itself break.VOL.PRE
# ‘(Somebody) breaks them all by themselves.’

The same argument could also be made with the other adverb nikammə ‘without a reason’.

**Purposive Infinitive Clauses:** The subject of a non-finite purposive clause is the same as the subject of the main clause: consider examples (29a) and (29b). In (29a),
the subject of the main clause and the purposive infinitive clause is the same. The unacceptability of purposive infinitive clause in (29b) is due to the lack of agent in any form in the main clause, implicit or not, according to Gair (1990).

(29)  

a. *kaarekǝ harigassannǝ baasunnǝ the plootǝrekǝ usǝǝnǝwa.  
car repair.VOL-INF mechanic.NOM float raise.VOL.PRE  
‘The mechanic raises the carburettor/float to repair the car.’  (Gair 1990:35)

b. (*kaarekǝ harigassannǝ) dǝn plootǝrekǝ issenǝwa.  
(car repair.VOL-INF) now float raise.INV.PRE  
Intended: ‘The carburettor/float is rising now (to repair the car).’  (Gair 1990:36)

We have shown under the discussion of control in infinitive clauses in Chapter 3 that when a null subject is present in the infinitive clause it must be controlled by an NP in the main clause (see § 3.3.10.1.3). The same principle applies to the sentences in (29) as well. In (29b), the subject of the main clause, i.e., the theme argument, and that of the volitive infinitive clause are different. Consequently, the subject of the main clause cannot control the subject of the volitive infinitive clause. The infinitive clause must have an animate agent as the subject and the plootǝrekǝ ‘float’ cannot be the one to repair the car. If an implied agentive argument is present in the main clause of (29b), the sentence becomes acceptable, since it can control the subject of the infinitive clause. Now compare (29a) with (30), in which the main clause is volitive transitive with no overtly expressed agent. This sentence is acceptable, since the implied agent controls the understood subject position in the infinitive phrase.

(30)  

∅₁ kaarekǝ harigassannǝ  ∅₁ plootǝrekǝ usǝǝnǝwa.  
car repair.VOL-INF float raise.VOL.PRE  
‘[The mechanic] raises the carburettor/float to repair the car.’

Thus, on the basis of (29b) and (30) we can show that the agentless clause, i.e. the main clause, in (29b) does not have an implied agent. This means that such agentless constructions are not subject to pro-drop.

We can also use the purposive infinitive clauses to demonstrate that involitive transitive clauses are different from agentless ones. Compare (31) below with (29b) above. (31) has an unintentional agent, which makes the sentence grammatical, as it can control the null subject position in the infinitive clause.
The point we want to make here is that the omission of the (unintentional) agent is not optional, but rather it is a different construction. This is another reason to distinguish the agentless construction from involitive transitive constructions.

Entailments of transitive and decausative clauses: The following clauses contain adverbial participles. The participial clause is in the morphologically involitive form in (32a), and has an agentive argument marked by the ati phrase. In (32b), the participle does not contain an agentive argument, and therefore this sentence does not imply that the plate was broken by someone, rather it implies that it broke by itself. Now compare (32b) with (32c), in which the adverbial clause is in volitive form. In this clause, the agent is suppressed (e.g. pro-drop), and is recoverable from the context, as can be seen from the English translation.

(32)  
a.  Siri ati pi'gaan b'i'dila,  
     Siri INST plate break.INV.PST.PTCP,  
     amma alut ekak genaawa.  
     mother.NOM new_one.IND bring.VOL.PST  
     ‘Siri accidentally broke the plate, and mother brought a new one.’

b.  pi'gaan b'i'dila,  
     plate break.INV.PST.PTCP, mother.NOM new_one.IND bring.VOL.PST  
     ‘The plate broke (by itself), and mother brought a new one.’
 ≠ ‘Having broken the plate, mother brought a new one.’

c.  pi'gaan b'i'dila,  
     plate break.VOL.PST.PTCP, mother.NOM new_one.IND bring.VOL.PST  
     ‘Having broken the plate, mother brought a new one.’
 ≠ ‘The plate broke (by itself), and mother brought a new one.’

If there were an unrealised argument in the adverbial clause in (32b), we would expect that it would be controlled by an argument in the same sentence or by a discourse participant depending on the context, just as the case with (32c). Thus, transitive clauses with suppressed agent arguments and decausative clauses with no agent arguments are different, as can be seen from the sentence meaning.

82 See § 3.3.10.2.1 for a discussion of –la participle construction.
We showed that decausative verbs have an agentless interpretation, and function intransitively, while their counterparts in volitive verbs always have the agentive interpretation, even when the agent is not overtly present.

4.4.2 Why the agentless construction is not possible with every verb

Not all transitive verbs undergo valency alternation, as mentioned in § 4.1.1, (see (4c)). This means that agentless constructions are not possible with every transitive verb. In this section, we look at why not all the verbs undergo a valence reduction, and which ones allow agentless constructions. We also provide an explanation of the semantic conditioning on valency alternation patterns found in some verbs.

A sample of verbs that undergo a valency alternation is given in Table 4-2. Of these verbs, those given in the transitive column have two arguments, while those given in the decausative column function intransitively. In the traditional grammar and in linguistic studies of Sinhala, the verbs in these two columns are distinguished as ‘volitive’ and ‘involitive’ on the basis of the verb morphology. For reasons explained later, we will not use these terms based on volitivity, but refer to them as transitive and decausative. A list of transitive verbs that do not exhibit a valency alternation is given in Table 4-3. The valency alternation phenomenon is not observable with regard to intransitive verbs. Table 4-4 contains a sample of intransitive verbs in both volitive and involitive forms. We assume that the lexical semantics of individual verbs determine their characteristics and distribution. Verbs that share certain semantic properties pattern differently from others which do not share the same semantic property. It is because of this reason that some transitive verbs can be used intransitively, but not others. Considering the lexical semantics of these verbs, it is possible to make some basic distinctions between verb classes which can explain some facts relating to volition, valency and argument structure in colloquial Sinhala verbs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive (‘volitive’)</th>
<th>Decausative (‘involitive’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ᶞussnwa</td>
<td>issenswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marisna</td>
<td>marenswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arisna</td>
<td>arenswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kadisna</td>
<td>kadinswana</td>
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<td>bid’inisna</td>
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<td>udurisna</td>
<td>idirenisna</td>
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<td>beerenswana</td>
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<td>nawweniswa</td>
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<td>hangenisa</td>
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<td>awulisna</td>
<td>awulenswa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alisna</td>
<td>alenswa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2: Transitive verbs with a valence alternation

Consider the verbs given in Table 4-2. Transitive verbs can be considered having the meaning *cause the action of* [decausative verb]. Thus, kadisna ‘break’ means causing something to be broken (e.g. by dropping), marisna means causing someone to die (e.g. by shooting) and ᶞussnwa ‘lift’ means causing something to move upwards (e.g. raising a flag). On the other hand, the verbs in the decausative
column do not have the causative meaning when they are used intransitively.\(^{83}\) They generally indicate a change of state (e.g. ‘become broken’, ‘become dead’ and so on), while volitive verbs cause this change of state.\(^{84}\) Levin (1993: 27-30) states that verbs such as *break, crack, bend* etc. that undergo the causative/inchoative alternation in English can roughly be characterised as verbs of change of state or position. This statement applies to the colloquial Sinhala verbal alternation in question as well. However, we do not wish to use the term *change of state or position* as the criterion that distinguishes verbs of valency alternation in Table 4-2 from the rest (e.g. those in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4). This is because *change of state or position* appears to be too broad a term to distinguish decausative verbs from the rest. On the basis of the lexical semantics, the distinction between verbs in the transitive column and the decausative column in Table 4-2 may be best seen along lines of causative versus non-causative.\(^{85}\)

The causative/non-causative distinction with verbs of valency alternation can also be viewed in terms of the absence or presence of an agent’s involvement in bringing about the event. For instance, something might break by itself; a door might open or close by itself, and a death can occur due to natural causes. Alternatively, all these eventualities (and others such as those given in Table 4-2) may be brought about by some form of external causation (e.g. by an agent and/or an instrument), as can be seen by such examples as *the child broke the window* (by throwing a stone) and *the terrorist killed the politician*. Thus, transitive events/actions are induced or brought about by an external cause (usually by an volitive agent), and in such instances they function as transitive verbs. In contrast, decausative verbs function as spontaneous events, and no agent is present or implied. Such clauses are semantically and syntactically intransitive.

We can compare the shared meaning components of verbs in Table 4-2 with those in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4. The shared behaviour of verbs in Table 4-3 suggests

\(^{83}\) Note that in involitive constructions the same verb form can be used transitively and in unintentional contexts, as shown by (1b) and (2b) earlier. This is altogether a different construction, as we argue in the present study. Further, such transitive involitive clauses also convey a causative meaning, just as their volitive counterparts (see (1a) and (2a)).

\(^{84}\) Here, the term ‘change of state’ also includes change of place.

\(^{85}\) It may be noted that these verb forms may also take a causative morpheme, which in turn adds another argument to the argument structure of verb. Here, we are not concerned about the formation of morphological causatives.
that the external causation cannot be separated from events expressed by these verbs. For instance, actions such as *kanwa ‘eat’, liyənwa ‘write’, hadənwa ‘make’* and *baninəwa ‘scold’* always have an agent regardless of the fact that actions are carried out voluntarily or involuntarily. It is not possible to imagine instances of eating and writing etc. without the involvement of some external causation (i.e. volitive/involitive agent, instruments such as a pen). These events cannot be self-generated. Therefore, the involitive verbs in Table 4-3 cannot be considered decausatives or spontaneous events, unlike those in Table 4-2. It is because of this reason that even when the agent is not overtly expressed it is implied in these clauses. The semantic difference between the volitive ones and their involitive counterparts in Table 4-3 has to do with the volitionality on the part of the agent. Likewise, the volitive intransitive verbs in Table 4-4 differ from the involitive counterparts only on the basis of volitivity. These volitive and involitive verbs also cannot be viewed on the basis of the causative/decausative distinction.

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86 In this instance, *hadenwa ‘make’* is used in the sense of making something like a chair or cooking food. There is another usage of *hadenwa* which is for bring up/raising children. In the second usage, it can also function intransitively as a decausative form, as in the following:

```
mee lamayi narəkə hədenəwa.
these child.PL badly make.INV.PRE
```

‘These children grow up badly.’
Table 4-3: Transitive verbs not exhibiting a valence alternation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volitive</th>
<th>Involitive[87]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kanwə́a</td>
<td>kəwenwə́a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kiyə́wə́a</td>
<td>kiyəwenwə́a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>liyəwenwə́a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gilə́wə́a</td>
<td>gilenwə́a</td>
</tr>
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<td>hadə́wə́a</td>
<td>hadənə́a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banə́wə́a</td>
<td>bənenwə́a</td>
</tr>
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<td>paagənenwə́a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>gərenwə́a</td>
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<td>rakə́wə́a</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-4: Intransitive verbs

To sum up the discussion so far, certain eventualities can be brought about by external causation or alternatively they may occur spontaneously. Those that involve external causation are transitive, while those that occur spontaneously are intransitive (also see Levin and Rappaport Havav (1995: 102-3) for a similar view in relation to English verbs). On the other hand, certain eventualities cannot occur spontaneously,
because they must be brought about by an external causation. Verbs expressing such eventualities do not undergo valency alternation.

4.4.2.1 The Imperative Construction: A Confirmation of the Analysis

In what follows, we discuss the imperative construction that can partially distinguish decausative verbs from other involitive verbs, and that this construction can more importantly confirm facts presented so far with regard to agentless constructions, valency alternation and semantic characterisation of verbs.

As mentioned in § 1.6.1 and § 1.6.4, intentionality involvement on the part of the subject in carrying out actions is morphologically indicated by case on the subject NP and by a special morpheme on the verb—intentional subjects appear with the nominative case and the verb is in volitive form. Non-intentional subjects (i.e. accidental agents, experiencers, patients, etc.) appear with a case other than nominative and the verb is in the involitive form. However, there appear to be two instances in which this semantically based morphosyntactic encoding is not followed. The first one is due to the gaps in the morphological paradigm; for instance when a volitive form is absent in the morphological paradigm, the involitive form of the verb may be used, and vice-versa.89 What concerns us here is the second instance, which, as far as we are aware, has gone unnoticed in the literature. This instance is present in a number of constructions including the intransitive imperative construction, in which intentional subjects may appear with the morphologically involitive form of the verb, even when the (morphologically) volitive verb form is available.90 Examples of intransitive imperatives illustrating the semantically volitive use of morphologically involitive verb forms are given in (33):

89 The following is an example:

\[\text{mam} \text{ wa} = \text{en} \text{ wa} \]
\[1SG.\text{NOM} \text{ fall.}\text{INV.PRE} \]

‘I fall.’ [It is not an accident, and the actor falls on purpose. Or else the actor may be pretending to fall.] (Henadeerage 1995: 57)

Morphologically involitive \text{wa} = \text{en} \text{wa} is used here, since a corresponding volitive form \text{*wa} = \text{en} \text{wa} \text{fall.VOL.PRE} does not exist. See Inman (1993) and Henadeerage (1995) for a discussion of the issue of gaps in the morphological paradigm.

90 If the morphologically volitive form is used instead, then the sentence is no longer intransitive, and it is a different construction.
In relation to the verbs with a valency alternation (i.e. those in Table 4-2), we mentioned that in the transitive use of such verbs the event is brought about by an external causation, and that in intransitive use the event takes place spontaneously. Thus, with regard to rawëmwa ‘deceive’, there are two possible situations: one can deceive another person, or not knowingly one may be in a situation in which s/he gets deceived. Also, one can intentionally avoid such a situation, as in (33a), in which the verb is used intentionally and intransitively. (33b)-(33d) also illustrate the same point.

Sentence (33d) has two verbs: mærenna ‘die’ and bædennə ‘tie’, both of which are intransitive and semantically volitive (although they are morphologically involitive). The morphologically volitive form ba’dinwa ‘tie’ is transitive, and also takes an accusative object, as in Gune tied up the dog. Its intransitive use has the meaning X is tied to Y.

The importance of these intransitive imperative constructions is that they illustrate the intransitive use of transitive verbs, which undergo a valency alternation. Further, these constructions do not have an agentive participant which causes such events. The sole argument in the intransitive imperative construction is the intentional actor, which is also the imperative addressee. Note that the imperative addressee is the

91 It was used in the context in which a friend advises Lora to get divorced from her husband. Source: teledrama ‘Isiwa Asapuwa’.

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highest argument of the clause, and thus this construction also provides evidence for the subjecthood potential of these NPs.\(^{92}\)

Intransitive imperatives occur only with decausative verbs. Further, as a secondary requirement of the imperative construction, the subject must be animate, as it corresponds to the imperative addressee. The following verbs in Table 4-2 also allow imperative addressee: *akilen\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘be shrivelled up’, *beeren\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘escape serious injuries/difficulties’, *hellen\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘shake, *issen\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘rise’ *wa\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)nen\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘wave/waft/reel/wag’, *na\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wen\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘bend over’ and *ka\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)r\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)ken\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wa* ‘turn’. Interestingly, the imperative construction is not possible with any of the involutive verbs in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4, even if they have animate subjects. Thus, all the examples in (34), which are from Table 4-3, and (35), which are from Table 4-4, are ungrammatical:

\[
\begin{align*}
(34) & \quad \ast \text{kawenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/kiywenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/liywenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/gilenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/haddenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\) e\text{paa.}} \\
& \quad \text{eat.INV.INF / say.INV.INF / write.INV.INF / swallow.INV.INF / make.INV.INF do\_not}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(35) & \quad \ast \text{\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)wenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/divenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/ewenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/nawenn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\)/næ\text{\textcircled{a}}\)enn\(\text{\textcircled{a}}\) e\text{paa.}} \\
& \quad \text{cry.INV.INF / run.INV.INF / come.INV.INF / bathe.INV.INF / dance.INV.INF do\_not}
\end{align*}
\]

Although the (understood) actors of sentences given in (34-35) are animate, the imperative construction is not possible with them. This is because the imperative addressee must also be able to act intentionally in order to carry out the action. Due to the nature of this construction it is limited to verbs taking animate subjects (hence it was earlier referred to as a partial test for distinguishing such verb forms). Nonetheless, the fact that it occurs only with decausative verbs (taking animate subjects) shows that decausative verbs are different from other involutive verbs (both transitive and intransitive).

### 4.4.3 Separating Valency from Volition: Arguing for Decausatives

In this section, we argue for recognition of decausatives as a distinct construction. We show that the decausative verbs in Table 4-2 are different from involutive verbs in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4, although they have identical verb forms.

---

\(^{92}\) The imperative addressee is sensitive to logical subjecthood in some languages (See Manning (1996) and Kroager (1993)).
As mentioned before, all the verbs in Sinhala are marked with the volitive or involitive morpheme, which generally indicates the (un-)intentionality on the part of the subject argument. Thus, in Table 4-2, transitive verbs have the volitive morpheme in them, while decausative verbs have the involitive morpheme in them. Likewise, those verbs in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4 do the same. However, when transitive verbs are intransitivised, a process only possible with those verbs in Table 4-2, the morphologically marked volitivity on verbs has no effect on the subject of the clause. In other words, the distinguishing characteristic of the two types of verbs given in the transitive and decausative columns in Table 4-2 is not volitivity. This is why it is possible to have both patients as well as intentional actors as subjects of these decausative verbs (consider, for instance, (1c) and (33d) both of which have the verb marenwa ‘die’). Semantically it is possible to see why decausatives need not be unintentional. Such states of affairs may take place with or without an intentional agent making the volitionality irrelevant. We argue that the crucial difference between the two types of verbs is valency: the ones given in the transitive/‘volitive’ column are transitive, while those in the decausative/‘involitive’ column are intransitive. One of the important syntactic characteristics of agentless constructions is that they are intransitive, but not necessarily unintentional. It is because of these correlations between agentless constructions and decausative verbs that the agentless construction is possible only with decausative verbs.

We can compare the relationship between the two types of verbs given in Table 4-3. They are grouped along the line of volition as is morphologically encoded. Volitive verbs appear with intentional subjects, while involutive verbs appear with unintentional subjects strictly following the morphological marking. In contrast with those in Table 4-2, the division between the two types of verbs in Table 4-3 is not valency. This explains why involutive verbs in Table 4-3 are always transitive just like their volitive counterparts. Intransitive verbs in Table 4-4 also indicate the same division based on volitivity.

The contrast between the decausative verbs and involutive verbs in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4 can thus be seen in terms of valency and volition. Decausative verbs can appear with either intentional or unintentional subjects, although these verbs are

93 The exception to this would be when there is a gap in the morphological paradigm. See fn. 89.
morphologically marked as involitive.\textsuperscript{94} Further, they are intransitive. On the other hand, involitive verbs in Table 4-3 are transitive. But, they never occur with semantically volitional subjects. Likewise, intransitive verbs of Table 4-4 never occur with semantically volitional subjects.

The point we want to make here is that verbs undergoing valency alternation (e.g. Table 4-2) are best distinguished in terms of valency, either as transitive or intransitive, not on the basis of volitionality. On the other hand, the verbs in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4 that do not undergo valency alternation are best distinguished on the basis of volitionality, either as volitive or involitive, not on the basis of valency. Such a treatment explains not only the contrasting characteristics and distribution of decausatives and involitives mentioned above, but also the existence of transitive verbs that do not become intransitive in the involitive form (i.e. the fact that only some verbs undergo valency alternation), and the occurrence of intentional subjects with morphologically involitive verbs.

Our treatment of the agentless construction and related valency alternation phenomena also shows that there is no correlation between the volitive/involitive distinction and the transitive/intransitive distinction. What we observed so far is that valency cuts across the morphologically marked volitive/involitive distinction, while morphologically marked volition cuts across the transitive/intransitive distinction. It is possible to represent the separate divisions of verbs along the lines of valency and volition as in Figure 4-1.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure41.png}
\caption{Divisions of verbs according to volition and valency}
\end{figure}

Now we briefly look at how the analysis of the present study can be compared with some observations made in previous studies.

\textsuperscript{94} An alternative explanation would be that both decausatives and involitives have two different morphemes, although they are phonologically identical.
Under the present analysis, as can be seen in Figure 4-1, involitives can be transitive or intransitive. This is in contrast with Gunasinghe’s view that “the volitive constructions are transitive or intransitive while the involitive constructions are intransitive” (1985:105). As we showed, involitive verbs such as those in Table 4-3 are transitive, and cannot be used in transitively. According to our analysis, those that can become intransitive are those that undergo the causative\decausative alternation.

In the light of our analysis, we can see why a term like ‘agentless involitives’ (Inman 1993:96, 147) is inappropriate to describe the agentless construction, as such clauses are not necessarily non-volitional. Also, recall Inman’s claim that involitive verbs have a variable argument structure (§ 4.2.4). In the light of the present study, this claim does not appear to hold.

Further, separating involitives from decausatives means that the atiŋ phrase that appears in transitive involitive clauses (e.g. (1b) and (2b)) need not be treated as optional (cf. Gunasinghe and Kess (1989:68)) or as an expanded form (of involitives) (cf. Wijayawardhana et al. (1991:113), also see Gair (1970:78)). Thus, we simply treat such transitive involitive clauses with the atiŋ phrase as the involitive counterpart of transitive volitive clauses like (1a) and (2a). The atiŋ phrase is part of the argument structure of verb, in which it is the most prominent argument (i.e. L-SUBJ). This explains why it shares all the subjecthood properties of nominative subjects, as we discussed in Chapter 3.

The occurrence of involitive verbs in volitional contexts was not previously thought of as a productive construction. As can be seen in Wijayawardhana et al., such volitive states of affairs occurring with involitive verbs are treated as exceptions:

“It [i.e. notion of control comprising features such as ability and volition, DKH] is an inherent property of animates (normally humans) as opposed to inanimates, and of agent role. This is why, with a few notable exceptions, inanimate and inactive subjects automatically select passive morphology [i.e. involitive verb] in Sinhala” (Wijayawardhana et al. 1991: 110) (emphasis mine, DKH).

To sum up the analysis, we showed that only some transitive verbs can become intransitive. These intransitive verbs, which we referred to as decausatives cannot be characterised as volitive or involitive. Therefore, we argued that they should be distinguished as a separate construction from the involitive construction. Separation of verbs into decausatives and involitives follows from the distinct characteristics of these
two constructions, and also explains some facts (e.g. involitive verbs in volitional contexts), which previously did not receive an explanation. We showed that those verbs that form decausatives can be semantically characterised on the basis of their lexical semantics.

4.4.4 Argument Structure of Valency Alternating Verbs

While there may be more than one alternative to formally account for the valency alternation in these verbs, we will not pursue alternative accounts here. In this section we briefly look at the argument structure of those verbs that undergo a valency alternation.

In relation to argument structure of decausative verbs in colloquial Sinhala, there is an important characteristic of decausatives that should be taken into account. Decausative clauses are not only syntactically but also semantically intransitive. We showed that decausative clauses do not even have implied agents. In this regard, decausatives can be contrasted with the prototypical passive construction in which syntactic valency is reduced at the level of grammatical functions and semantic valency remains constant in both active and passive forms. This means that a passive-like rule (i.e. a lexical rule suppressing the agent at the grammatical function level) is not appropriate for decausatives.

Verbs undergoing a valency alternation may be considered to have a variable valency, as they can be either transitive or intransitive. We assume that verbs such as $\text{mar}\text{-}\text{ar}$ ‘kill/die’, $\text{kad}\text{-}\text{ar}$ ‘break’ $\text{waw}\text{-}\text{ar}$ ‘grow’ etc. that undergo a valency alternation (see Table 4-2) have two subcategorisation frames: one has a single argument (intransitive/decausative), and the other has two arguments (transitive). For instance, $\text{mar}\text{-}\text{ar}$ ‘kill/die’ is assumed to have following lexical entries:

$$\text{mar}\text{-}\text{ar} \ V \ (\uparrow\text{PRED}) = \text{‘kill} <(\uparrow\text{SUBJ}) \ (\uparrow\text{OBJ})\text{’} \quad \text{(e.g. (1a) and (1b))}$$
$$\text{mar}\text{-}\text{ar} \ V \ (\uparrow\text{PRED}) = \text{‘die} <(\uparrow\text{SUBJ})\text{’} \quad \text{(e.g. (1c))}$$

On the other hand, a transitive verb like $\text{liy\text{-}\text{ar}}$ ‘write’, which does not occur intransitively, is assumed to be:

$$\text{liy\text{-}\text{ar}} \ V \ (\uparrow\text{PRED}) = \text{write} \ \text{‘}<\uparrow\text{SUBJ} \ (\uparrow\text{OBJ})\text{’}$$
We showed that verbs undergoing a valency alternation can be identified on the basis of certain lexical semantic properties they possess. Only these verbs are assumed to have two lexical entries. As we argued, volitionality does not alter the valency of a verb. Therefore, both the volitive form and the involitive form have the same transitivity value. On this basis, we assume that volitive and involitive verbs have the same lexical entry.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we argued that the agentless construction should be distinguished from the involitive construction. We showed that these two constructions have distinct characteristics: volitionality is the distinguishing feature of the involitive construction, while valency is the distinguishing feature of the decausative construction. A treatment of them as separate constructions has several advantages. The most important of all is the fact it can explain such sentences in which volitional states of affairs occur with the involitive form of the verb. We have shown that such sentences are decausatives, not involitives. This is because decausatives may denote volitional or non-volitional actions/events.

Our analysis can also explain why not all involitives are intransitive. This is because intransitivity is a characteristic of decausatives, and involitives are not necessarily intransitive, hence the presence of involitive transitive clauses. Previously it has been assumed that the agentive participant in such involitive transitive clauses is optional and omissible, and is an expanded form of the intransitive clause. The presence of transitive involitive clauses such as these does not pose any problems for the present analysis, as we argue that the valency alternation is restricted to verbs undergoing the causative/decausative alternation, but not to those exhibiting the volitive/involitive distinction.

The assumption of these two constructions as one by previous studies has resulted in both constructions not receiving an adequate treatment. One consequence of combining the characteristics of the two has led to the observation that transitive clauses tend to be intransitive in the involitive form. Thus, involitivisation is incorrectly thought of as a form of valency reduction. As a result of this assumption, instances in which involitive clauses do occur transitively received some arbitrary explanations.
In this chapter we also made a number of other observations and conclusions, apart from the ones mentioned above. We also showed that involitive constructions and agentless constructions cannot be regarded as passive in colloquial Sinhala due to the observed differences between these constructions and prototypical passive. More importantly, we showed that despite the valency reduction associated with the agentless construction, it is not similar to prototypical passive due to the fact that both semantic valency and syntactic valency are reduced in the agentless construction.

We argued that there is no correlation between the volitive/involitive distinction and the transitive/intransitive distinction. The valency alternation phenomena are semantically restricted, although its effect is syntactically relevant. We further provided a semantic characterisation of verbs undergoing valency alternation, and showed how the lexical semantics of individual verbs can be used to explain their characteristics and distribution.
Chapter 5  Non-Verbal Sentences

5.1 Introduction

We treat all the predicate types with the exception of verbs as non-verbal. Predicates of non-verbal sentences (NVSs) can belong to any of the categories: adjectives, postpositions and nouns. The main goal of this chapter is to explore the characteristics of NVSs. In this analysis, more specifically we will examine issues relating to distinguishing word classes, negation selection pattern of some negators, clause structure of NVSs, and the lack of copula in NVSs.

We will begin our discussion of NVSs with an analysis of word classes, in particular nouns, adjectives and postpositions in colloquial Sinhala. We will show in §5.2 that although different word classes are hard to distinguish from each other due to common characteristics they possess, they are in fact syntactically different from each other. Negation selection is a useful syntactic criterion in this regard, as it can distinguish some word classes from others. We will also discuss the complex negation pattern of two negators.

In §5.4, as one of the main goals of this chapter, we examine the structure of NVSs and compare them with verbal sentences (VSs) in order to examine if they differ from VSs in terms of clause structure. We see this as a necessary task especially because VSs and NVSs have been argued to be different in a previous study (Kariyakarawana 1998). Colloquial Sinhala has been claimed to possess two different clause structures; one for VSs and another for NVSs (Kariyakarawana 1998). As discussed in §3.2.2 of Chapter 3, the main differences are claimed to be a structural difference in subject, and theta assignment of verbal and non-verbal predicates. Further, Kariyakarawana claims that these structural distinctions are reflected in different syntactic constructions in which verbal and non-verbal sentences can or cannot participate. It will be shown that there is no such structural difference between VSs and NVSs as claimed by Kariyakarawana. Further, an analysis of the structure of NVSs will show if a uniform treatment of VSs and NVSs is possible, and the conclusions made with regard to VSs can be extended to NVSs.
We will also investigate whether NVSs contain some kind of underlying verb in § 5.5. The lack of any form of copula in NVSs has some theoretical implications as to how we account for them.

5.2 Word Classes and Non-Verbal Predicates

Generally in colloquial Sinhala, just as in many other languages, nouns can be heads of arguments; adjectives can be attributes and predicates; and postpositions may indicate directional, temporal and spatial relationships. Such specific characteristics of lexical items, whether they be morphological, syntactic or semantic, are the motivation behind the classification of distinct categories or word classes. Some members of a particular word class, however, may share morphosyntactic properties of a different word class. Thus, such an overlapping of morphosyntactic properties between different word classes makes it difficult to differentiate and classify one class from another in colloquial Sinhala.

It appears that a particular word class sharing characteristics of other classes is common in many languages (see Bhat (1994)). Bhat argues that languages form a gradation with regard to categorial distinctions (i.e. adjective-noun, adjective-verb, etc.), as such distinctions between different categories may be manifested strongly in some languages, while in some others such a distinction may not be very clear-cut (also see Schachter (1985:13)). In what follows, we discuss nouns, adjectives and postpositions as word classes using morphosyntactic criteria, rather than semantic and notional distinctions, as we believe that classification of a word into a particular class should depend on morphosyntactic criteria. This is because a categorial distinction of word classes along the lines of morphosyntactic features would explain some characteristics of word classes with regard to their functions in some syntactic phenomena.

5.2.1 Adjectives

Being able to function predicatively and attributively is generally seen as a property of adjectives in languages (see Schachter (1985:13) for a discussion), and colloquial Sinhala adjectives are not different with regard to this prototypical property. However, overlapping characteristics of nouns and adjectives (and of postpositions) in colloquial Sinhala raise questions as to whether adjectives are a class of their own or a subclass of
nouns. Reynolds (1980:136) states that adjectives in colloquial Sinhala are not a “recognisable formal class”, and that adjectives are the stem forms of nouns. To the same effect, Gunasekara (1891:138) states that “...every noun may be used as an adjective of this class [as attributes of nouns - DKH]”. In traditional Sinhala grammar, words are divided into four groups: *naam* ‘nouns/pronouns’, *kriyaa* ‘verbs’, *nipaat* and *upa* or *sarga*, which comprise two classes of particles. Under this classification, adjectives are treated as nouns.

Some forms cannot be morphologically distinguished as to whether they should be classified as nouns or adjectives (or even postpositions); in other words some lexical items may be used as nouns and adjectives without the need of a derivational suffix: (see (1)). All these forms can function as arguments, predicates and nominal modifiers. Consider, for instance, (2a-b) in which *hayy* ‘strength/strong’ is a noun. (b) functions as a nominal predicate. As a nominal, it has been modified by an adjective, and has the indefinite suffix attached to it. *Hayy* in (2c-e) modifies nouns (c), and functions as a predicate (d-e). Thus, a lexical form such as this cannot be recognised as a noun or adjective on the basis of morphological criteria, nor can nouns and adjectives be recognised on the basis of their function as a modifier of nouns or a predicate of a clause.

(1)  
- *us* ‘height/tall’,  
- *hay* ‘fear/fearful’,  
- *lass* ‘beauty/beautiful’,  
- *gun* ‘nutrition/nutritious’,  
- *suw* ‘fragrance/fragrant’,  
- *sudu* ‘white’,  
- *dig* ‘length/long’,  
- *nar* ‘bad thing/bad’,  
- *dur* ‘distance/distant’,  
- *kar* ‘troubles/troublesome’

(2)  
- *hay* ‘strength/strong’:

---

95 Adverbial particles, postpositional particles, conjunctions, interjections, and prefixes and suffixes belong to the group of particles. Although most of them are indeclinable (hence, the name ‘indeclinable particles’) some postpositions do take case marking (see § 5.2.2). *Nipatas* are free morphemes, while *upa* or *sarga* are prefixes, which are bound morphemes (Ven. T Sutadhara p.c.).

96 Traditional Sinhala part of speech classification is reminiscent of that of Sanskrit, to which Sinhala is closely related. According to grammarians like Yaaksa, Sanskrit has four major word classes: a class of verbs, a class of nouns and two classes of indeclinables (Joshi 1966). Adjectives are, thus, not recognised as a separate word class. Also in some other languages, the relationship between adjectives and other categories, and whether adjectives form a category of their own or belong to a subcategory of nouns and/or verbs are highly debated issues (see Bhat (1994:151, 245) and references therein, Schachter (1985:13), Joshi (1966) and Dench (1987:389) for similarities in Martuthunira adjectives and nouns).
a. *ka"be* hayyo
   \textit{rope.LOC strength}
   ‘the strength of the rope’

b. *api-jı  eekı  ho"dı hayyak.*
   \textit{1PL-DAT that good strength.IND}
   ‘For us, it is a good strength/advantage.’

c. *hayyo ka"bı  ‘strong ropes’*

d. *ka"bı  hayya-yı*
   \textit{rope strong-AM}
   ‘The rope is strong’

e. *ka"bı  hayyo  na:wı:
   \textit{rope strength NEG}
   ‘The rope is not strong’

Sentences in (3) also illustrate the same point:

(3) *digı  ‘length/long’*:

a. *meeke  digı  adı  haya-yı.*
   \textit{this.LOC length foot six-AM}
   ‘The length of this is 6 feet.’

b. *meekı  adı  hayak  diga-yı.*
   \textit{this foot six.IND long-AM}
   ‘This is 6 feet long.’

Consider ‘the assertion marker’ -(y)i, glossed as AM in (2d) and (3). It is not a morphological marker that can distinguish adjectival forms from nominal forms, although it may seem so at first sight. Its distribution is very restricted, and it can only be suffixed to vowel-ending adjectival forms when they are predicates (see (2d)), but not when they are attributes, as in (2c) (Gair 1970:39, Reynolds 1980:21, Karunatillake 1992:12). It does not appear in negative forms (see (2e)) or after consonant-ending adjectives.

Another characteristic of nouns that is also shared by most descriptive adjectives is their ability to be heads of arguments, and be case-marked. Such forms have different functions in a clause depending on the case markers, as arguments (4a) or as adjuncts (4b). In exclamatory constructions, such adjectives occupy the place of a head of an NP (4c).
Thus, it is difficult to distinguish nouns from adjectives because they appear in the same structural position of the predicador of clause and the head of NP. Further, they can function as attributes of nouns.\(^{97}\)

There is, however, some evidence to differentiate adjectives from nouns. In this section, we present an observable difference between nominal predicates and what we claim to be adjectival predicates. Recall, for instance, (2b) and (2d), which we claim contain a nominal and an adjectival predicate respectively. The basis for claiming this is not simply the presence of (in)definite case markers (for nominal predicates) and the assertion marker -(y)i (for adjectival predicates), though these morphological features may well help to determine their parts of speech classes. Consider sentences in (5), in which we claim that (5a) has a nominal predicate, while (b) has an adjectival predicate:

(5) a. eekʰ haŋmoogemʰ *(hu'gak) ayitiyak.\(^{98}\)  
that everyone.GEN.EMP *(very) ownership/right.IND  
‘That is a right of everyone.’

\(^{97}\) It is to be noted that not all adjectives function as arguments. For instance, the following adjectives do not take number/(in)definiteness markers:


Therefore, they do not have the function of nouns (as was the case with those in (4a-b) in the text). However, note that \textit{alut} ‘new’ can take instrumental case as given in (4b), and functions as an adverb.

\(^{98}\) The emphatic marker, glossed as EMP indicates the emphasis with the meaning such as ‘inclusiveness’, ‘the very’, ‘the same’ (Karunatillake 1992:125).
Ayitiyə ‘ownership/right’ (with the indefinite marker -ak) is the predicate in (5a), which is a nominal equational sentence. Now compare (a) with (b), in which the predicate is ayiti (with the assertion marker -yi). We argue that ayiti in (b) is not a noun or a verb, but an adjective. Note that the degree adverb huŋɡak ‘very’ (also means ‘much/many’) cannot occur preceding ayitiyak in (a), unlike in (b). Further, the genitive noun hæmoogemə in (a) is the possessor of the predicate noun, while such a genitive-marked noun is not allowed in (b), since it cannot modify an adjective. Hæmoogemə is an argument of the predicate in (b). On the other hand, the nominal predicate in (a) does not subcategorise for such an argument. Thus, the difference between two predicate types is also shown by the difference in the argument structure in them. We assume that (5a-b) have the phrase structures given in (6a-b), respectively:

(6)    (a)    S                        (b)        S
       NP         NP               N P       N P               A P
       N P           N                              A DV         A

b. eekə hæmoogemə ayitiyak.     eekə hæmoogemə huŋɡak ayitiyi.
that everyone.GEN.EMP right.IND that everyone.DAT.EMP very own.AM

‘That (is) a right of everyone.’              ‘Everyone has a big stake in it’.

Sentences (7-8) illustrate similar facts. As shown, (a) sentences are different from (b) sentences in terms of the argument structure of the predicate. (a) sentences belong to the nominal equational type. In (b) sentences, predicates indicate a certain property that subject NPs have. This difference in lexical semantics of predicates is reflected in the case marking pattern on the subject. Subjects of (a) sentences are nominative (unmarked), while subjects must be in the dative with (b) sentences. Further, nominal predicates can be modified by adjectives, but not by degree adverbs,

99 It is to be noted that the English translation does not fully reflect the meaning of the Sinhala clause. Although, I have glossed ayiti as ‘own’, it is not a verb, and cannot take tense marking. It also cannot take case markers in the same way as other nouns can.
as shown by (a) sentences. The complementary distribution of degree adverbs and adjectives thus indicates another difference between the two types of predicates.

(7)  a. eekə loku/*hu/gak amaaruwak.
    that big/*very illness/difficulty.IND
    ‘That is a serious illness/difficulty.’

   b. ledaa-tə/*ledaa hu/gak/*loku amaaruyi.
     patient-DAT/*patient.NOM very/*big ill/difficult.AM
     ‘The patient is very ill.’

(8)  a. eekə ho'də/*tikak aaranciyak.
    that good/*little.IND news.IND
    ‘That is good news.’

   b. api-tə eekə tikak/*ho'də aaranciyi.
      1PL-DAT that little.IND/*good news.AM
      ‘It is known to us.’
      Lit: ‘We know a bit about that.’

Earlier we mentioned that the assertion marker appearing on certain adjectival predicates cannot be considered a useful diagnostic due to its restricted distribution. However, its correlation with degree adverbs, as we observed so far, is important in terms of distinguishing adjectives from nouns. Everything that can take a degree adverb and that is not systematically ineligible for an assertion marker can take an assertion marker.

There is another important syntactic difference between nouns and adjectives. This is related to the pattern of negation selection. Adjectival predicates and nominal (and also some postpositional) predicates have a different negator selection pattern, as will be shown in § 5.3 in detail.

As observed so far, there is evidence to differentiate adjectives from nouns, and the distinct syntactic behaviour of the two types demands that they be treated as separate classes.

5.2.2 Postpositions

Most lexical items that can be considered postpositions in Sinhala are also nouns. There are two types: the first type is a group of nouns that themselves inflect for cases
and assign cases to their complements. This type is sometimes referred to as ‘Substantive postpositions’ (Gair 1970:33). Examples are given in (9):

(9) a. \textit{watt\-t\=pahali} \quad \textit{‘(from) below the estate’}  
\hspace{2cm} \text{estate-DAT \ dative-INST} \quad \text{(Gair 1970:33)}

b. \textit{lam\=ya la\=g\=t\=y} \quad \textit{‘to the vicinity of the child / (to) near the child’}  
\hspace{2cm} \text{child.NOM \ near-DAT}

c. \textit{lam\=ya la\=gi} \quad \textit{‘in the vicinity of the child’}  
\hspace{2cm} \text{child.NOM \ near-INST}

d. \textit{galwali th\=t\=j\=y} \quad \textit{‘(to) above the rock’}  
\hspace{2cm} \text{rock.INST \ above-DAT} \quad \text{(Gair 1970:33)}

Other examples include \textit{wat\=e} ‘round’, \textit{kittu\=w} ‘near/vicinity of’ and \textit{dige} ‘long/along’, whose complements take nominative case; \textit{pahal\=e} ‘down/below’, whose complement takes dative or instrumental case; \textit{egoda\=h\=a} ‘beyond’, \textit{pi\=t\=a} ‘outside’ and \textit{megoda\=h\=a} ‘this side’, whose complements take genitive case.

Note that some postpositions and adjectives can be attributes of heads. Consider (10):

(10) a. \textit{la\=g\=e paar\=e}  
\hspace{2cm} \text{short \ road} \quad \text{‘close/short road’}

b. \textit{w\=a\=d\=i\=y\=a la\=g\=e paar\=e}  
\hspace{2cm} \text{more \ close \ road} \quad \text{‘the closer road’}

c. \textit{mee paar\=e (w\=a\=d\=i\=y\=a) la\=g\=i\=y\=a}.  
\hspace{1.5cm} \text{this \ road \ (more) \ close.AM} \quad \text{‘This road is short(er)/close(er)’}

d. \textit{kade *(w\=a\=d\=i\=y\=a) la\=g\=e gee}  
\hspace{1.5cm} \text{shop *(more) \ close \ house} \quad \text{(cf. 10b)}
\hspace{1.5cm} \text{‘the house close(*er) to the shop.’}

---

\textsuperscript{100} Elsewhere in Sinhala literature they are simply referred to as postpositions (see Reynolds (1980), Gair and Paolillo (1988), and Karunatillake (1992)). Other terms like ‘locator nouns’ or ‘secondary postpositions’ are also used to refer to this type of locational words used as postpositions in other languages (see Blake (1994: 9, 16)).
e. Gune **paar** *(\(w\partial d\iy\)) la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)*la\(^9\)gay. \(\text{cf. 10c}\)

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Gune.NOM road *(more) close/*close.AM} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘Gune is close(*er) to the road.’
Lit: ‘Gune is near the road.’

\(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) ‘near/close’ can be an attribute to a noun, as in (10a) and (10b). A degree adverb may modify it (10b-c). In (10c), \(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) is the predicate, to which the assertion marker is affixed. In (10d), the phrase headed by \(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) functions as an attribute to the noun. In this clause, a degree adverb is not acceptable, and as a postposition \(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) takes an NP complement. Similarly the assertion marker (and a modifying degree adverb) cannot occur with \(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) in (10e), in contrast with (c). The unacceptability of the degree adverb with PPs may be because PPs indicate the location or temporal relationship relative to its complement, but not a property or quality, just as adjectives do. We will treat \(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) in (10a-c) as adjectives, and \(la\(^9\)g\(\partial\)\) in (10d-e) as postpositions, due to these differences in syntactic behaviour (also see the negation selection in § 5.3). The difference between the adjectival clause (10c) and postpositional clause (10e) can also be seen in their structures, as shown by (11a) and (b), respectively:

\[
(11) \quad (a) \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{S} \\
\text{SUBJ} \\
\text{NP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{mee paar} \quad (w\partial d\iy) \quad la\(^9\)gay. \\
\text{this road more close.AM} \\
\end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{PRED} \\
\text{AP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{ADV} \\
\text{A} \\
\end{array} \\
\quad (b) \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{S} \\
\text{SUBJ} \\
\text{NP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Gune.NOM road close} \\
\end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{PRED} \\
\text{PP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{NP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{P} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘This road is shorter/closer’
‘Gune is near the road.’

A note regarding the postulation of constituent structures as in (11) is due here. The degree adverb must immediately precede the adjective, and cannot be moved to a different position within the sentence in the same way sentential adverbs can. Therefore, a sentence like *\(w\partial d\iy\) mee paar\(\partial\) la\(^9\)gay is not acceptable. Likewise the complement of a postposition must immediately precede its head.
The second type of postpositions may be considered a group of particles,\(^{101}\) as they themselves do not inflect for case. However, they assign cases to their complements. They include:

\[(12)\]  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{gaen} \text{ ‘about’, tisse ‘throughout’ hærə ‘except’, nisaa ‘due to’, lawaa ‘by’, hində ‘because’, tek ‘up to’, dakwaas ‘as far as’ and ekkə ‘with’, whose complements take nominative case; } \\
& \text{idəla ‘from’, whose complement takes genitive case; and issella ‘before’ and kiyəla ‘by’ whose complements take dative case.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{laaŋya gaen} \text{ (child.NOM about) ‘about the child’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{hæmoomə ekkə (everyone.NOM with) ‘with everyone’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{maasəyəkə-t issella (month.IND-DAT before) ‘before a month’}
\end{align*}
\]

In what follows we will treat these postpositional forms, including the ‘substantive postpositions’, as a class of predicates different from nominal predicates (and adjectival predicates), although some of these postpositions are cross-classified with nouns and adjectives. Syntactic characteristics of PP clauses that are different from those of NP and AP clauses may be best explained by such a separate treatment.

### 5.2.3 Nouns and Nominal Predicates

Clauses with nominal predicates can be grouped into four types depending on the individual characteristics that they possess, namely equational clauses with definite predicates, equational clauses with indefinite predicates, oblique nominal clauses and Action Nominal clauses. We will look at the first three types in this section. Action Nominals will be presented separately in § 5.2.4.

While both nominals in definite predicater clauses are definite (see 13a-b), the predicater in indefinite equational clauses is indefinite (see 13c-d):

- **Equational type with definite NP predicates:**

\[(13)\]  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Gunasiri mahattəyə ape iskoole mul gurawəyəya.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Gunasiri gentleman.NOM 1PL.GEN school.LOC head teacher.NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{‘Mr. Gunasiri is the head teacher of our school.’ (Gair & Paolillo 1988:40)}
\]

---

\(^{101}\) Some of these forms are historically derived from past participles: e.g., hærə ‘having left’, lawaa ‘having put’ (see Gunasekara (1891:310)).
a'. ape iskoole mul guruvərya Gunasiri mahattyya.

1PL.GEN school.LOC head teacher.NOM Gunasiri gentleman.NOM

‘The head teacher of our school is Mr. Gunasiri.’

b. muddo nətiunu ekəfo waəxdi kaarəya mamə.

ring lose.NOMIN-DAT offender.NOM 1SG.NOM

‘The person responsible for the loss of the ring is me.’

b'. mamə muddo nətiunu ekəfo waəxdi kaarəya.

1SG.NOM ring lose.NOMIN-DAT offender.NOM

‘I am the person responsible for the loss of the ring.’

- **Equational type with indefinite NP predicates:**

c. Gunasiri mahattyya ape iskoole guruvəryek.

Gunasiri gentleman.NOM 1PL.GEN school.LOC teacher.IND

‘Mr. Gunasiri is a teacher of school.’

c'.*ape iskoole guruvəryek Gunasiri mahattyya.

1PL.GEN school.LOC teacher.IND Gunasiri gentleman.NOM

d. oyaa-tə meekə təəggak.

2SG-DAT this present.IND

‘This is a present for you.’

d'.*oyaa-tə təəggak meekə.

2SG-DAT present.IND this

Definite equational clauses have nominative case (which is unmarked) for both arguments. We observe two differences with regard to the two nominal equational clauses. Firstly, unlike indefinite nominal predicate clauses (13c-d), definite predicate clauses (13a-b) can invert their order, and either of the two NPs can function as the predicator. The predicator is determined by word order: the first NP is the argument; the second NP is the predicate. On the other hand, the indefinite NP in an equational clause is always the predicator, and must always follow the argument. In other words, the order of constituents cannot be changed. Therefore, the word order in equational clauses is [NP:subject NP:predicate]. Secondly, two types of equational clauses function differently with regard to focussing. While either of the two NPs can be focussed in definite predicator clauses, only the indefinite predicator can be focussed in the second type, as it will be shown in the next chapter (see § 6.2.3).
Non-equational clauses are realised with different case forms (14), unlike equational clauses. The NP that appears to be the predicator may be marked with any one of several cases. Therefore, such clauses may have different meanings depending on case inflections of NPs.

### Oblique Nominal Predicators:

(14) a. *Seeman ayya-t mon´ kar´d´r´yak do d´a?*
    > Seeman elder.brother-DAT what trouble.IND Q now
    ‘What trouble does Seeman have now?’
    Lit: ‘What trouble (is there) for Seeman?’

b. *mee salli oyaa-fə.*
    > this money 2SG-DAT
    ‘This money is for you.’

c. *mee mahatt ya a`mmiikaawe.*
    > this gentleman.NOM America.INST
    ‘This gentleman is from America.’ (Kariyakarawana 1998:53)

d. *ee mahatt ya oostraliyaawe.*
    > that gentleman.NOM Australia.LOC
    ‘That gentleman is in Australia.’

e. *mee pot mage.*
    > this book 1SG.GEN
    ‘This book is mine.’

f. *Sena-ge siiya as`niipe*
    > Sena-GEN grandpa.NOM sick.INST
    ‘Sena’s grandpa is not well/suffering from a sickness.’ (Kariyakarawana 1998:53)

Oblique nominal clauses are similar to definite equational clauses with regard to focussing. Any NP can be focussed in both types. However, oblique nominal clauses differ from equational clauses with regard to word order freedom. The oblique NP is the predicator regardless of the word order. Thus, it is possible to distinguish each type with regard to certain morphosyntactic characteristics.

### 5.2.4 Action Nominals

Sentences in (15) belong to a group that is generally referred to as Action Nominals (henceforth, ANs) (see Gair and Paolillo (1988)). These sentences contain a nominal predicate which describes an activity, not a state, as was the case with some other
nominal predicates shown previously. The nominal predicate is in the nominative case, and is not a nominalised form of a verb, nor is it derived from a verbal predicate in any way.

(15) a. lam’ya  paadwaad’hinaaw.
    child.NOM lesson.DEF/work.DEF/smile.DEF
    ‘The child (is) studying.’
    ‘The child (is) working.’
    ‘The child (is) laughing/smiling.’

b. Andare en ko gowiyo katuaw.
    Andare.NOM come.PRE.VADJ PTK farmer.PL.NOM talk.DEF
    ‘When Andare came the farmers (were) (really) talking.’ (Gair & Paolillo 1988:62)

c. ayya-yi taatta-yi bar kataawak.
    elder.brother.NOM-CONJ father.NOM-CONJ serious talk.IND
    ‘Elder brother and father (are engaged in) a serious talk / (are seriously) talking.’

As with other NVSs discussed previously, time reference needs to be indicated by the context (as in 15b), or by a time adverbial. However, unlike other NVSs, ANs have the meaning of a continuous action, or, as Gair and Paolillo state, repetition of the act. They occur in most cases as definite nouns, though sometimes indefinite ANs are possible, as in (15c). Further, as nouns they can also be modified by an adjective. Gair and Paolillo state that they differ from nominal equational clauses at least in two ways:

a. There is no co-reference, identity or class inclusion relation between subject and predicate. Put simply, there is no ‘is’ relation.

b. The interpretation is ‘do’ rather than ‘is’, i.e., ‘NP do the action of N’. (Gair and Paolillo 1988:63)

A list of ANs is given in Table 5-1. Some of them only become acceptable with the context being specified by means of adverbs.
Table 5-1: Action Nominals

| caarikaaw | ‘wondering, strolling’ | randu | ‘fighting/fight’ |
| gam | ‘trip, journey’ | sakm | ‘promenade’ |
| gosaaw | ‘noise, racket’ | sell | ‘playing’ |
| hinaaw | ‘smile’ | wæ | ‘working/work’ |
| kaiy | ‘chatting/chat’ | wagaaw | ‘cultivation’ |
| kataaw | ‘talking/talk’ | wel’d | ‘trade, commerce’ |
| paad | ‘lesson’ | winood | ⊗ ‘pleasure’ |

Constructions which involve a nominal predicate to describe activities and/or emotions are also found in other languages. These languages with similar constructions include Kayardild (Tangkic, Australia, Evans 1985:179), Panyjima (Pama-Nyungan, Australia, Dench 1981:32), Nyamal (Pama-Nyungan, Australia, Allan Dench, p.c.) and Warlpiri (Pama-Nyungan, Australia, Simpson 1991:125). For instance, in Martuthunira (Pama-Nyungan, Australia) and other related languages like Panyjima, the use of the word for ‘speech’, ‘language’ and ‘word’, etc. (in locative case) describes an activity of talking or engaged in a talk, as Dench (1995) explains. The action nominal construction in most of these languages occurs without a verb or copula, although in some, like Martuthunira, a copula verb occurs together with the locative nominal. One of the characteristics of this particular construction in Australian languages, as Simpson explains, is that these nominal predicates do not act as a referential entity. As shown above, ANs in colloquial Sinhala also display the same characteristic.

5.2.5 Null-Copula and No Copula

In relation to NVSs in colloquial Sinhala and the lack of a copula, some remarks are due here. Unlike verbal predicates in which the tense information would be morphologically indicated, non-verbal predicates do not indicate tense, and are neutral as far as the time reference is concerned. Where the time reference is required, time adverbials may be used (see (16), for instance).

Many languages have copula constructions, some of which have obligatory copulas while others do not. Both these types differ from NVSs found in Sinhala. In some languages, like English, grammatical information such as tense, aspect and mood

---

102 The majority are from Gair and Paolillo. The symbol ⊗ indicates the ones from Gair and Paolillo that our informants were not happy to use as ANs.
in NVSs is expressed by obligatory copulas. On the other hand, the copula is restricted to certain constructions in some languages. For instance, the copula is absent in present tense clauses, but must be present in other tenses in Hebrew, Arabic (Eid 1991:32) and in Russian (Stassen 1994:110). In such languages the zero copula is said to occur in contexts where such grammatical information may be absent or unmarked. Lyons (1969:323) states that “sentences that are temporally, modally and aspectually ‘unmarked’ (e.g. ‘Mary is beautiful’) do not need the ‘dummy’ carrier”. Colloquial Sinhala, on the other hand, is different from these languages, in that a copula morpheme is completely absent. In other words, there is no overt or morphologically un-surfaced form that can be called copula. (We will revisit this issue in detail in § 5.5). Some other languages that would fit into the same group include Maori (Biggs 1969:24), Nakkara (Central Arnhem Land Coast, Australia, Eather 1990:367) and Tagalog (Schachter 1985:11). In fact many Australian and Austronesian languages are said to lack the copula completely (see Stassen 1994).103

(16)  
\textit{Gunasiri mahatt\textsuperscript{2}ya d\textsuperscript{\textbeta\texteta\textupsilon\textomicron} ape iskoole mul guruw\textsuperscript{\textupsilon\textomicron\textsigmata\textomicron\textupsilon\textomicron\textupsilon\textomicron\textgamma}}.  
Gunasiri gentleman.NOM now our school.LOC head teacher.DEF

\textit{namut, giy\textsuperscript{\textupsilon\textomicron\textomicron\textupsilon}aurudde eyaa nikam guruw\textsuperscript{\textupsilon\textomicron\textupsilon\textupsilon\textomicron\textupsilon\textomicron\textupsilon\textupsilon}ek wit\textsuperscript{\textupsilon\textupsil

‘Now, Mr. Gunasiri is the head teacher of our school. But, last year he (was) just a teacher.’

5.2.6 Summary

In previous sections, we discussed some morphosyntactic and semantic characteristics of adjectives, postpositions and nouns. Despite certain characteristics that they share with each other, there appears to be clear evidence to distinguish them as distinct categories on the basis of observed morphosyntactic characteristics. The negation selection pattern, to be discussed in detail in § 5.3, also offers syntactic evidence for distinguishing verbal and adjectival clauses from others. Thus, we can assume that all major categories (including verbs) differ from each other, and should be treated differently. We also noted that some parts of speech classes (e.g. postpositions and

\footnote{Stassen’s (1994) work argues against the ‘Dummy Hypothesis’, the view that the copula’s function is to carry grammatical information such as tense, aspect and mood in non-verbal clauses. Stassen shows that in many languages there is no parallelism between zero copula forms and unmarked forms for tense, aspect and mood (as has been assumed by Lyons (1969:322-223) and others).}
nouns) can be grouped into subclasses due to the distinct characteristics that they possess.

We also noted that some nominal clauses, like equational ones, appear to be constrained by some syntactic restrictions (e.g. focussing, to be discussed in § 6.2.3 and word order). We argue that these characteristics of individual predicate types do not suggest that their clause structure is different from that of the rest. The equational clauses are restricted in terms of word order. Unlike in all the other clauses, in which functions are determined morphologically, it is not possible to distinguish the predicate from the argument in equational clauses due to their specific nature. Therefore, the functions of these NPs have to be decided on the basis of word order. On the other hand, the restriction of focussing associated with indefinite predicator clauses is related to the indefiniteness of the NP (see the explanation of this in § 6.2.3). Thus, these restrictions are due to individual characteristics of different predicates, but do not reflect the nature of all the NV predicates as a whole.

One important point that we make in this chapter is that although word classes can be clearly distinguished on the basis of some criteria, there appears to be no difference between the clause structure of individual predicate types, or NVSs as a whole and VSs. We argue that all the NV clause types and VSs function alike in many syntactic constructions, as will be shown in subsequent sections.

In what follows, we examine a number of different syntactic phenomena in order to compare NVSs with VSs.

5.3 Non-Verbal Sentences and Negation

Pattern of negation selection is a useful construction for providing syntactic evidence for distinguishing some word classes, that is, it shows that verbal clauses and adjectival clauses pattern alike, and are different from all other clause types in terms of negation selection.

In what follows, we look at the negation selection by different predicate types, in particular to see what predicate type chooses what negator. First, we present a brief

104 Also see word order freezing in § 7.4, in which we show another instance of fixed word order, where the morphological function identification is not possible in colloquial Sinhala.
overview of both negators. This part is based on the study of NVSs by Gair and Paolillo (1988). Then, we will discuss some issues relating to occurrences of nœæ, and offer an explanation for the negation selection pattern in NVSs. At the end, it will be shown that the negation selection pattern does not help distinguish VSs from NVSs in terms of the clause structure in contrast with Kariyakarawana (1998:38).

In this discussion, we look at the negation pattern of two negators: nœey and nœœ. Nœey is the focus negator, which has all the properties of focus markers as far as distribution is concerned. It can appear with all types of predicates, both verbal and nonverbal as well as with other constituents. On the other hand, nœœ is the neutral negator, and can be used to negate clauses with verbal and adjectival predications, and only some postpositional and nominal predicates. Nœœ must immediately follow the predicate, which is marked with the suffix -e, in the case of a verb, as in (17). On the other hand, nœey may follow any constituent including the predicate. The constituent preceding nœey carries the negative focus reading. When nœey follows the predicate, it negates the whole event (i.e. proposition) or the predicate with its complements may have negative focus meaning depending on the context, as in (17) and (18a). Note that the predicate, in case of a verb, surfaces in the basic declarative form (with the final vowel -a) when followed by nœey. Unlike nœey, nœœ, as the general sentential negator cannot negate arguments as shown by (18b).

(17)  
\begin{verbatim}
 nangi iskoole-t {yanne nœœ / yanœwa nœey}.
younger_sister.NOM school-DAT {go.PRE.E NEG / go.PRE FNEG}
\end{verbatim}

nœœ (NEG): ‘The younger sister does not go to the school.’
nœey (FNEG): ‘It is not that the younger sister is going to the school’
(but, studies at home/goes to work/something else is happening).

(18) a.  
\begin{verbatim}
 nangi iskoole-t yannœ horœ {nœœ/nœey}.
younger_sister.NOM school-DAT go.INF unwilling {NEG / FNEG }
\end{verbatim}

nœœ (NEG): ‘The younger sister is not unwilling go to the school.’
nœey (FNEG): ‘It is not that the younger sister is unwilling to go to the school’
(but, prefers to work/parents can’t afford to send her to school).

b.  
\begin{verbatim}
 nangi {nœey/nœœ} iskoole-t yannœ horœ
younger_sister.NOM {FNEG /NEG} school-DAT go.INF unwilling
\end{verbatim}
‘It is not the younger sister who is unwilling to go to the school.’
With verbal and adjectival predicates, either negator can be used (17-18). Only the focus negator is acceptable with the nominal equational (19a), postpositional (b), oblique nominal (c) and Action Nominal sentences:

(19) a. *Gunasiri mahatt*ya ape iskool-e mul guruw*ryya* {nemy/*næ:e}.
    Gunasiri gentleman.NOM our school-LOC head teacher.DEF {FNEG/*NEG}
    ‘Mr. Gunasiri (is) not the head teacher of our school.’  (Gair & Paolillo 1988:53)

b. *mee pot*o itih*ase g*æn*o {nemy/*næ:e}.
    this book history about {FNEG/*NEG}
    ‘This book (is) not about history.’

c. *mee mahatt*ya æm*rikaawe* {nemy/*næ:e}.
    this gentleman.NOM America.INST {FNEG/*NEG}
    ‘This gentleman (is) not from America.’

d. *lameya paad*æm*o {nemy/*næ:e}.
    child.NOM lesson.DEF {FNEG/*NEG}
    ‘The child (is) not studying.’

In fact the focus negator can be used with any predicator and even with those that have already been negated by næ:e.105 However, the occurrence of næ:e is complicated. Gair and Paolillo further suggest the use of the term [+V] to unite those --i.e. verbs [-N, +V] and adjectives [+N, +V] that can take næ:e, and to separate nominal predicates [+N, -V] that cannot take næ:e. However, they note that some postpositional sentences, which are [-N, -V], appear to be problematic for this view, as they allow næ:e (see 20a), as well as nemey (see 21a). In fact, not only some postpositional clauses, but also some nominal predicate sentences allow næ:e, as shown by (20b-c).

(20) a. *ee pot*o mese ud*o næ:e.
    that book table upon NEG
    ‘That book is not on the table.’  (Gair and Paolillo 1988:53)

105 For instance, the following sentence has been negated with both næ:e and nemey:

    nangi iskoole-t*y yanne næ:e nemey.  (cf. 17)
    younger_sister.NOM school-DAT go.PRE.E NEG FNEG
    ‘It is not that the younger sister is not going to the school’.
(21) a. ee poto mese uʃa nemy.
that book table upon FNEG
‘That book is on not the table’ (but, in the bag). (Gair and Paolillo 1988:53)

b. lamga-ʃa unwa nemy.
child-DAT fever FNEG
‘It is not fever that the child has’ (but something else).

c. ee mahattya oosraliyaawe nemy.
that gentleman.NOM Australia.LOC FNEG
‘It is not Australia where that gentleman is.’

Gair and Paolillo note that nɐxe is also the negator of existential/locative verb tiyenwa ‘be/exist.inanimate’ and innwa ‘be/existanimate’, which it replaces. Thus, (20a-c) are considered to be the negative equivalents of (22a-c), respectively.106

106 It is to be noted that innwa and tiyenwa can also be negated like other ordinary verbs, in which case nɐxe follows the –e marked form of the verb: see (b) sentences below. However, there is a difference in meaning between the locative/existential form and the V + nɐxe form, as shown by (a) and (b) sentences respectively. Note that (b) sentences have a continuative meaning, which is absent in (a) sentences.

(1) a. Gune-ge gedə wə̣də kaarəyo nɐxe.
Gune-GEN house.LOC servant.PL.NOM NEG
‘There (are) no servants at Gune’s house’ (because he can’t afford to pay them).

b. Gune-ge gedə wə̣də kaarəyo inne nɐxe.
Gune-GEN house.LOC servant.PL.NOM be.ANIM.PRE.E NEG
‘Servants don’t stay at Gune’s house’ (because he doesn’t pay them enough).

(2) a. maa laŋə salli nɐxe.
1SG near money NEG
‘I don’t have money’
Lit: ‘There (is) no money with me.’
Therefore, Gair and Paolillo consider nəe that appears with some PPs to be the negative locative/existential verb. Thus, they reach the conclusion that nəe occurs only with the [+V] type of predicates (i.e. verbs and adjectives). Although their study does not mention about the nominal clauses that negate with nəe (20b-c), we assume that the same explanation is also applicable to such sentences, and that they, too, are verbal clauses when negated with nəe.

Gair and Paolillo (1988:49) state that nəe has two main functions (i.e. as an existential negative and a negator of verbal and adjectival clauses). Building on the analysis of Gair and Paolillo, the present study also treats nəe as the negative verbal predicate corresponding to locative/existential innəwa and tiyenəwa. However, our analysis of nəe somewhat differs from that of Gair and Paolillo. We distinguish two forms of nəe. Thus, nəe in locative/existential clauses and nəe verbal/adjectival clauses have two different structures (i.e. lexical entries), although they are homophones. For instance, nəe in example (20) is an argument-taking predicate, just like innəwa and tiyenəwa, with the only exception that nəe is negative, hence a negative predicate. On the other hand, nəe and nemey in verbal and adjectival clauses like (17-18) and nemey in PP, NP and AN sentences like (21) are simply negative markers, not argument-taking predicates. Thus, we assume that there are three

---

b. mau laŋɔ salli tiyenne nəe:
1SG near money be.INAN.PRE.E NEG
‘Money doesn’t last longer with me’ (because I am a big spender).
negators: the predicative $\text{næv}$ (as in 20a), the neutral negator $\text{næv}$ (as in 17-18) and the focus negator $\text{nemey}$ (as in 21): see Table 5-2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicative</th>
<th>Non-negative Predicate</th>
<th>Negative Predicate</th>
<th>Non-Predicative Negative Marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VPs, APs</td>
<td>$\text{næv}$ (e.g. 20)</td>
<td>$\text{næv}$ (e.g. 17-18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Locative/Existential</td>
<td>$\text{næv}$ (e.g. 20)</td>
<td>$\text{næv}$ (e.g. 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>innswatiyenwa (e.g. 22)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP, NPs, ANs</td>
<td></td>
<td>$\text{nemey}$ (e.g. 21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5-2: Negator selection of different predicate types

There is an important reason as to why one form of $\text{næv}$ should be treated as a predicate and the other as a negative marker. Let us consider $\text{næv}$ in the verbal sentence (17), the adjectival sentence in (18a) and $\text{næv}$ in existential clauses in (20). $\text{næv}$ in negative existential clauses such as (20) is a (negative) predicate. If we assume that it is the same predicate which appears in adjectival clauses, such as (18a), such clauses would be seen as having a second predicate. Consequently, these clauses that negate with $\text{næv}$ can no longer be treated as non-verbal. Further, when a verbal predicate is negated with $\text{næv}$, as in (17), that clause, as a result of having $\text{næv}$, would be seen as having two predicates: the verb predicate and the negative predicate, which we argue is not the case. Therefore, the two forms of $\text{næv}$ should be treated differently.

Under the present analysis, sentences in (20) are considered VSs along with those in (22), while those in (21) are NVSs in the sense that they do not contain a (hidden) verbal predicate, and $\text{nemey}$ is simply the negative marker, not a predicate.\(^\text{107}\) Thus, $\text{nemey}$ negates postpositional, nominal and AN sentences, as well as being the negative focus marker. On the other hand, $\text{næv}$ negates locative/existential clauses, in which is it a negative predicate, as well as being the negator for verbal and adjectival

\(^{107}\) In § 5.5, we argue that NVSs do not have copula verbs, and that locative/existential verbs are not underlyingly present in NVSs.
sentences, in which it is a negative marker. We assume that these negators may have following the lexical entries as given in (23a-c):\(^{108}\)

(23)  a. **Negative predicate:**

\[
n\text{æ}: \text{V, } (\uparrow \text{PRED}) = \text{exist/be } \text{‘<(\uparrow \text{SUBJ}) (\uparrow \text{XCOMP})>’} \\
(\uparrow \text{XCOMP SUBJ}) = (\uparrow \text{SUBJ}) \\
\text{NEG} = +
\]

b. **Negative marker:**

\[
n\text{æ}: \text{CL, } \text{NEG} = +
\]

c. **Negative marker (focus):**

\[
n\text{æ}: \text{CL, } \left\{ (\text{COMP}^* \text{GF} \uparrow \text{FOCUS}) = \uparrow \right\} \\
\text{FOCUS} = \uparrow \text{PRED} \\
\text{NEG} = +
\]

Thus, our analysis can explain the different types of negators available for VSs and NVSs. Additionally, it is possible to explain why *nemey*, as the focus negator can negate constituents of verbal clauses and clauses which have already been negated with *næ*:\(^{109}\)

To conclude, NVSs do not contain hidden or underlying verbs, as APs, NPs, PPs and ANs are themselves the predicates of such NVSs. On this basis, sentences with locative/existential predicates like (20) and (22) are not considered to be NVSs. Our analysis does not hinge upon the classification of predicates types (i.e. \([\pm V]\)) proposed by Gair and Paolillo, yet it is consistent with their proposal. APs are similar to VPs with respect to allowing (some form of) *næ*, unlike other predicate types, which only allow *nemey* as the negator. In this regard, negation selection can be considered a syntactic criterion for distinguishing some word classes. Finally, it is clear from our analysis that negation selection does not offer evidence to suggest that clause structure of NVSs is different from that of VSs (cf. Kariyakarawana 1998:38).

\(^{108}\) See the discussion in Chapter 6 (in particular § 6.4) for a formulation of lexical entries for focus particles. Focus particles, such as (23c), are assumed to be clitics in this study (see § 7.5.1.2). We tentatively assume that *næ* in (23b) is also a clitic, given its similarity with the focus particle *nemey* (23c). However, its morpho-syntactic status needs further study.

\(^{109}\) See footnote 105.
5.4 VSs, NVSs and Kariyakarawana (1998)

Kariyakarawana (1998) provides a discussion of verbal and non-verbal sentences. On the basis of a number of tests to be reviewed below, he argues that VSs differ structurally from NVSs. These claimed differences have led him to draw a number of important conclusions regarding the clause structure of these verbal and non-verbal predicates. VSs are argued to have ‘inner subjects’, which receive the theta role from the verbal predicate, while subjects of NVSs are said to receive no theta role from those predicates, as they are non-theta assigners. In this section, we will not deal with Kariyakarawana’s conclusions and their bearings to the present or previous studies, as it is discussed in § 3.2.2. However, as it will be shown below, there does not appear to be a difference between verbal and non-verbal clauses which is of such significance as to warrant strong conclusions. Therefore, the validity of such strong conclusions reached on the basis of the following tests may be questioned.

The difference between the clause structures of VSs and NVSs is distinguished in Kariyakarawana on the basis of Embedding, Subject Extraction, Complement Extraction, Topic Interpretation, Nominalisation, Relativisation and the Quantifier Float.

Kariyakarawana uses the notation ‘[+V] clauses’ to refer to VSs and [-V] to refer to NVSs. An important clarification needs to be made here with regard to the terms ‘NVS’, [+V] and [-V]. Some clauses have been referred to with all of these terms making it very difficult to understand whether [+V] refers the verbal non-verbal distinction or the classification of grammatical categories, as used by Gair and Paolillo (1988). For instance, the following adjectival clause in different constructions have been referred to with different terms:

a. me lamɔya bοhɔmɔ hɔ'dɔ-yi. (p.53), referred to as a ‘NVS’ (see p.52)
   this child.NOM very good.AM
   ‘This child is very good.’

b. me lamɔya hɔ’dɔ næxe / hɔ’dɔ nɔmɛ. (p.55), referred to as [+V] (see p.54)
   this child.NOM good NEG /good FNEG
   ‘This child isn’t good.’
   ‘It is not the case that this child is good.’

c. mee pɔntiye lamay dennɛk hɔ’dɔ-yi. (p.62), referred to as ‘non-verbal’ and [-V] (see p. 62)
   this class.LOC child.PL two good.AM
   ‘Two of the children in this class are good.’

---

110 Kariyakarawana’s use of the terms like ‘NVSs’, [+V] and [-V] is rather confusing and inconsistent. Some clauses have been referred to with all of these terms making it very difficult to understand whether [±V] refers the verbal non-verbal distinction or the classification of grammatical categories, as used by Gair and Paolillo (1988). For instance, the following adjectival clause in different constructions have been referred to with different terms:
use of notation \([\pm V]\) by Kariyakarawana, as his \([+V]\) includes some sentences that we treat as NVSs. Under his analysis, NVSs that have verbal paraphrases with \(inn\,\text{wa}\) and \(ti\text{yen}\,\text{wa}\), and those that can negate with \(n\,\text{wa}\) also belong to \([+V]\) type (p. 57). Thus, postpositional predicates, referred to as ‘locative predicates’ by Kariyakarawana, some (non-equational) nominal clauses and some adjectival clauses are \([+V]\). The rest comprising of nominal clauses, postpositional clauses, Action Nominal clauses and adjectival clauses are treated as \([-V]\) clauses, and are argued to be different from \([+V]\) clauses. Therefore, Kariyakarawana’s distinction of \([\pm V]\) clauses is not based on the grammatical category of the predicate nor the classification of predicate types based on the feature system\(^{111}\) used by Gair and Paolillo (1988) for Sinhala.

5.4.1 Embedding

VSs and NVSs alike can occur as embedded sentences. In embedded sentences, the complementiser \(baw\,\text{kiy}\,\text{la}\) must be present (24). Kariyakarawana argues that while both VSs and NVSs can be embedded using the complementiser \(baw\,\text{kiy}\,\text{la}\), only VSs can be embedded as small clauses without the complementiser. This assumption is flawed as all our informants find such sentences as (25) from Kariyakarawana without a complementiser completely unacceptable. Thus, both verbal and NVSs require the presence of a complementiser.

(24)  a. \(\text{mam} \, [\text{eyaa} \, \text{lokkek}] \, \{\text{kiy}\,\text{la} / *\} \, \text{hituwa/kiwwa.}\)
\(1SG.NOM \, [3SG.NOM \, \text{big}_\text{fella.IND}] \, \{\text{COMP} / *\} \, \text{think.PST/say.PST}\)

‘I considered him to be a powerful person.’
Lit: ‘I had thought/said that [he (was) a powerful person].’

b. \(\text{h\,\text{maa}mooom} \, [\text{eyaa} \, \text{boru} \, \text{ki\text{yen}\,\text{wa}}] \, \{\text{kiy}\,\text{ala} / *\} \, \text{dann\,\text{wa}.}\)
\(\text{everybody.NOM} \, [3SG.NOM \, \text{lie.PL} \, \text{say.PRE}] \, \{\text{COMP} / *\} \, \text{know.PRE}\)

‘Everybody knows that [he is lying].’

(25) \(\text{mam} \, [\text{Gunapala(-w} \, \text{aaw}\] \, \text{dann\,\text{wa}.}\)
\(1SG.NOM \, [\text{Gunapala(-ACC) come.PST}] \, \text{know.PRE}\)

‘I know Gunapala came.’

(Kariyakarawana 1998:58)

\(^{111}\) Verbs \([-N, \, +V]\); adjectives \([+N, \, +V]\); nominal predicates \([+N, \, -V]\) and postpositional predicates \([-N, \, -V]\).
Kariyakarawana assumes that the subject of such VSs can be exceptionally case marked by the matrix verb. Our informants refuse to accept such sentences like (25) without a complementiser whether or not the embedded subject has accusative or nominative case. The obligatory presence of a complementiser in both VSs and NVSs means that there is no argument for Kariyakarawana’s structural difference between VSs and NVSs on the basis of embedding. Furthermore, there appears to be no evidence for exceptional case marking in colloquial Sinhala.

5.4.2 Subject Extraction

In this construction an argument of the embedded clause is focussed and the matrix verb is marked with the -e marker. It is not only the subject of the embedded clause that can be so moved (though it need not be), but also any argument of the embedded clause can be focused by attaching a focus marker or the question marker. Thus, ‘subject extraction’ does not correctly describe what they are, though the term is more suited to comparable sentences in English. We provide a detailed discussion of similar sentences under the focus (see Chapter 6, in particular § 6.2.2).

(26) is an example of what Kariyakarawana refers to as Subject Extraction:

(26) kauda, oyaa hitanne [Ø aawe ]?
    who.Q 2SG.NOM think.PRE.E [   come.PST.E]

‘Who do you think came?’ (Kariyakarawana 1998:60)

With regard to Subject Extraction, Kariyakarawana claims that [+V] predicate sentences, i.e. verbal predicates and those non-verbal ones that can take a verbal predicate, allow the Subject Extraction. Thus, the preposed kauda ‘who.Q’ of the embedded verbal clause (26) has been given as the evidence for ‘[+V] clauses’ participating in this construction.112 Contrary to Kariyakarawana’s claim, we find that not only clauses with verbal predicates but also those with adjectival predicates can

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112 It is to be noted that it is not necessary, although possible, for this argument to be preposed. Even if the wh phrase occurs in its original place without being moved or if it is postposed, the sentence still has the same meaning (see below). This is because movements of constituents (i.e. preposing) have no effect, when functions of constituents are morphologically marked.
participate in this construction, as we will show. First consider the Kariyakarawana’s example:

(27) * kaudə, oyaa hitanne [Ø bohomə ho'da-yi]?
    who.Q 2SG think.PRE.E [very good-AM]

    Intended: ‘Who do you think is very good?’  (Kariyakarawana 1998:60)

Kariyakarawana’s example contains the assertion marker following the adjective. The unacceptability of the sentence has to do with the interaction between the assertion marker and focus. Thus, to make (27) acceptable we could simply remove the assertion marker, as shown by (28a), or add the complementiser to (27), as in (29a). Sentences in (28b) and (29b) also illustrate the same point.

(28) a. kaudə, oyaa hitanne [Ø bohomə ho'də]?
    who.Q 2SG.NOM think.PRE.E [very good]

    ‘Who do you think is very good?’

b. kaatədə, oyaa hitanne [Ø ləjja]?
    who.DAT.Q 2SG.NOM think.PRE.E [shy]

    ‘Who do you think is shy?’

113 The absence of a complementiser in (26-28) in the text does not go against the claim in the previous section that a complementiser must be present in embedded clauses (see § 5.4.1). Sentences (26-28) are different from those discussed under § 5.4.1 in that the matrix verb is marked with -e marker indicating that an argument, or more accurately a constituent of the clause (regardless of whether it belongs to the matrix verb or embedded verb), is focussed. Though the complementiser is generally possible even with these clauses in § 5.4.2, it need not be present. We discuss the focus in complex clauses in detail in Chapter 6, but here we briefly show that why the complementiser is absent in (26-28).

Sentence (26) has two focused complements (the embedded clause and the preposed wh phrase), both of which are licensed by the two -e markers on both verbs. (Each focused constituent must be licensed by an -e marked verb: see the co-occurrence condition in § 6.2.2.2 and § 6.4.4.4). Now, compare (26) with the following sentence, which has a complementiser.

kaudə, oyaa hitanne [Ø aawə kiyəla]?
who.Q 2SG.NOM think.PRE.E [come.PST COMP]

‘Who do you think came?’

This sentence is structurally different from (26), and has only a single focus constituent (i.e. the preposed wh phrase). Note that the embedded clause is not a focused constituent in this clause (unlike in 26). Thus, absence of complementiser in (26-28) is to do with its interaction with focus in complex clauses. As for adjectival clauses (27-29) the same principle applies (although they do not inflect for the –e suffix). Therefore, in adjectival clauses there is an interaction between the assertion marker, the complementiser and focus.

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Thus, the unacceptability of these adjectival clauses has to do with focusing in complex clauses, not with the inability to extract subjects from NVSs.

The embedded sentences given in (28) would be treated as [-V] clauses under Kariyakarawana’s treatment of NVSs, as they cannot optionally take a verbal predicate. Now consider the following two examples in (30) which are not discussed by Kariyakarawana. (30a) has a nominal predicate, while (30b) has a postpositional predicate.

(30) a.* kaudọ oyaa hitanne [Ø₁ asəniipe ]?
who.Q 2SG think.PRE.E [ sickINST ]
Intended: ‘Who you think is not well?’

b.* mokakdo oyaa hitanne [Ø₁ mese uɗa ]?
what.Q 2SG think.PRE.E [ tableLOC upon ]
Intended: ‘What do you think is on the table?’

These embedded predicates are [+V] according to Kariyakarawana due to their ability to take an optional verbal predicate and their ability to be negated with næve. Therefore they too should function like verbal sentences and allow extraction. However, they too become unacceptable in this construction. If what can be called ‘[+V]’ allow the Subject Extraction, we would expect those in (30) to be grammatical (without any modification). However, sentences in (30) are grammatical when a complementiser is present (just like adjectival ones in (29): compare (30) with (31)).

(31) a. kaudọ oyaa hitanne [Ø₁ asəniipe kiyọla ]?
who.Q 2SG think.PRE.E [ sickINST COMP]
‘Who you think is not well?’

b. mokakdo oyaa hitanne [Ø₁ mese uɗa kiyọla ]?
what.Q 2SG think.PRE.E [ tableLOC upon COMP]
‘What do you think is on the table?’
On the basis of (30) with (31), it is clear that ‘Subject Extraction’ or the preposing of subject is possible from NVSs, but Kariyakarawana’s prediction with regard to ‘Subject Extraction’ is incorrect.

Now, what constrains the so-called Subject Extractions? The ungrammaticality of these sentences is not related to a structural difference in VSs and NVSs, but rather to restrictions on focussing in complex clauses, in particular the interaction between the scope marking (on the predicate) and the assertion marker. We will not discuss the issue of scope marking in complex clauses here, as it is irrelevant to the present discussion. However, it is sufficient to say at this stage that absence of the complementiser is the reason for the ungrammaticality of NVSs in (27) and (30).

To conclude, we observed that there is no evidence to suggest the verbal clauses behave differently from non-verbal ones with regard to this particular construction, regardless of what we call it (i.e. focus in complex clauses or Subject Extraction).

5.4.3 Complement Extraction

Consider the following pair of sentences from Kariyakarawana (p.61), which is treated as an instance of what Kariyakarawana refers to as the Complement Extraction:

(32) a. Sena        Sriya       gænə liyumak liwwa.
    Sena.NOM   Sriya.NOM about letter.IND write.PST
    ‘Sena wrote a letter about Sriya.’

b. kau ru gænə də [Sena Ø liyumak liwwe]?
    who about [Sena.NOM letter.IND write.PST.E]
    ‘Who did Sena write a letter about?’

There is an important difference between the Sinhala sentence in (32b) and the corresponding English sentence given in the gloss. In the Sinhala sentence, it is the whole PP, not just the complement of the PP, which has moved to the sentence-initial position, and to which the question marker is assigned. Thus, the sentence literally means ‘About whom did Sena write a letter?’ This pied-piping is obligatory in Sinhala, and the complement of PP alone cannot be moved, though it is possible in English: see (33).

\[114\] See § 6.2.2.2 and § 6.4.4.4) for a discussion of similar facts. Also, see footnote 113.
It is important to recognise that in colloquial Sinhala nearly every constituent in a sentence can be focussed\(^{115}\) and constituent order is free. For instance, the focussed postpositional phrase in (32b) can appear in any place in the sentence, not only in the sentence-initial position, without affecting the meaning. Thus, (32b) is exactly the same as (34) in terms of the meaning and the functions of the constituents.

\[(34) \quad \text{Seena kauru \textit{g\=an\=\=\=\=de} liyumak liwwe?} \]

\text{‘Who did Sena write a letter about?’}

Therefore, it would be appropriate to treat (32b) as an instance of focus/question formation rather than an instance of what could be called Complement Extraction.\(^{116}\) In fact what Kariyakarawana refers to as Subject Extraction (§ 5.4.2) and Complement Extraction are all various forms of the focus construction. ‘Subject Extraction’ involves the focussing of the subject (or any constituent) of the embedded clause, whereas Kariyakarawana’s examples of ‘Complement Extraction’ involve the focussing of constituents (other than the subject) in simple clauses (i.e. non-embedded ones).

Now we move on to discuss some more examples given by Kariyakarawana, which he uses to argue that complements of [-V] clauses are not be extractable, unlike the complements of [+V] clauses, which are said to allow extraction. (35) is one such example of [-V] type from Kariyakarawana (p.61):

\[(35) \ a. \ \text{meek\=o} [\text{Sena Sriya \textit{g\=an\=\=\=\=de} liyapu}] liyumak. \]

\text{‘This one (is) a letter [that Sena wrote about Sriya].’}

\(^{115}\) This is an oversimplification of facts and we will revisit the issue of what cannot be focussed in a sentence shortly.

\(^{116}\) Note that the question formation of this sort can be explained under focus: see Chapter 6.
First of all, note that the clause in the bracket (35) does not function as an argument of the nominal predicate liyumak ‘a letter’. It is rather the modifier of liyumak, and functions as an adjective/relative clause. ‘Sena’ and ‘about Sriya’ are part of the argument structure of ‘write’, but not of the nominal predicate liyumak. The PP complement of the verb ‘write’ in (35b) has been marked with the question marker, and the sentence has become unaccepteable. We will shortly explain the reason for the ungrammaticality of this sentence.

Kariyakarawana argues that the facts related to the extraction of subjects (e.g. 26-30) and complements (e.g. 35b) in VSs and NVSs have to do with the theta assignment of such predicates. Verbal predicates, for instance, assign theta roles to their subjects, while non-verbal predicates are claimed not to, according to Kariyakarawana. Therefore, subjects of VSs are said to be in a theta dependent position, while subjects of NVSs (which are argued to be base-generated in the SpecI position) and other arguments are not theta assigned, because non-verbal predicates are said to be non-theta assigners (p.64-72). Thus, the extraction is argued to be possible only from VSs:

“... the complements of [+V] clauses can be extracted while the complements of [-V] are not, because extraction from VP involves extraction from theta positions while the extraction from DPs is from non-theta positions.” (Kariyakarawana 1998:61)

In fact, the clause in (35b), from which kauru gānə ‘about whom’ has been moved, is a verbal sentence ‘[+V]’. In that case we need to explain why it is unacceptable. The unacceptability of sentences like (35b) is not due to the alleged non-extractability of complements of NVSs, as assumed by Kariyakarawana, but due to reasons related to focus and the question formation of NVSs of this type, as we will show now.

The ungrammaticality of (35b) can be attributed to two reasons: (a) restrictions associated with focus in equational sentences with indefinite predicates; and (b) restrictions associated with what constituents can be focused in general. In § 5.2.3, we mentioned that equational clauses with indefinite predicates are restricted to certain constructions. For instance, only the predicate of such clauses can be focused, not the argument, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (36a). When the nominal predicate is
focused, instead of any other argument, the sentence becomes perfectly acceptable, as shown by (36b).

(36) a. *meekə də liyumak?
this Q letter.IND

    Intended: ‘Is it this which is a letter?’

b. meekə [kauru gənə Sena liyapu] liyumak də?
this [who about Sena.NOM write.PST.VADJ] letter.IND Q

    Lit: ‘To whom (is) this a letter that Sena wrote?’

Secondly, relative clauses or parts of relative clauses cannot be focused in colloquial Sinhala: see § 6.2.2.2. The PP that is focused in (35b) is a constituent of the relative clause, hence the ungrammaticality. Thus, we can point to two reasons why (35b) is ungrammatical.

Further, the following sentences (37) with nominal equational (definite) predicates (a), adjectival predicates (b), postpositional predicates (c), and Action Nominals (d) suggest that any constituent in these sentences can be made the focus of questioning, contrary to Kariyakarawana’s claims. (Although we have given only one constituent in each sentence with the focus of questioning, we assume that it is sufficient to support our point.)

(37) a. ee mahattəya koi iskoole mulguruwəryə də?
that gentleman.NOM which school.LOC head.teacher.NOM Q?

    Lit: ‘Which school is that gentleman the principal of?’

b. mokak nisaa də oyaa-ʃə laʃə?
what due.to Q 2SG-DAT ashamed?

    ‘For what (reason) are you ashamed?’

c. kaage sellam_bağə də meese udə?
who.GEN toy.PL Q table.LOC upon

    ‘Whose toys are on the table?’

d. kaa gənə də laməya kataawə?
who about Q child.NOM talk.DEF

    ‘About whom is the child talking?’

See § 6.2.3 for an explanation of this restriction.
Thus, the unacceptability of sentences like (35b) has to do with the characteristics of individual predicate types and restriction on focusing itself, rather than what could be called the extractability of arguments and the inability of non-verbal predicates to assign theta roles to their arguments.

### 5.4.4 Topic Interpretation

The particle *naŋ* when it follows an NP gives the topic/contrastive sense to the NP. It can follow any argument in both verbal and non-verbal clauses, as illustrated by the following sentences.

(38) a. ape lam.'ya naŋ boru kiyanne nəe:

1PL.GEN child.NOM TOP lie.PL say.PRE.E NEG

‘As for our child, he does not lie.’ or
‘Our child does not lie’ (but your child does).

b. Gunapala naŋ guruvərəyek.

Gunapala.NOM TOP teacher.IND

‘As for Gunapala, he is a teacher.’ or
‘Gunapala is a teacher’ (but Siri is not).’ (Kariyakarawana 1998:63)

c. api-tə naŋ eekə aaranchi.

1PL-DAT TOP that news

‘As for us, we got the news about that.’

d. gee naŋ Siri-tə aiti.

house.NOM TOP Siri-DAT own

‘As for the house, Siri owns it’. or
‘Siri owns the house’ (but he does not own the car).

Kariyakarawana assumes that subjects of NVSs have the topic/contrastive reading even without the *naŋ* particle, whereas subjects of VSs do not (p.63). Informants that we have consulted do not agree that subjects of NVSs have a contrastive reading without the *naŋ* particle. Note that the *naŋ* particle can be used to give the contrastive reading for any argument, not just for the subject of a clause. Particularly when there is more than one argument in a clause, whether it be a VS or NVS, the contrastive focus marker must be present if a particular argument requires a contrastive sense.
Otherwise, intonation must be used instead of *naŋ*. In NVSs, most of which usually have a single argument, the sole argument is naturally the topic.\(^{118}\)

### 5.4.5 Nominalisation and Inflectional Suffixes

Kariyakarawana claims that NVSs cannot be nominalised and relativised, as VSs can be. This claim is in fact true. However, such constructions do not prove a structural difference between the two types. Nominalisation is a morphological process of a verb being suffixed with either *-iim* or *ek*.\(^{119}\) The syntactic effect of this process is that the highest argument of the verb must be in genitive case when the verb becomes nominalised (i.e. *child’s running*). Therefore, nominalisation is only applicable to verbal predicates. We do not assume that nominalisation is a useful process to distinguish one predicate type from the other. This claim does not provide an argument for Kariyakarawana’s proposed structural difference between VSs and NVSs, as it is similar to stating that the tense markers can only appear on verbal stems, but not on nominal, adjectival or postpositional stems.

Certain inflectional suffixes are restricted to verbal predicates. Without the overt presence of a verbal predicate, non-verbal predicates cannot occur with forms such as Conditional *-ot ‘if’, Concessive *-at ‘even though’, Permissive *-aawe* and the temporal forms like, *-la, -kota, -ddi* and *-aam*.\(^{120}\)

Some of these suffixes are further restricted to a specific form of the verb, not to any verbal form. For instance, the permissive *-aawe* can occur only with the past tense form or the perfect adjectival form, but not with the present tense form of the verb, even though such permisssives can refer to an event either in the present or the future time (see (39)). Thus, the ability of a verbal predicate to occur with a particular affix is to be seen as a property of inflectional morphology.

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\(^{118}\) Incidentally all 7 examples of NVSs given in Kariyakarawana (p. 63-64) in support of his claim have only a single argument.

\(^{119}\) For a detailed discussion of syntactic aspects of nominalisation, see § 3.3.6.

\(^{120}\) And some of them can also be suffixed to quasi-verbs like *æti* and *næti*, as in *ætat* ‘exist/be.even_though’ and *nætat* ‘not.exist/be.even_though’.
5.4.6 Relativisation

Kariyakarawana argues that only VSs can be relativised, but not NVSs (p.39). In the process of relativisation in Sinhala, the verb takes the form of a verbal adjective and functions as a modifier to the following relativised noun, as in (40).\(^{121}\) Nouns and postpositions cannot take the adjectival form, as verbal predicates can (see 41). It is for this reason that clauses with nominal and postpositional predicates cannot be relativised. Contrary to Kariyakarawana’s statement that only VSs can be relativised, adjectival clauses can also naturally participate in this process, illustrated by (42a-b), though Kariyakarawana does not mention adjectives.

(40)  \[\text{guruv} \text{–} \text{lar} \text{–} \text{lam} \text{–} \text{t} \text{–} \text{dunn} \text{–} \]  \text{pot} \text{o}
[teacher.NOM child-DAT give.PST.VADJ] book

‘The book [which the teacher gave to the child]’

(41)  \*  \[\text{lek} \text{–} \text{k} \text{–} \text{yek} \text{–} \text{Sriya} \]
writer.IND Sriya.NOM

Intended: ‘Sriya [who is a writer]’

(42)  a. \text{pot} \text{o} \text{kiy} \text{–} \text{wann} \text{–} \text{amaaru} \text{–} \text{yi}.  ⇒  \[\text{kiy} \text{–} \text{wann} \text{–} \text{amaaru} \]  \text{pot} \text{o}

‘The book is hard to read.’
‘The book [which is hard to read]’

b. \text{pot} \text{o} \text{gaan} \text{–} \text{waxhi}.  ⇒  \[\text{gaan} \text{–} \text{waxhi} \]  \text{pot} \text{o}
book price high.AM  [price high] book

‘The book is expensive.’
‘The book [which is very expensive]’

Furthermore, note that not only are NVSs designated as [-V] according to Kariyakarawana, but also [+V] type cannot be nominalised and relativised unless they have their verbal predicates overtly present. Recall that Kariyakarawana’s definition of [+V] includes postpositional clauses, some nominal clauses and some adjectival

\(^{121}\) Whether or not relativisation can be considered a subjecthood diagnostic is discussed in § 3.3.4.
clauses that can optionally take verbs. Thus, the distinction between [+V] and [-V] cannot be maintained with regard to the relativisation and nominalisation.

Interestingly, relativisation involves another morphosyntactic process, in which verbs and adjectives function alike, as opposed to all other predicate types, which cannot participate in relativisation.

5.4.7 Quantifier Float

Here, we briefly point out that QF does not appear to provide evidence for a distinction between verbal and non-verbal sentences. With the examples such as (43), Kariyakarawana argues that subjects of NVSs do not allow QF, unlike the subjects of VSs.

(43) a. mee pantiye lamay dennek ho'da-yi.
   this class.LOC child.PL two good-AM
   ‘Two of the children in this class are good.’ (Kariyakarawana 1998:62)

   b. lamayi mee pantiye dennek ho'da-yi.
   child.PL this class.LOC two good-AM
   Intended: ‘Two of the children in this class are good.’ (Kariyakarawana 1998:62)

The informants we consulted do not agree with the judgments on sentences made by Kariyakarawana, but find examples such as (43b) acceptable. The following sentences with quantifier okkom ‘all’ also appear to be acceptable in NVSs as well as VSs: see (44a-44b).

(44) a. lamayi mee pantiye okkom ho'da-yi.
   child.PL this class.LOC all good-AM
   ‘All of the children in this class (are) good.’

   b. pot mee okkom Gunapala-ta.
   book.PL this all Gunapala-DAT
   ‘All these books are for Gunapala.’

122 QF was also discussed in Chapter 3 (§ 3.3.5) and it was shown that it is not a reliable subjecthood diagnostic in colloquial Sinhala.
5.4.8 Summary

In the preceding section, we examined a number of processes that Kariyakarawana (1998) claims as evidence for a structural difference between VSs and NVSs. Among the morphosyntactic processes we discussed, Embedding, Subject Extraction, Complement Extraction and Quantifier Float clearly showed both clause types functioning alike. Topic Interpretation does not appear to provide any conclusive evidence for a difference between the two types, as it was shown.

Nominalisation and relativisation cannot be considered as processes that distinguish the two alleged structural types. This is because some parts of speech categories are restricted to certain morphosyntactic processes. Thus, we showed that nominalisation, in this case, is a process of inflectional morphology, restricted to verbs. Other grammatical categories, for instance noun and postpositions, do not participate in this process as verbs do. As for relativisation, only verbs and adjectives can modify another entity. Thus, being a modifier, either as a relative clause or as an adjective, is not a function of nouns and postpositions. Therefore, these morphological properties should not be seen as providing evidence for a structural difference in the syntax of VSs and NVSs.

5.5 Is There a Copula or Hidden Verb in NVSs?

Having established that VSs and NVSs function alike with regard to many syntactic constructions, we now proceed to investigate if NVSs of colloquial Sinhala have a copula. It was clear from the data discussed in previous sections that there is no phonological form corresponding to a copula in colloquial Sinhala sentences, when compared with their English translations. However, as mentioned in the discussion of negation (§ 5.3), some NVSs (i.e. those that can negate with negative existential \( \text{n\text{a}}\text{\text{\text{a}}} \)) have a verbal predicate in negative form. Hence, they are treated as verbal sentences in this analysis. On the basis of our treatment of negative existential \( \text{n\text{a}}\text{\text{\text{a}}} \), one may question whether there could be a non-overt underlying verb or an invisible copula in other NVSs as well. Gair and Paolillo (1988) argue that NVSs in colloquial Sinhala do not have a copula. In what follows we will consider a series of arguments, including one from the study of Gair and Paolillo, in order to show that NVSs do not have an underlying verb form.
Some NVSs can be paraphrased using verbal predicates. First, consider the following NVSs:

- **With Postpositional Predicates:**

  (45) a. ee potɔ mese uɗɔ.
  
  that book table upon
  ‘That book is on the table.’

  b. Gune paarɔ la’gɔ.
  
  Gune.NOM road close
  ‘Gune is near the road.’

- **With Nominal Predicates:**

  (46) a. lamɔya-ɗ unɔ.
  
  child-DAT fever
  ‘The child has fever.’

  b. ee mahattɔya oostraliyaawe.
  
  that gentleman.NOM Australia.LOC
  ‘That gentleman is in Australia.’

- **With Adjectival Predicates:**

  (47) api-ʃo ee bafu prɔyooɔɔɔɔwat.
  
  1PL-DAT that good.PL useful
  ‘Those things are useful to us.’

Now compare (45-47) with (48-50), which are verbal alternatives of the NVSs:

(48) a. ee potɔ mese uɗɔ tiyenɔwa.
  
  that book table upon be.INAN.PRE
  ‘That book is on the table.’

  b. Gune paarɔ la’gɔ inɔɔwa.
  
  Gune.NOM road close be.ANIM.PRE
  ‘Gune is near the road.’

(49) a. lamɔya-ɗ unɔ tiyenɔwa.
  
  child-DAT fever be.INAN.PRE
  ‘The child has fever.’

  b. ee mahattɔya oostraliyaawe inɔɔwa.
  
  that gentleman.NOM Australia.LOC be.ANIM.PRE
  ‘That gentleman is in Australia.’
‘Those things are useful to us.’
Lit: ‘For us, those things become useful.’

Sentences (48-50) contain verbal predicates *tiyenwa* ‘exist/be (inanimate), locative/existential *innwa* ‘exist/be (animate)’ and *wenwa* ‘become’. On the basis of (48-50), one might argue that these verbal predicates are underlyingly present in the structure of the NVSs (45-47), but can be optionally omitted unless some other constraint requires their presence. Fernando (1973, quoted in Kariyakarawana 1998) assumes that *wenwa* ‘be/become’ and other existential verbs, like *innwa* ‘exist/be (animate)’ and *tiyenwa* ‘exist/be (inanimate)’ are realisations of a copula.\(^{123}\)

Such verbal alternatives in given (48-50) are only available for those for which the locative/existential or ‘become’ meaning is applicable. Under the present analysis, the structure of sentences in (45-47) and (48-50) are argued to be different. The former have non-verbal predicates, while the latter have verbal predicates. For instance, the argument structure of (45a) and its corresponding verbal alternative in (48a) can be given as in (51a) and (b), respectively:

\[(51)\]
\[a. \textit{udwa}: P, (\uparrow \text{PRED}) = \text{up/above ‘<}(\uparrow \text{SUBJ})(\uparrow \text{OBJ})>’\]
\[\quad (\uparrow \text{OBJ CASE}) = \text{NOM}\]
\[b. \textit{tiyenwa}\textsuperscript{124}: V, (\uparrow \text{PRED}) = \text{exist/be ‘<}(\uparrow \text{SUBJ})(\uparrow \text{XCOMP})>’\]
\[\quad (\uparrow \text{XCOMP SUBJ}) = (\uparrow \text{SUBJ})\]

The difference between VSs and NVSs of this sort is not only reflected in the argument structure of such clauses, but also in the case assignment of arguments and in the meaning differences in the predicates of VSs and NVSs, as we will discuss below.

The first argument that NVSs, as in examples (45-47), do not contain hidden verbs is that there are also NVSs that have no verbal counterparts. *Tiyenwa*, *innwa*, *wenwa* or *nææ* (as the negative counterpart of locative/existential verbs, glossed as ‘be.NEG’) or any other verbal predicate is not acceptable to some NVSs, as shown by

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\(^{123}\) Kariyakarawana does not agree with Fernando’s claim due to the difference in meaning when such verbs appear as the copula (see Kariyakarawana 1998:38 fn. 4).

\(^{124}\) Compare with (23a) in § 5.3.
(52). Sentence (52a) is an equational sentence, and the only predicate applicable to it is its own nominal predicate. The other sentences with nominal predicates (52b-c), postpositional (52d) and adjectival (52e-f) illustrate the same point. The fact that *næw* (which is the negative existential predicator) cannot negate them also indicates that there are not any hidden locative/existential verbs in non-negative clauses. Locative/existential verbs and *wen*wa are only acceptable for clauses for which the meaning of such verbal predicates is applicable, as in (48-50).

(52) a. oyaa-ochastic meekw *tiyen*wa/*inn*wa/*wen*wa/*næw*.
   
   2SG-DAT this present.IND *(be.INAN.PRE/be.ANIM.PRE/become.PRE/be.NEG)
   
   ‘This is a present for you.’

b. mee salli oyaa-ochastic *tiyen*wa/*inn*wa/*wen*wa/*næw*.
   
   this money 2SG-DAT *(be.INAN.PRE/be.ANIM.PRE/become.PRE/be.NEG)
   
   ‘This money is for you.’

c. mee mahattwa amrikaawe *(inn*wa/*wen*wa/*næw*).
   
   this gentleman.NOM America.INST *(be.ANIM.PRE/become.PRE/be.NEG)
   
   ‘This gentleman is from America.’

d. mee liyum* Siri gæn* *(tiyen*wa/*wen*wa/*næw*).
   
   this letter.DEF Siri.NOM about *(be.INAN.PRE/become.PRE/be.NEG)
   
   ‘This letter is about Siri.’

e. mata-t yann* aasa-yi *(aasa_wen*wa).
   
   1SG.DAT-also go.INF like-AM *(like_become.PRE)
   
   ‘I also like to go.’

125 The following sentence is fine as a locational clause meaning ‘you have/don’t have this money’:

mee salli oyaa-ochastic tiyen*wa/næw*.

this money 2SG-DAT be.INAN.PRE/be.NEG

‘You have/don’t have this money.’

126 The following sentence is possible with *tiyen*wa. It has the locative existential meaning, and *aasaawak* ‘a desire’ in this case is not an adjective, but a noun.

mata-t yann* aasaawak tiyen*wa.

1SG.DAT-also go.INF desire.IND be.INAN.PRE

‘I also have a desire to go.’
We now move on to discuss some more evidence against the hidden verb hypothesis. These facts relate to wenɔwa ‘become’. The effect on the meaning of the clause, the argument structure and the case assignment strongly suggests that wenɔwa cannot be a hidden verb.

Firstly, the addition of wenɔwa to a NVS changes the meaning of the original sentence by adding a ‘become’ sense which is intrinsically present in wenɔwa, as noted by Gair and Paolillo (1988). This effect on meaning can be seen by comparing examples like (47) and (50), and the following:

(53)  a. lamɔya-ge muunɔ ratu-yi.
    child-GEN face red-AM
    ‘The child’s face (is) red’

b. lamɔya-ge muunɔ ratu una.127
    child-GEN face red become.PST
    ‘The child’s face reddened/became red.’

Secondly, the evidence that wenɔwa is not invisibly present in some NVSs also comes from a number of other factors related to the argument structure and case assignment. It not only adds the ‘become’ sense to NVSs, but also sometimes changes the case of the subject, since it can sometimes add the meaning of agency and voluntariness to actions. For instance, (54a) is a state, and the subject of the clause does not have the control over the action. On the other hand, (54b) is not a state as such, since the subject has the control over the event, and becoming sad in this clause is not seen as an unintentional process. Therefore, the subject in this case is very much like an agent in the sense that it is intentional, as is also indicated by nominative case. If wenɔwa is underlyingly present in the argument structure of NVSs like (54a), the case of the subject should not be affected when it surfaces, as in (54b).

127 The past tense form of wenɔwa is una.
All the sentences in (55) belong to the nominal equational type. However, only some, like (55a) allow the verb *wen*wa. Others like (55b-c) for which the *become* sense is unacceptable, are ill-formed, since no change of state has taken place.

(55) a. *Gunasiri mahatt*ya ape iskoole mul *guruw*ya una.
   Gunasiri gentleman.NOM our school.LOC head teacher.NOM become.PST
   ‘Mr. Gunasiri became the head teacher of our school.’ (Gair & Paolillo 1988:56)

b. *meemage pot*ya *(una).*
   this 1SG.GEN book.DEF *(become.PST)
   ‘This (is) my book.’

c. *mam*Sunimal *(una).*
   1SG.NOM Sunimal *(become.PST)
   ‘I (am) Sunimal.’

Further, not all adjectival clauses allow *wen*wa (56). It is acceptable only to some subjects, as shown by (56b) and (c), although the adjectival predicate alone would be acceptable for both subjects (56a). The fact that the verbal predicate *wen*wa is not a part of the structure of these NVSs is clearly evident in sentences of (56). Thus, we have to distinguish two predicates: the adjectival predicate, as in (56a), and the compound verbal predicate consisting of the adjective and *wen*wa, as in (56b).

(56) a. *mam*kawem* lwaestiti(y)i.
   1SG.NOM/food ready.AM
   ‘I am ready.’ / ‘The food is ready.’

b. *mam* lwaesti una.
   1SG.NOM ready become.PST
   ‘I have prepared.’ (e.g. I have got dressed)

c.* kawem* lwaesti una.
   food ready become.PST
   Intended: ‘The food was ready.’
There is further evidence to assume that the argument structures of these adjectival predicates (and other NV predictors), as in (56a) are different from those of complex verbs formed by combining adjectives and nouns with wenwa, as in (56b). This is because the argument structure of non-verbal predicates changes when they are combined with verbs to form complex verbs. We can illustrate this point with wenwa and another verb kərənwa ‘do’, which also forms complex verbs with nouns and adjectives. Wenwa is an intransitive verb, and has a volitive or involitive meaning depending on the combined noun or adjective, while kərənwa ‘do’ is a transitive predicate, which always has a volitive subject.128 Our assumption is supported by the fact that wenwa and kərənwa form a tight constituent with what we can call the predicate complement, which is the preceding adjective or the nominal predicate. They cannot be separated by another constituent.129 The nominal predicate complement of wenwa and kərənwa is not an object. If it was an object it would take accusative case, as the objects of kərənwa usually do (see (57)). This also provides evidence for its predicatehood, since a predicate cannot be an object or bear any grammatical relation.

\[\text{(57) a. Gune eyaa-wə lokka*(-wə) kələa.} \]
\[\text{Gune.NOM eyaa-ACC boss*(-ACC) do.PST} \]
\[\text{‘Gune made him the boss.’} \]

\[\text{b. Gune lokka*(-wə) una.} \]
\[\text{Gune.NOM boss*(-ACC) become.PST} \]
\[\text{‘Gune became the boss.’} \]

Thus, where wenwa is present, it requires a predicate complement, with which it forms a complex verb, as in (57b). The argument structure of such complex verbs is based on wenwa and its predicate complement. Consequently, the clauses, which have wenwa like (57b) and which do not have wenwa like (56a) have different

128 The involitive form of kərənwa is kerenwa.

129 The formation of complex predicate structures by combining verbs like become and/or do with nouns and adjectives is also common in other languages. In Malayalam, a small set of verbs like aa ‘be’ war ‘come’ cey ‘do’ can be combined with NPs and PPs etc., as Mohanan (1982) explains. They also cannot be separated from their predicate complements. Tagalog, another language without a copula, has verbs like maging ‘become’ which take predicate complements, according to Kroeger (1999).
argument structures. Therefore it is not possible to assume that wen\textwa is underlyingly present in such NVSs.

We showed that wen\textwa and locative/existential verbs cannot be a copula, and do not occur underlyingly in NVSs. Under the present analysis, sentences with locative/existential verbs and their negator na\textne are also considered VSs.

5.5.1 Action Nominals

In what follows, we look at ANs, (§ 5.2.4) in order to see if they have an underlying verbal predicate or if they can be treated as truncated versions of verbal clauses.

Some ANs may seem as if they are truncated forms of verbal constructions, when we consider sentences like (58-59), in which (b) and (c) are verbal paraphrases of (a):

(58) a. gowyo wii\textwagaaw\textwa.
   farmer.PL.NOM rice\text_cultivation.DEF
   ‘The farmers are cultivating rice.’

b. gowyo wii\textwagaaw\textwa k\textawa.
   farmer.PL.NOM rice\text_cultivation.DEF do.PRE
   ‘The farmers are doing the rice cultivation.’

c. gowyo wii\textwagaa_k\textawa.
   farmer.PL.NOM rice\text_cultivation\_do.PRE
   ‘The farmers cultivate rice.’

(59) a. l\textnya kataawak/kataaw\textwa.\textsuperscript{130}
   child.NOM talk.IND/talk.DEF
   ‘The child is engaged in a talk.’
   ‘The child is talking/chatting.’

b. l\textnya kataawak/kataaw\textwa k\textawa.
   child.nom talk.IND/talk.DEF do.PRE
   ‘The child is making a speech.’
   ‘The child is making the speech.’

\textsuperscript{130} Both the definite form and indefinite form have the same meaning.
c. laməya kataa kurəna.
child.NOM talk_do.PRE
‘The child talks/speaks.’

Sentences in (a-c) are structurally different from one another, though they may sometimes have very similar meanings. (a) sentences are ANs, which have no verbal predicate. In (b) sentences, the verb kurəna ‘do’ occurs. Wii_wagaawə ‘rice cultivation’ and kataawak/kataawə ‘talking’ in (58b) and (59b) respectively are the objects of the verbal predicate kurəna. The constituent order in these examples is free. Now consider the (c) sentences, which differ from the (b) sentences in that the verb and what is considered as an object together form a tight constituent. Therefore, they may be considered as compound verbs. The order of the verb and the complement noun is fixed, and nothing can intervene between them. Also note that in this construction the object appears without any case marking, and may be considered as the base or stem form.\textsuperscript{131}

The evidence that sentence (58a) and (59a) are not truncated forms of (58b) and (59b) respectively come from meaning differences between (a) and (b) sentences. Unlike ANs, (b) sentences have the reading that someone is doing a specific task or thing, e.g., kataawə kərənə ‘doing/giving the talk’, paaδənə kurənə ‘doing the lesson’, sellamə kurənə ‘doing a particular sport/game’, whereas corresponding ANs would simply refer to an activity, e.g., ‘talking/chatting’, ‘studying’ and ‘playing’.

If we consider ANs to be truncated forms of verbal sentences, this would imply that a) a sentence can be truncated by suppressing the verb leaving the argument, and b) there is always an underlying verb where there is an AN predicate. However, neither of these two assumptions is possible, as we will show below. If a verbal predicate can be dropped from a clause, we would expect a sentence like (60) to be grammatical and acceptable. This example does not have a predicate, and does not imply any activity as to what the child is doing with food, e.g., the child is eating or preparing food. It

\textsuperscript{131} See Table 3-2 for other compound verbs formed with kurənə.
further shows that not all the nouns can act as predicates, suggesting that ANs are not a productive construction that can be formed with any nominal.

(60) * lam̐ya kæmɔ.
child.NOM food.DEF

Intended: ‘The child (is having) food.’ or ‘The child (is preparing) food.’ or ‘The child (is doing something with) the food.’

Just like NVSs of postpositional, adjectival and nominal predicates discussed previously, ANs also do not contain hidden verbal predicates or a copula. The argument structure of ANs is based on the AN predicate.

NVSs in colloquial Sinhala are clearly non-verbal. With the evidence considered thus far we can conclude that no copula or hidden verbs are present in their structures.

5.6 Problems posed by Copula-less Clauses

In the case of verbal clauses, the PRED function is assigned by the verb. On the other hand, NVSs do not have a verb or copula that can assign PRED. Consequently, with such NVSs it is not possible to identify the syntactic functions of NPs. Following Bresnan (2001:275), if we assume that adjectives intrinsically have a subject of predication, this leaves nouns and postpositions (in colloquial Sinhala) as the problematic ones, as they do not have subject of predication. This problem is even more serious with nominal clauses, which consist of just two NPs, as in ‘Gunasiri (is) the principal’ (see 13a). In such clauses, one is a predicate nominal, and the other is the subject. There is no copula or a verb form that can be the PRED for the subject. The NP the principal, as a predicate nominal, appears to subcategorise for SUBJ, although it can just be the subject (or the object) of a clause when it is not a predicate nominal. Thus, these nouns can be seen as having two different subcategorisations. And, the PRED function must come from somewhere to specify syntactic functions in these clauses. In this study, we do not intend to provide a solution for copula-less clauses in colloquial Sinhala. Below, we briefly look at some relevant proposals.

As far as we are aware, LFG currently does not have a standard treatment for copula-less constructions such as those with nominal predicates in colloquial Sinhala. However, a number of proposals have recently been made, which have some relevance
to the question at hand, including those of Rosén (1996), Musgrave (2001:231-236) and Bresnan (2001:270-280).

Rosén proposes two non-standard alternatives, one of which involves introducing a PRED under phrase structure rules that subcategorises for syntactic functions. The second alternative involves not using PRED feature in f-structures of these clause types, and instead providing subcategorisation information, which is otherwise provided in PRED, by what she calls situation schemata.

Musgrave’s solution includes a phrase structure rule to introduce the PRED value, which has subject and predicate as its arguments.

Bresnan’s proposal is for non-verbal English predicate complements (i.e. XCOMPS), as in Susan remained/became [a grouch]. She proposes a lexical predication template for prepositions and nouns, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{‘in}(\uparrow \text{OBJ})> & \Rightarrow \text{‘be-in}(\uparrow \text{SUBJ})(\uparrow \text{OBJ})> \\
\text{‘grouch} & \Rightarrow \text{‘be-a-grouch}(\uparrow \text{SUBJ})>
\end{align*}
\]

(p.275)

According to Bresnan, predication template “augments the lexical form for a preposition or nominal to one which has a subject of predication” (p.275). This solution is not proposed specifically for non-verbal clauses, which have no copula. However, this approach seems preferable because of the way it allows subject of predication.

5.7 Concluding Remarks

Overlapping properties of word classes in this language, and cross-classification of some of them, make it difficult to see clear boundaries between different word classes. However, we showed that there is some morphosyntactic evidence that can be used for distinguishing different word classes in colloquial Sinhala.

Then, we discussed NVSs in terms of nine morphosyntactic constructions (Negation, Embedding, Subject Extraction, Complement Extraction, Topic Interpretation, Nominalisation, Relativisation and Quantifier Float) in order to see if they differ from VEs. The majority of the constructions discussed (i.e. Negation, Embedding, Subject Extraction, Complement Extraction, Topic Interpretation and Quantifier Float) do not demonstrate a difference in the structure of VEs and NVSs, as
both types function alike in such syntactic processes. Furthermore, those constructions that did show a difference in certain predicator categories also provided no evidence to suggest that VSs are different from NVSs, although they interestingly indicated a division between verbal and adjectival predicates and other non-verbal predicate types. These constructions (i.e. Negation and Relativisation) showed that verbal predicates and adjectival predicates share some similarities by allowing negation with the negative marker nəxe and relativisation. Clauses with postpositional and nominal predicates, and Action Nominals, on the other hand, appear to form a different group, as they cannot participate in all the constructions that verbal and adjectival clauses can. These shared properties of different predicate categories may be due to the verbal and adjectival predicates being [+V, -N], and other non-verbal predicates being [-V, +N]. Finally, the verbal and non-verbal distinction does not seem to correlate with syntactic differences or similarities that various predicator categories have (contrary to Kariyakarawana (1998)). Therefore, these constructions do not provide evidence for a structural difference between VSs and NVSs. This in turn suggests that the inner and outer subject distinction made on the basis of alleged differences in the clause structure of VSs and NVSs cannot be maintained.

We accounted for the distribution of different negators by proposing different lexical entries for them. We are argued that the complex distribution of nəxe requires us to distinguish two forms of nəxe, each with distinct functions. One is considered a negative predicate, while the other is a negative marker, not a predicate. What Kariyakarawana refers as to Subject Extraction and Complement Extraction are various forms of focus constructions. We showed that these constructions are constrained by restrictions related to focus, and cannot be considered as evidence for the alleged differences in the structure of VSs and NVSs. Most morphosyntactic constructions in colloquial Sinhala have connections with, and/or are constrained by, focus, which plays an important part in colloquial Sinhala grammar. In the next chapter, we present a detailed analysis of focus.

We showed that NVSs do not have a copula or a hidden verb. Copula verbs generally express tense and aspect in some languages. However, in Sinhala NVSs time reference may be expressed with a temporal adverbial if necessary. Further, there is no evidence to assume that copula or hidden verbs are absent in unmarked form and
surface in marked forms or where such grammatical information needs to be expressed. The presence of certain verb forms (e.g. \textit{wen\textipa{w}wa} ‘become’) as copula results in a change in the meaning of the clause and sometimes in the argument structure, as we observed. The present study further confirms previous findings of Gair and Paolillo (1988) with stronger evidence.

We showed that all the non-verbal categories can be predicates. The lack of a copula or a verbal predicate in some NVSs, in particular nominal ones, demands that they be treated as having the dual function of arguments and predicates. In turn, this is a question of how different theoretical frameworks treat such lexical forms in grammar. The issue of copula-less clauses in colloquial Sinhala (and in some other languages) is an area for future research.
6.1 Overview

How is focus encoded in colloquial Sinhala? Are there different focus constructions? If there are different focus constructions, do they have different meanings and/or usages? How can Sinhala focus be accounted for in the framework of Lexical Functional Grammar? These are some of the questions that we will address in this chapter.

6.1.1 Focus Encoding in Colloquial Sinhala

Languages employ different techniques to encode focus. These methods include morphological encoding, intonation, re-arranging constituent order, etc. Languages may use one or more of such methods. The most commonly employed strategy in colloquial Sinhala is morphological encoding. Apart from the nominal constituent that is focused, the verb also carries morphological marking to indicate that one of the constituents of the clause is focused. Sometimes the constituent to be focused may be determined on the basis of the phrase structure in the absence of an overtly marked focus constituent. Apart from the morphological encoding, sometimes a constituent may have focus or emphasis resulting from the pitch accent that may be placed on a particular element of a clause. Examples in (1b-1d) illustrate intonationally, morphologically and phrase-structurally encoded focus. These sentences are answers to the question ‘Where did Siri go?’. Sentence (1a) provides a neutral answer to the question. It is neutral in the sense that no constituent bears special emphasis (e.g. contrastive focus). On the other hand, Colombo, given in small caps, in (1b) is marked with the highest pitch accent, and therefore is intonationally the most prominent constituent of that sentence. Focus is thus encoded prosodically in this sentence. In this study, we will not deal with phonological focus. Sentence (1c) is an example of morphologically encoded focus. In this sentence, Colombo, given in underlined form, is marked with tamay, which is one of the focus markers of colloquial Sinhala. The verb of the sentence is also marked with -e indicating that a constituent bears focus.
The focused constituent occurs in clause final position, and is without an overt marker in (1d). Just as in (1c), the verb is marked with -e to indicate the presence of a focused constituent. Thus, focus is indicated by the verb marking and phrase structure. Sentences (1b-1d) have contrastive focus, compared with (1a) which does not have the contrastive focus interpretation. We will return to discuss the meaning of these sentences shortly.

Another question worth asking is whether the focus in colloquial Sinhala can be encoded by phrase structural means alone, or whether there is a relation between the order of constituents and discourse-related phenomena, in particular, focus. Some languages have been shown to have a relationship between constituent order and discourse factors (see, for instance, Russian (King 1995), German, Korean (Choi 1999), Turkish (Butt and King 1996), Hindi and Urdu (Butt and King 1996, 1997)).

Discourse-related effects in these languages are claimed to be associated with varying constituent orders. As mentioned earlier, constituent order is free in both focused and unfocused clauses in colloquial Sinhala, and focus is primarily encoded through morphological means. Morphological encoding includes both verb marking and

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132 Also see Kiss (1994).

133 It may be noted that in examples such as (1d) the sentence final constituent (which is morphologically unmarked for focus) is interpreted as in focus in the absence of a morphologically marked, focused constituent. Other constituents in the clause may occur in any order. In this regard, the word order in this type of clause may be considered somewhat restricted.
argument marking. The focused constituent can appear in any phrase structural position without affecting the meaning. For instance, re-arranging the constituent order in (1a-1c) does not affect the meaning of the respective sentences. Focus is syntactically interpreted, as in (1d), only when morphological encoding on an argument is absent. Where a constituent is focused, the verb always carries the suffix -e to indicate that one of its constituents bears focus.

6.1.2 The Notion of Focus and Focus in Colloquial Sinhala

Various terms have been used to describe the focus construction in Sinhala. They include emphatic construction, cleft, pseudo cleft, focus and so on. Earlier it was shown that focus may be encoded in a number of ways. Now it is worth asking if word order variations and different encoding of focus are reflected in semantic and discourse characteristics.

Our interpretation of focus in this study follows the information structure model proposed by Choi (1999), which is an extension of Vallduvi’s (1992) Informational Packaging. On the basis of discourse information, a clause may be separated into two parts, as focus and presupposition (Jakendoff 1972) or as focus and ground (Vallduvi 1992). In these divisions, presupposition or ground (or sometimes referred to as background) is the old or given information that is already known in the discourse, in other words information that the hearer is assumed to share with the speaker (Jackendoff 1972:230). On the other hand, focus is generally the new information.

134 The encoding of other discourse markers like topic in colloquial Sinhala has not been studied to the best of our knowledge. Our investigation of topic marking yields no evidence to show a relationship between topic and constituent order, as is the case with some languages (e.g. Urdu and Turkish (Butt and King 1996)). Apart from the use of intonation, the particle naŋ is used to mark the topic constituent, as shown in (i), regardless of the phrase structural position.

i. Siri kolambi naŋ giya.
   Siri.NOM Colombo TOP go.PST
   ‘As for Colombo, Siri went there.’

ii. kolambi naŋ Siri giya.

iii. Siri giya kolambi naŋ.
   ‘As for Colombo, Siri went there.’

135 Note that the term ‘argument’ here includes not only those subcategorised by the verb, but also adjuncts.
Focus is a very broad term, and many researchers have shown the need to distinguish more than one type of focus (see for instance Dik et al. (1981), Rochemont and Cullicover (1990), King (1995), Choi (1999) and references therein). For example, *contrastive focus* is distinguished from *completive focus* (a term used by Dik et al (1981) and Choi 1999) or what is also sometimes referred to as *presentational focus*.

Completive focus is new information, and according to Rochemont and Cullicover (1990:20), is not *context-constructable*. Any information that is *context-constructable* has been ‘under discussion in the discourse at hand’. Further, *completive focus* does not involve a comparison with something else, unlike *contrastive focus*, which generally involves a set of possible, alternative candidates with whom the focus is being contrasted. While both completive and contrastive focus present new information, contrastive focus, unlike completive focus, is argued to be *prominent*, as it is being singled out among several potential alternatives (Choi 1999:90). Thus, in the information structure model proposed by Choi, the feature prominent [+Prom] distinguishes contrastive focus from completive focus, which is [-Prom], while both being [+New] at the same time.\(^{136}\)

Now we move on to see how the sentences given in (1) can be analysed in terms of the information structure model outlined above. *Colombo* is the requested information in the question ‘Where did Siri go?’ Therefore, *Colombo* is the focus in (1a), as it constitutes ‘new information’ given in the answer that is not included in the question. According to the information structure model that the present study follows, *Colombo* in (1a) is completive focus. On the other hand, (1b-1d) are different from (1a), and have contrastive focus.\(^{137}\) The focus of these sentences may be new information, though sometimes such contrastively focused constituents can be *context-constructable*, as they may have been under discussion in the discourse (see Rochmont and Culicover 1990). What clearly distinguishes (1a) from (1c-1d) is that in latter the focused constituent is contrasted with other possible alternatives. These sentences imply that ‘Siri went to COLOMBO’, but not ‘to Kandy or some other place’,

\(^{136}\) In this study, we do not discuss the terms *topic* and *background*, and have not included the feature distinctions for the rest of Choi’s information structure model. The reader is referred to Choi (1999:92) for a complete analysis.

\(^{137}\) It may be noted that sometimes a sentence such as (1b) may carry completive focus or contrastive focus depending on extralinguistic emphasis, e.g. facial expressions.
as can be seen in the gloss. In fact, we can attach an accompanying alternative phrase like Nuwərə nemy ‘not Kandy’ to sentences (1b-1d). However, the same phrase, if attached to (1a), would result in an ungrammatical sentence. Thus, the focus in (1a) does not imply an alternative set.

The present study covers only contrastive focus and will not consider the construction exemplified in (1a). Further prosodically encoded focus (as in (1b)) will also not be analysed, as it does not involve the morphosyntactic characteristics dealt with in this study. It is to be noted that throughout this study the general use of the term ‘focus’ refers to contrastive focus, unless otherwise stated.

6.1.3 Are there different focus constructions in Sinhala?

A previous study has argued for two types of contrastive focus in Sinhala: Cleft Focus and Emphatic Focus (Kariyakarawana 1998). Kariyakarawana argues that Cleft Focus (e.g. (1d)), realised in the postverbal position, is said to have an obligatory cleft reading, while Emphatic Focus (e.g. (1c)) may or may not have a cleft reading. It is to be noted that whether the focused constituent is in the postverbal/clause-final position or the in situ position, the meaning of the clause remains unaffected, as has been indicated in the glosses of respective sentences above. As will be shown in § 6.3 in detail, we do not consider that the basis for establishing Cleft Focus and Emphatic Focus is well-founded.

Our use of different terms, such as ‘constituent focus’, ‘predicate focus’ and ‘clause-final focus’, throughout this study does not reflect the meaning differences that a construction might have, but is based on the syntactic characteristics that each type exhibits. We use these terms to identify various clause types simply for explanatory convenience.

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138 * Siri koldʰbə giya, Nuwərə nemy.
Siri.NOM Colombo go.PST, Kandy FNEG

Intended: ‘Siri went to Colombo, but not to Kandy’

139 It may be noted that, although sentence (1d) falls within the type of Cleft Focus in Kariyakarawana’s study, ‘Cleft Focus’ and what we refer to as ‘clause-final focus’ (e.g. 1d) are very different in a number of ways. See § 6.3 for discussion of this.
The present study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the syntax of colloquial Sinhala focus. In section 6.2, we discuss the characteristics of Sinhala focus, in particular the morphological and phrase structural encoding of focus. Section 6.4 is a syntactic treatment of Sinhala focus. The present study covers various clause types in both verbal and non-verbal sentences.

6.2 Characteristics of Colloquial Sinhala Focus

In what follows we examine the characteristics of focus constructions in simple clauses (§ 6.2.1), multi-clause constructions (§ 6.2.2) and in non-verbal clauses (§ 6.2.3). We will also use terms such constituent focus, predicate focus and clause-final focus to refer to different types of focus constructions. Constituent focus involves focusing on a constituent of a clause. On the other hand, where a predicate bears focus, rather than a constituent (e.g. an argument), it will be referred to as predicate focus. In the case of clause-final focus, the constituent that occurs clause-finally is not marked with a focus marker, and is focused by virtue of its position within the clause.

Our analysis and syntactic treatment of Sinhala focus follows in § 6.4.

6.2.1 Focus in Simple Clauses

We begin our examination of focus in simple clauses with an example of constituent focus. One of the characteristics of constituent focus is that the focus encoding involves morphologically marking the verb and the constituent to be focused. The co-occurrence of these two elements, the verb marking particle -e and the focus marker on a constituent, is crucially important. This is shown by the pair of examples given in (2), in which (2a) is the non-focused neutral sentence, and (2b) is the focused form:

(2)  a. Nuwəː bas_ekə dəŋ giya.  
    Kandy bus_DEF now go.PST
    ‘The Kandy bus left just now.’

b. Nuwəː bas_ekə tamay dəŋ giye.  
    Kandy bus_DEF FOC now go.PST.E
    ‘It is the Kandy bus that left just now.’

In the focused sentence, the verb is specially marked with the suffix -e, glossed as E, as opposed to the verb-final -a in the basic declarative form, which is not glossed in our examples. The inflectional suffixes -a/-e can occur on finite verbs of present and
past tense, and are not tense markers. The focus marker *tamay* appears following the subject of the clause in (2b) making it the focused constituent.

Apart from *tamay*, there are a number of other focus marking particles with different meanings, which can appear following any constituent (or, the predicate itself, in the case of predicate focus). These particles include the reportative *lu* ‘it seems/so they say’, *witray* ‘only’, focus negation *nemey*, dubitative *yae*, conditional *nagy* ‘if’, *ne* ‘n’est ce pas’ and the interrogative *də* (see (3) below). The other emphatic forms –*yi* and *tamaa*, which also can be glossed as ‘indeed/certainly’, are interchangeable with *tamay*, and similar to it in meaning and function.

(3)  

*Nuwər* bas _ekə_ *lu/witray/nemey/yae/nag/na/də/tamaa* *dən* _guye_.  
Kandy _bus_ **DEF** REP/EXE/FNEG/DUB/COND/TAG/Q/FOC now _go.PST.E*

*lu* (REP): ‘It is the Kandy bus that left just now, (so they say).’

*witray* (EXC): ‘Only the Kandy bus left just now.’

*nemey* (FNEG): ‘It is not the Kandy bus that left just now.’

*yae* (DUB): ‘It is not the Kandy bus that left just now, isn’t it?’

*nagy* (COND): ‘If it is the Kandy bus that left just now, ....’

*ne* (TAG): ‘It is the Kandy bus that left just now, isn’t it?’

*də* (Q): ‘Is it the Kandy bus that left just now?’

*tamaa*/–*yi* (FOC): ‘It is the Kandy bus that left just now.’

Although focus markers generally differ in meaning, they are similar in distribution. Further, they have clitic-like behaviour, and are assumed to be attached to an XP. In this study, we will not discuss the differences between individual focus markers, as their exact nature is not significant for our purposes, and we will mainly use *tamay* in our data as representative of focus markers in general.

Further, with constituent focus, any argument, or even an adjunct, can be focused: see (4).

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140 They cannot appear on other verbal forms such as the present or past participle form.

141 *Yae* appears to negate propositions, expressing ‘incredulity’, and yields the equivalent of tag-questions, as in *Siri is a teacher → Siri is not a teacher, is he?* (Karunatillake 1992).

142 See footnote 141.

143 See § 7.5.1.2 in chapter 7 for a detailed discussion of focus markers as clitics, and the phrase structure representation of the Focus Phrase.

144 Sharma (1999) contains a discussion of discourse clitics in Hindi. These particles bear some interesting similarities with Sinhala focus markers.
When a focus marker follows a predicate, the whole proposition may be focused or questioned, depending on the particle. We refer to this construction as **predicate focus**. In this case the E-marking does not appear on the verb, and the verb appears in the basic form with –a (see 5):

(5)  
\[ \text{Nuw} \text{ bas}_e \text{ko } \text{dæn } \text{giya } \text{nemey/tamay/dɔ/yi}. \]  
Kandy bus_DEF now go.PST.FNEG/FOC/Q/REP  
\[ \text{nemey (FNEG): 'It is not that the Kandy bus left just now.' } \]  
\[ \text{tamay (FOC): 'The Kandy bus DID leave just now.' } \]  
\[ \text{dɔ (Q): 'Did the Kandy bus leave just now?' } \]  
\[ \text{yi (REP): 'The Kandy bus left just now, (so they say).'</ } \]

As in the basic declarative form, the order of constituents within the clause is free in the focused form: see (6):

(6)  
\[ \text{a. sudupaag pettak tamay mahattәya oyaa-to mәleriyaaw-to dunne. } \]  
white_tablet.IND FOC mister.NOM 2SG-DAT Malaria-DAT give.PST.E  
\[ \text{b. mahattәya sudupaag pettak tamay oyaa-tо mәleriyaaw-tо dunne. } \]  
\[ \text{c. mahattәya oyaa-tо sudupaag pettak tamay mәleriyaaw-tо dunne. } \]  
\[ \text{d. mahattәya oyaa-tо mәleriyaaw-tо sudupaag pettak tamay dunne. } \]  
\[ \text{e. mahattәya oyaa-tо mәleriyaaw-tо dunne sudupaag pettak tamay. } \]  
\[ \text{‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave you for Malaria.’ } \]

Since focus is not phrase structurally encoded in (6), the focus constituent is not restricted to a particular phrase structure position. The constituent to be focused is determined by the accompanying focus marker. However, this is not the case in **clause-final focus**, as in the following sentence:

(7)  
\[ \text{mahattәya oyaa-tо mәleriyaaw-tо dunne sudupaag pettak. } \]  
mister.NOM 2SG-DAT Malaria-DAT give.PST.E white_tablet.IND  
\[ \text{‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave you for Malaria.’ } \]

A focus marker is absent in (7). The constituent following the E-marked verb is interpreted as the focused item.\(^{145}\) **Clause-final focus** is only possible when (a) the verb

\[^{145}\text{It is very common in focus constructions for the focused constituent to follow the E-marked verb, whether or not the constituent is overtly marked with a focus marker.}\]
is marked with the E-marker and (b) a constituent follows the verb. Note that the only focus meaning available in this instance is that of the focus marker *tamay*. For this reason, the postverbal position can be considered the default focus position, and *tamay* can be considered the default focus marker. It should also be pointed out that when other focus markers occur in this position, their overt presence is obligatory. Thus, it is possible to say that in the absence of an overt focus marker, the default focus reading is *tamay*.

If a focus marker is not attached to any constituent in a clause, and no constituent follows the E-marked verb, the sentence is ungrammatical. This is because the presence of the E-marker requires that a constituent in the clause must be in focus. To satisfy this requirement, the clause-final constituent must be interpreted as focused in a clause in which no constituent is overtly marked with a focus marker. Note that the co-occurrence relation between the E-marker and focus markers does not hold in clause-final focus.

Finally, with regard to the interrogative particle *d*$\ddot{\sigma}$, some remark is due here. Any argument can be made the focus of a question by adding the interrogative particle *d*$\ddot{\sigma}$ to it, as shown by sentences such as (3) and (4). On the other hand, when *d*$\ddot{\sigma}$ immediately follows the predicate, the yes-no question reading is possible, as in (5). It may be noted that only one focus marker can occur in a single clause, while multiple interrogative markers may be present in a single clause. As noted by Kishimoto (1999:53), there appear to be some distributional differences between the interrogative *d*$\ddot{\sigma}$ and the other focus markers. For example, comparing (8a-8b), *tamay* is allowed clause-finally (8b). However, *d*$\ddot{\sigma}$ is not allowed clause-finally in (8a), and is expected to occur immediately following the *wh*-NP. This is because the presence of the *wh*-NP requires that the interrogative marker must immediately follow it, as the *wh*-NP cannot occur on its own. Usually, *wh*-questions allow multiple foci in a single clause, as in (8c). On the other hand, multiple focus particles cannot occur in a single clause (8d). Despite the differences exhibited in (8a-8d), Kishimoto assumes that *wh* and focus constructions involve the same grammatical mechanism.

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146 When more than one constituent follows the E-marked verb, the clause-final constituent is interpreted as the focus.
6.2.2 Focus in Multi-Clause Constructions (MCCs)

In this section, we first analyse how focus is interpreted in MCCs, i.e. sentences containing more than one clause. Secondly, we look at the characteristics of focus in MCCs.

Any argument or adjunct belonging to an embedded clause or a matrix clause can be focussed in MCCs. The interpretation of focus within MCCs depends on the combination of two factors, where -e affix appears (i.e. on the matrix verb or the embedded verb), and what clause the focus constituent belongs to (i.e. the matrix clause or the embedded clause). We can outline these possibilities as given in Table 6-1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus constituent belongs to</th>
<th>-e marking on</th>
<th>Resulting focus interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. embedded clause</td>
<td>embedded verb</td>
<td>‘embedded interpretation’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. embedded clause</td>
<td>matrix verb</td>
<td>‘matrix interpretation’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. matrix clause</td>
<td>matrix verb</td>
<td>‘matrix interpretation’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. matrix clause</td>
<td>embedded verb</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6-1: Outline of focus interpretations in MCCs

We use the terms ‘embedded focus interpretation’ and ‘matrix focus interpretation’ to refer to the two types of focus interpretations available in MCCs. These focus
interpretations (to be discussed shortly) are simply based on the E-marking. Much of our discussion in what follows will be devoted to the types (a) and (b) in Table 6-1. Sentences with a focussed constituent in the matrix clause and the E-marked verb on the embedded clause (i.e. d) are not grammatical, and in § 6.4.4.4 we will explain why such a construction is not possible given the analysis proposed in this study.

6.2.2.1 Scope Marking and Focus Interpretation

When a constituent of an embedded clause is focused, the E-marking can appear either on the embedded predicator or the matrix predicator. Depending on where the E-marker appears, the sentence has either embedded focus interpretation (a in Table 6-1) or the matrix focus interpretation (b in Table 6-1). Consider sentences in (9) with the focus marker \textit{tamay} and (10) with the question marker \textit{də}, for instance (the focused constituents and the -e suffix are underlined for clarity):

(9)  a. \textit{Gune [janaadipət̪i \ boruwak \ tamay \ kiwwe ] kiyəla hituwa.}
Gune.NOM [President.NOM lie.IND FOC say.PST.E ] COMP think.PST
‘Gune thought that it was a lie that the President told.’

b. \textit{Gune [janaadipət̪i \ boruwak \ tamay \ kiwwa ] kiyəla hituwe.}
Gune.NOM [President.NOM line.IND FOC say.PST ] COMP think.PST.E
‘It was a lie that Gune thought the President told.’

(10) a. \textit{Gune [janaadipət̪i \ boruwak \ də \ kiwwe ] kiyəla hituwa.}
Gune.NOM [President.NOM lie.IND Q say.PST.E ] COMP think.PST
‘Gune wondered if it was a lie that the President told.’

b. \textit{Gune [janaadipət̪i \ boruwak \ də \ kiwwa ] kiyəla hituwe?}
Gune.NOM [President.NOM line.IND Q say.PST ] COMP think.PST.E
‘Was it a lie that Gune thought the President told?’

Notice the meaning difference between the (a) sentences and the (b) sentences. As can be seen, \textit{boruwak ‘a lie’} of the embedded clause is the focused constituent in all the sentences. However, the embedded verbs in the (a) sentences, with the -e suffix attached to them, yield the embedded focus interpretation, while the matrix verbs in the (b) sentences with their -e suffix yield the matrix focus interpretation. It appears that the focus or the question is interpreted relative to the E-marked verb. In other words, the E-marked verb determines the scope of focus or question. Thus, any one of the two verbal predicates can be marked with -e, and the scope of the focused constituent is interpreted relative to the E-marked verb. Examples (9-10) illustrate what is generally

Let us briefly analyse the meaning of the (a) and (b) sentences in (9-10) to see what ‘the scope marker’ really does in these constructions, and how the focus interpretation is dependant on it. Lambrecht (1994) uses a number of terms to analyse the information structure of a sentence. One useful term to borrow from Lambrecht is the \textit{pragmatic presupposition} or simply \textit{presupposition}, which Lambrecht defines as “the set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered” (1994:52). All the sentences in (9-10) generally presuppose that \textit{the President said something}.

Sentences in (9-10) are statements, or \textit{assertions} as Lambrecht (1994) refers to them, which can be considered as Gune’s opinion concerning the truth of the President’s statement. The meaning difference between the (a) and (b) sentences above is due to subtle differences in their presuppositions and assertions.

Before we present the information structure of these sentences, we will introduce two other terms from Van Valin and LaPolla (1997). We can refer to the focused constituent as the \textit{Actual Focus Domain}, which is the actual part of the clause or the constituent that is in focus, according to Van Valin and LaPolla.\footnote{Lambrecht (1994:214-215) refers to this as the ‘Focus Domain’.} In the above examples, the constituents marked with \textit{tamay} and \textit{də} are the actual focus domains. We also make use of the term \textit{Potential Focus Domain} from Van Valin and LaPolla. The potential focus domain is “the syntactic domain in which the focus element(s) may occur” (1997:212). We assume that E-marking or the scope marker on the verb indicates the potential focus domain in Sinhala. This is because the focus constituent must occur inside the clause of the E-marked verb, and cannot be scrambled out of the clause of the E-marked verb (as we will show later in this section).
We can now schematically illustrate the information structures of (9a) and (9b) as in (11a) and (11b) on the basis of the terminology introduced above.\footnote{This analysis is based on Lambrecht’s Information Structure model (1994): also see Van Valin and LaPolla (1997). It may be noted that the term ‘context’ as used above is mine, and the original analysis of Lambrecht (and also that of Van Valin and LaPolla) does not contain such a feature.}

(11) a. **Information structure for (9a)**

Presupposition: The President said something (S).
Context: someone describes Gune’s opinion (X) as to whether the President’s statement (S) is true (A) or false (B).
Assertion/Gune thinks: S = B
Actual Focus Domain: *boruwak* ‘a lie’
Potential Focus Domain: … [\textit{janaadip} \textit{boruwak tamay kiww}] …

b. **Information structure for (9b)**

Presupposition: Gune thought that the President said something (S)
Context: someone describes Gune’s opinion (X) as (A) or (B) with regard to the President’s statement (S) being true (A) or false (B)
Assertion/Gune thinks: X = B with regard to the President’s statement (S)
Actual Focus Domain: *boruwak* ‘a lie’
Potential Focus Domain: [Gune [\textit{janaadip} \textit{boruwak tamay kiwwa} ] \textit{kiyala hituw}] .

The crucial difference between (9a) and (9b), and their respective structures in (11a-b) is the focus interpretation, which is directly influenced by the ε-marked verb. In the (a) sentences, Gune makes an assertion regarding the President’s statement being false: S = B, which simply means *what the President said is B*. On the other hand, what is indicated by the (b) sentence is Gune’s view in relation to the President’s statement being true or false: X = B (i.e. Gune’s assumption is that it is a lie).

The meaning differences in sentences such as (9a-9b) result from the fact that the focus is construed on the basis of the ε-marked verb. For instance, the assertion made by Gune is based on a presupposition which Gune believes to be true. In other words, in the case of (9a), Gune really believes that the President told a lie. Therefore, if the President did not tell a lie, Gune’s assumption and the proposition made afterwards on this basis become incorrect. However, the situation is different in (9b). Gune’s assertion (X = B) in (9b) may not have anything to do with what the President actually said and the accuracy of the President’s statement. It may be possible that Gune misheard what the President said. Or else, the speaker, who is describing Gune’s belief in relation to the President’s statement, may be trying to convince others about
what Gune thought or said concerning the truth of the President’s statement, regardless of whether the President told a lie or not.

Furthermore, not only the assertion but also the presupposition can be different in (9a-9b). As we have indicated in (11b), (9b) may presuppose ‘Gune thought that the President said something’ (compare with that of (9a/11a). In this regard, ‘Gune's knowledge about the President’s statement’ may have already been under discussion, hence it may not be new information. What is new and prominent in this example is how the accuracy of the statement is being interpreted in terms of Gune's opinion, in other words, how it is construed on the basis of the E-marked matrix verb.

Finally, the potential focus domain for (9a) is the embedded clause. In the case of (9b), the whole sentence including both the matrix and embedded clause is the potential focus domain. We will use the term ‘embedded focus interpretation’ and ‘matrix focus interpretation’ throughout this study to refer to (9a) and (9b) type clauses respectively.

6.2.2.2 Characteristics of MCCs

We now proceed to look at some characteristics of MCCs.

Whether it be a simple sentence like (2b) or a complex sentence with an embedded clause, the E-marker must be present on a verb, if a focus marker is attached to a constituent other than the verb itself. The absence of -e on either of the predicates explains the unacceptability of (12).

(12) * Gune janaadip’ti boruwak da/tumay kiwwa kiyala hituwa.
Gune.NOM [president.NOM lie.IND Q/FOC say.PST ] COMP think.PST

As mentioned previously, the constituent order of non-focused clauses (e.g. (2a)) and simple focused clauses, such as (6), can be free. However, focusing in complex embedded clauses appears to have some effect on the reordering of constituents. The focused constituent is less restricted in terms of scrambling in clauses with the matrix focus than in those with the embedded focus. For example, in (13) the matrix verb is E-marked, and the object argument of the embedded clause is focused. Note that the focused constituent can occur either in the embedded clause or in the matrix clause, since the potential focus domain of this sentence extends up to the matrix verb.
(13)  a. mee potə tamay, Gune kiyew [laməya Ø_i kiyewwa] kiyəla.  
            this book           FOC               Gune.NOM say.PST.E [child.NOM       read.PST ]        COMP

b. Gune mee potə tamay, kiyew [laməya Ø_i kiyewwa] kiyəla.

c. Gune kiyew mee potə tamay, [laməya Ø_i kiyewwa] kiyəla.

d. Gune kiyew, [laməya Ø_i kiyewwa] kiyəla mee potə tamay.

‘It is this book that Gune said that the child read.’

On the other hand, when the embedded clause is marked with -e, the focus constituent should stay within the embedded clause, as in (14). As can be seen, the shifting of the focussed constituent from the embedded clause to the higher clause is not favoured when the potential focus domain does not extend to the higher clause.

(14)  a. [mee potə tamay laməya kiyewwe] kiyəla Gune kiywa.
            [this book          FOC     child.NOM read.PST.E ]        COMP               Gune.NOM     say.PST

b.* [laməya Ø_i kiyewwe] kiyəla, mee potə tamay, Gune kiywa.

c.* [laməya Ø_i kiyewwe] kiyəla, Gune kiywa mee potə tamay.

d.??mee potə tamay, Gune kiywa [laməya Ø_i kiyewwe] kiyəla.

‘Gune said that what the child read was this book.’

Thus, (13) and (14) demonstrate that the focussed constituent cannot be moved out of, and should reside inside, the S which is designated as the potential focus domain. The following ungrammatical sentence further confirms this assumption:

(15)  * [mee potə laməya kiyewwe] kiyəla Gune den tamay kiywa.
            [this book          child.NOM read.PST.E ]        COMP               Gune.NOM now     FOC     say.PST

Intended: ‘Gune said NOW that the child read this book.’

Den ‘now’ is a constituent of the matrix clause in (15). The potential focus domain is the embedded clause, not the matrix clause, since the embedded verb is E-marked. The problem with (15) is that the focussed item is outside the potential focus domain.

To sum up the discussion so far, when a matrix clause is the potential focus domain (a) a constituent of either the matrix clause or the embedded clause can be focused, and (b) the focussed constituent (if it belongs to the embedded clause) may be scrambled out of the embedded clause to a higher clause. However, when an embedded clause is the potential focus domain a constituent of that clause must be focussed, and cannot be moved to a higher clause. In (§ 6.4.4.4), we provide an explanation for and analysis of the characteristics displayed by examples in (13)-(15).
In simple clauses, only one focussed constituent is allowed per clause. However, an MCC, a sentence with more than one clause in it, may contain more than one focussed constituent. For each focussed constituent, a predicate must be appropriately marked. In other words, every focussed constituent must have a different e-marked verb. For instance, (16a) has two constituents marked with the interrogative d, and this has been morphologically indicated on both the matrix and the embedded verbs:


? ‘Was it to Siri that you asked what it was I gave?’ (Gair 1983)

b.* [mam∅F2 mokak d∅F1 dunneF1] kiyola Gune xhuvu Siri-tø døF2 [1SG.NOM what Q give.PST.E] COMP Gune.NOM ask.PST Siri-DAT Q

c.* [mam∅F2 Siri-tø tamayF2 mokak d∅F1 dunneF1] kiyola Gune xhuvu. [1SG.NOM Siri-DAT FOC what Q give.PST.E] COMP Gune.NOM ask.PST

Intended: ‘It was to Siri that Gune asked what it was I gave.’ (Gair 1983)

Sentence (16b) is similar to (16a), the only difference being that the matrix verb is not marked with -e in (16b). Sentence (16c) has two focussed constituents: one with tamay and the other with the interrogative marker d. Both (16b) and (16c) are unacceptable due to the matrix verb not being appropriately marked for focusing. Because there are two focussed constituents in the embedded clause, the two verbs (i.e. the matrix verb and the embedded verb) must be suffixed with -e.

There are restrictions on the grammatical relations of constituents that may be focused. Only the direct constituents of an S may bear focus. Constituents that cannot

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149 However, as noted above, multiple interrogative markers may be present in a single clause: see (8c).

Although the following sentence may initially appear to contradict the statement that multiple focus markers are not allowed in a single clause, this is not the case since there are two constituents marked with focus markers in this sentence, both sharing the single grammatical function.

Gune tamay gedrø give. Sena nemey. Gune.NOM FOC house go.PST.E Sena.NOM FNEG

‘It is Gune who went home, but not Sena.’

Also, see Mohanan and Mohanan (1994) for an analysis of similar clauses in Malayalam cleft constructions.

150 Gair (1983) is reprinted in Gair (1998) and these examples are from Gair (1998:57).
be focused include possessors, complements of postpositions and relative clauses, as far as our data is concerned. This restriction applies to all clause types in colloquial Sinhala, not just to MCCs. Consider sentences (17-20):

- **Possessor focused:**

  (17) * Gune *kamāya-ge* tamay pota genaawe.

  Gune.NOM child-GEN FOC book.ACC bring.PST.E

  Intended: ‘Gune brought the child’s book.’

- **Complement of the postposition focused:**

  (18) a.* Gune mininha telamay ekk kataa_kale.

  Gune.NOM man.NOM FOC with talk.PST.E

  Intended: ‘It was THE MAN that Gune talked with.’

  b. Gune mininha ekk tamay kataa_kale.

- **Relative clause or part of it focused:**


  Gune.NOM [shop.L FOC work do.PRE.VADJ] man.DAT talk.PST.E


  Gune.NOM [shop.L work do.PRE.VADJ] man.DAT FOC talk.PST.E

  ‘It was to the man [who works in the shop] that Gune talked.’

(20) a. Gune ikmā-jo kade wara kara mininha-jo kataa_kala.

  Gune.NOM quick-DAT shop.L work do.PRE.VADJ man.NOM talk.PST

  ‘Gune quickly talked to the man who works in the shop.’

  ‘Gune talked to the man who works quickly in the shop.’


  Gune.NOM quick-DAT FOC [shop.L work do.PRE.VADJ] man.NOM talk.PST.E

  ‘Gune quickly talked to the man who works in the shop.’

  ≠ ‘Gune talked to the man who works quickly in the shop.’

A relative clause as a whole, or any constituent that belongs to a relative clause, cannot be focussed, as shown in (19a-c), but an NP that contains a relative clause can be focused because it is a direct daughter of the S (see 19d). (20) illustrates this point. The
meaning of (20a) is ambiguous: the adverb may be interpreted as a part of the main clause or of the relative clause. However, when it is focussed, it can no longer be interpreted as a part of the relative clause.

6.2.3 Non-Verbal Predicates and Encoding of Focus

As discussed previously, ways of encoding focus in verbal sentences include morphologically marking the verb and a constituent. However, in the case of clause-final focus (e.g. 7), the constituent which is to be interpreted as the focus is not morphologically marked. Instead, it may simply follow the E-marked verb. Focus in non-verbal sentences (NVSs) shares all the characteristics of verbal sentences, except the morphological marking of the predicate by the E-marker. NV predicates cannot be so suffixed with the -e marker. As mentioned previously, the suffix -e can only be attached to the present and past finite forms of verbal predicates. The presence of the markers -a/-e on verbal predicates, and their absence with non-verbal predicates, is to be treated as a property of inflectional morphology. Therefore, nominal predicates, postpositional predicates and action nominal predicates do not have distinct forms for focussed and non-focussed clauses.

In what follows we briefly present a number of NVSs to illustrate their characteristics. Just as in verbal sentences, any argument or even the predicate itself may be focussed, as shown by the adjectival clauses in (21-22). Sentences in (22) illustrate that the focussed constituent may occur in any position of the phrase structure indicating flexibility in word order. Examples of postpositional, nominal equational and action nominal clauses are given in (23), (24) and (25) respectively.

- Adjectival Clauses:

(21)  
nangi  iskoole-t  yanno  hor  tamay/dɔ.
younger_sister.NOM  school-DAT  go.INF  unwilling FOC/Q

tamay (FOC):  ‘The younger sister is certainly unwilling to go to school.’
dɔ(Q):  ‘Is the younger sister unwilling to go to school?’

151 What are referred to as quasi-verbs: æti ‘might (be)’ and næti ‘not’ also take -e, as in ætte and nætte (Gair 1970). Further, modal adjuncts such as ooma ‘want’ and pulawan ‘can’ also take -e, although this appears to be optional as they sometimes occur in focus constructions without -e.
(22) a. nangi tamay/də iskoole-tə yannə horə.
    younger_sister.NOM FOC/Q school-DAT go.INF unwilling

b. iskoole-tə nangi tamay/də yannə horə.

c. iskoole-tə yannə nangi tamay/də horə.

d. iskoole-tə yannə horə nangi tamay/də.

    tamay (FOC): ‘It is indeed the younger sister who is unwilling to go to school.’
    də(Q): ‘Is it the younger sister who is unwilling to go to school?’

- Postpositional Clauses:

(23) a. mee potə tamay/də mese uğə.
    this book FOC/Q table upon

    tamay (FOC): ‘It is this book which is on the table.’
    də(Q): ‘Is it this book which is on the table?’

b. mee potə mese uğə tamay/də.
    this book table upon FOC/Q

    tamay (FOC): ‘Certainly, this book is on the table’
    də(Q): ‘Is this book on the table?’

- Nominal Equational Clauses (with definite predicates):

(24) a. Gunasiri mahattəya tamay/də ape iskool-e mul guruwəryə.
    Gunasiri gentleman.NOM FOC/Q our school-LOC head teacher.DEF

    tamay (FOC): ‘It is Mr. Gunasiri who is the head teacher of our school.’
    də(Q): ‘Is it Mr. Gunasiri who is the head teacher of our school?’

b. Gunasiri mahattəya ape iskool-e mul guruwəryə tamay/də.
    Gunasiri gentleman.NOM our school-LOC head teacher.DEF FOC/Q

    tamay (FOC): ‘Mr. Gunasiri is indeed the head teacher of our school.’
    də(Q): ‘Is Mr. Gunasiri the head teacher of our school?’

- Action Nominal Clauses:

    Siri.NOM FOC work.DEF

    ‘It is Siri who (is) working.’

b. Siri wəəə tamay.
    Siri.NOM work.DEF FOC

    ‘Siri (is) certainly working [and not talking].’
The encoding of focus in NVSs is limited to attaching a focus marker to a constituent or to the predicate itself, as shown by the examples above. However, the constituent focus is not possible with clauses containing indefinite predicates. Consider the following pair of sentences which belong to the nominal equational type with indefinite predicates:

- **Nominal Equational Clauses (with indefinite predicates):**

  (26) a. Gune guruyek tamay/də.
      Gune.NOM teacher.IND FOC/Q
      tamay (FOC): ‘Gune is indeed a teacher’
      də(Q): ‘Is Gune a teacher?’

  b.* Gune tamay/də guruyek.
      Gune.NOM FOC/Q teacher.IND
      Intended: tamay (FOC): ‘GUNE is a teacher’
      Intended: də(Q): ‘Is GUNE a teacher?’

As previously mentioned (see Chapter 5), equational sentences with indefinite predicates are restricted to certain constructions, and focus markers can only occur following the predicate, unlike in equational clauses with definite predicates (see, 24a for instance). Indefinite predicates do not allow the argument NP to be focussed, as shown by the unacceptability of (26b). We suspect that this unacceptability may be linked to discourse factors affecting the meaning. Indefinite nominal predicators appear to be inherently focussed, even when an overt focus marker is not present.

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152 The only observable morphological effect on the predicates of NVSs is associated with vowel-ending adjectival predicates, which take the assertion marker –yi in non-focus forms (see below), and are uninflected in focussed forms as shown by the examples (21-22) in the text. All other NV predicates, including consonant-ending adjectives, do not take the assertion marker.

nangi iskoole-tə yanno hor-yi.
younger_sister.NOM school-DAT go.INF unwilling-AM
‘The younger sister is unwilling to go the school.’

153 A test such as the following indicates that the focus is associated with the indefinite NP, not with the argument NP.

a. Gune guruyek (poliskaaruyek nemey).
   Gune.NOM teacher.IND (policeman.IND FNEG)
   ‘Gune is a teacher’ (not a policeman).
Therefore, no other constituent in the clause may be focused, as only one constituent in a clause can be focused (whether it be the argument NP or the predicate itself). In other words, focus implies new information, and an indefinite predicator, being inherently a carrier of focus, cannot be old information. Indefinite nouns in general appear to interact with discourse functions like focus in some languages. Indefinite or non-specific NPs in German, for instance, exhibit some restrictions with regard to the scrambling, as scrambled elements should be defocused, according to Choi (1999). Essentially what this means (in German) is that unspecific, indefinite phrases cannot be scrambled, as they are ‘inherently focused’ (Webelhuth 1992) or *new information* (Choi 1999:69). If we assume that the indefinite NP (in Sinhala) naturally has the focus, this would explain why another constituent in the same clause cannot bear focus at the same time.

Now we move on to look at some issues relating to clause-final focus in NVSs. Just as in verbal sentences (see (7)), it is possible for a constituent to be interpreted as in focus when it occurs in clause-final position. In such clauses, the focus marker is not present on the focussed constituent, and sometimes intonation may be used instead. Consider the following postpositional clause:

(27)  
\[ mese \, udə \, ee \, potə. \]  
\[ table \, upon \, that \, book \]  
‘What is on the table is that book.’

Even without any morphological marking, *ee potə* ‘that book’ has the focus interpretation due to the phrase structural position in which it occurs. Although this construction is possible with adjectival, postpositional and action nominal clauses, nominal equational clauses are not available for this construction. Both constituents in nominal equational clauses are equal in terms of definiteness, and either constituent can function as the predicate. Therefore, both constituents can be interchanged, and there is no way to distinguish the focus constituent without an overt focus marker.

\[ b. \, Gune \, gurumərəyek \, *(Siri \, nemey). \]  
\[ Gune.NOM \, teacher.IND \, (Siri \, FNEG) \]  
\[ Intended: \, ‘Gune (not Siri) is a teacher’. \]
6.2.4 Summary

We observed that contrastive focus in Sinhala can be encoded morphologically or through a combination of morphological and configurational means.\(^{154}\) However, contrastive focus is never encoded by configurational means alone.

It was also shown that verb morphology plays an important role in focus encoding and focus interpretation in Sinhala. The highlight of the constrictive focus encoding is the interaction of verb morphology and focus particles in different constructions. There is a strict co-occurrence relation between the E-marker and focus markers in constituent focus, and this co-occurrence relation may be relaxed when a constituent occupies the configurationally-defined focus position. The co-occurrence relation does not hold in predicate focus, and the co-occurrence relation is not applicable to NVSs.

The E-marker performs two functions in Sinhala focus. Firstly, it indicates that a constituent in the clause bears focus, but not a predicate; secondly, as a scope marker it indicates the potential focus domain, which defines where a focus constituent may occur within the sentence, and may not be scrambled out of.

What follows is a discussion of a previous study related to contrastive focus (§ 6.3). In § 6.4, the present study aims to provide a unified account of focus in various constructions in verbal sentences and NVSs.

6.3 Previous Studies: Kariyakarawana (1998)

Focus constructions have been documented and discussed in a number of previous studies: see Gair (1970), Gair (1983),\(^ {155}\) Kariyakarawana (1998)\(^ {156}\) and references therein. Also, other related studies include Kishimoto (1999) and Hagstrom (1998), both of which are detailed studies of Sinhala questions. All these studies are based on the framework of Government and Binding theory, and we will not attempt to discuss

\(^{154}\) The third alternative is prosodic encoding, which is not discussed in this study.

\(^{155}\) Reprinted in Gair (1998).

\(^{156}\) See footnote 16.
their treatment. However, we will discuss a non-theoretical issue raised by Kariyakarawana (1998), related to the analysis of colloquial Sinhala focus.

Kariyakarawana argues that there exists three different focus constructions in colloquial Sinhala: C(left) Focus, E(mphasis) Focus and P(honological) Focus. C-focus is argued to have a biclausal structure, and is different from E-focus, which is said to contain a monoclausal structure. What distinguishes C-focus constructions from E-focus constructions, according to Kariyakarawana is a) the respective presence and absence of an obligatory cleft reading, b) the scope of negation, and c) the morphological marking of focus. The third type, P-focus involves placing stress on a particular constituent.

In what follows we argue that there is not sufficient evidence to distinguish two types of focus as C-focus and E-focus. Our argument against the positing of C-focus and E-focus comes from reviewing the evidence that Kariyakarawana uses to support the claim. These reasons are a) the respective presence and absence of an obligatory cleft reading, b) the scope of negation, and c) the morphological marking of focus. We will now discuss each of these.

### 6.3.1 Obligatory Cleft Reading

Kariyakarawana provides question-answer pairs to argue that there is an obligatory ‘cleft reading’ associated with C-focus (see 28), while this is optional with E-focus (see 29). Consider the following sentences from Kariyakarawana (1998:81-82):

(28) **C-focus:**

a. \( \text{lankaawe ay不肯 kanne monәwa dә?} \)
   \( \text{lanka.LOC people.NOM eat.PRE.E what Q} \)
   ‘What is it that Sri Lankans eat?’

b. \( \text{lankaawe ay不肯 kanne bat (uyi).} \)
   \( \text{lanka.LOC people.NOM eat.PRE.E rice (FOC)} \)
   ‘It is rice that Sri Lankans eat.’

(29) **E-focus:**

a. \( \text{lankaawe ay不肯 monәwa dә kanne?} \)
   \( \text{lanka.LOC people.NOM what Q eat.PRE.E} \)
   ‘What do Sri Lankans eat?’
   ‘What is it that Sri Lankans eat?’
The sentences in (28) and (29) contain question-answer pairs. The focussed constituent in (28a-28b) occurs in post-verbal position. In (29a), on the other hand, the wh-phrase occurs in preverbal position, which is the in situ position. For the question in (29a), both answers, the non-contrastive one (29b) as well as the contrastive one (29c), are appropriate. However, for a question such as (28a), a non-contrastive answer such as (29b) is not appropriate. This has prompted Kariyakarawana to argue that questions such as (28a) and (29a) have different structures: the former is said to be C-focus and the latter is said to be E-focus. Consequently, he assumes that the answer (28b) is C-focus, while the answer (29c) is E-focus (since it has the same word order as in (29a).

Kariyakarawana’s claim that the ‘obligatory cleft reading’ distinguishes one type from the other: “[s]ince the question [in (28a)] is obligatorily clefted, the answer must have a cleft interpretation” (p.82), while (29a) “has both cleft and non-cleft, i.e. regular wh-question, reading” (p.83). Kariyakarawana does not explain what he means by ‘cleft’ and the use of this term to refer to only some focus clauses is rather confusing. He further states that

“a constituent may be focused by clefting it, which we will call C-focus... [or] … a constituent of a sentence may be focused, in its regular SOV order, by the placement of a morphological focus marker immediately following it, which will be referred to as E(mphasis) focus, …” (p.81).

This implies that ‘clefting’ is taken to mean shifting a constituent from its in situ position to another location for the purpose of focusing.

Kariyakarawana’s use of the term ‘cleft’ and his claim of C-focus being bi-clausal appear to signal some similarity between English type cleft sentences and Sinhala contrastive focus. He further claims that those constituents that are focussed by

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157 According to the terms used in the present study, sentence (29b) would be referred to as completive focus, while (29c) is contrastive focus.
being placed in the post-verbal position are “roughly similar to cleft sentences in languages such as English and in which case it gives obligatory focus interpretation” (p.35).

We contend that the argument for alleging two types of focus is unsubstantiated for two reasons. Firstly, we do not assume that the meaning difference in questions (28a) and (29a) suggests a structural difference in answers (28b) and (29c), due to the simple reason that (28b) and (29c) have no difference in meaning, and are both equally suitable answers for either question. In other words, although questions (28a) and (29a) may be slightly different in meaning, this difference is not reflected in the meaning of their answers (28b) and (29c), as Kariyakarawana also notes (p.83).158

Secondly, contrastive focus in Sinhala, or the so-called ‘clefts’, is not comparable with cleft sentences in languages such as English, in which such sentences consist of a simple sentence divided into two clauses so as to give prominence to a particular linguistic item and the information it carries. The word order difference in (28b) and (29c) does not alter the meaning, nor does it result in English-style clefts, which have two clauses in them. As far as the meaning of Sinhala focus sentences is concerned, they have a contrastive focus reading which resembles, and can be translated into English as, cleft sentences, but without being structurally the same as English cleft sentences.

What the question-answer pairs above reveal is that the phrase structural position (i.e. the *in situ* position or the post-verbal position) of the *wh*-phrase affects the meaning of the question. However, the reordering of focus constituents (as in (28b) and (29c)) does not yield a similar semantic difference, as mentioned before. Therefore, the cleft reading associated with *wh*-questions, and the relation of this cleft reading to word order, can be seen as a characteristic of *wh*-questions alone, and does not provide evidence for two types of focus constructions. How *wh*-question phrases in different phrase-structural positions take different types of answers, as shown in (28-29), can be illustrated in summary as follows:

---

158 “The main difference between C-Focus and E-Focus [...] was that the former [(28a)] has only a cleft reading while the latter [(29a)] has both cleft and non-cleft i.e., regular *wh*-question, reading. Note, however, that this distinction is not that clear with the answer patterns.” (Kariyakarawana p. 83).
Consider the following yes-no question, which proves that a difference between E-focus and C-focus cannot be substantiated on the evidence for wh-question-pairs:

(30) lankaawe aȳ paag d̄ kanna ?
    lanka.LOC people.NOM bread Q eat.PRE.E

‘Is it bread that Sri Lankans eat?’
≠ ‘Do Sri Lankans eat bread?’

In this sentence the wh-phrase has been replaced by an NP (paag d̄), which bears the focus. Note that it has the same word order as (29a), and therefore would be considered as E-focus by Kariyakarawana. For a question such as (30), non-contrastive focus clause (29b) is not a suitable answer. However, contrastive focus clauses like (28b) and (29c) are equally suitable answers for (30). Sentence (30) indicates two facts. Firstly, it shows that it is different from wh-question clauses like (29a) in terms of meaning, though they both share the same word order pattern. Secondly, (30) is similar to (28a) in terms of the answers it can and cannot take. Thus, the different word orders in (28a) and (30) have no relevance to the alleged distinction.

6.3.2 Negation Selection

Negation selection is also seen as evidence for the alleged difference in two types. Consider (31) from Kariyakarawana (1998:85):

(31) C-focus:
    a. Siri giyee kol̤b̄ nemey/*nætte.
       Siri.NOM go.PST.E Colombo FNEG/*NEG
       ‘It is not to Colombo that Siri went.’

E-focus:
    b. Siri kol̤b̄ tamay giyee nætte/*nemey.
       Siri.NOM Colombo FOC go.PST.E NEG/*FNEG
       ‘The place that Siri did not go is Colombo.’
Nëtte (or næxe) is the neutral negator, and negates only adjectival and verbal predicates. On the other hand, nemey is the focus negator, and can be used to negate individual constituents (including any predicate) (see Chapter 5.3 for a discussion of this). Nëtte is not acceptable in (31a), as it can only negate adjectival or verbal predicates (i.e. it cannot function like a constituent negator). On the other hand, nemey is not acceptable in (31b) for two reasons. Firstly, only one constituent in a clause can be focussed. In this sentence, Colombo bears the focus as it is marked with tamay; a second focus marker is not, therefore, allowed. Secondly, when any focus marker, including nemey, immediately follows a verbal predicate, the verbal predicate must be marked with the -a suffix, not with the -e suffix (see, the discussion of predicate focus in § 6.2.1 and § 6.4.4.2). 159

Kariyakarawana states that nëtte and nemey are in complementary distribution in the two focus types, and that the focus of C-focus clauses must be negated with nemey, while the focus of E-focus clauses must be negated with nëtte (1998:85). This statement appears to be incorrect, as nëtte and nemey are not in complementary distribution across the two focus types. Nëtte and nemey are in complementary distribution with each other, but their distribution does not correlate with Kariyakarawana’s focus types.

Further, evidence indicates that there is no relation between negator selection and the alleged dual structure of focus. Consider the sentences in (32), in which each sentence has two negative particles: nemey, the focus negator, is used to negate constituents, and nëtte, the neutral negator, is used to negate predicates (i.e. the whole clause).

(32)  
E-focus:

a. Siri kolɔ*bɔ nemey/nëtte giyee nëtte/nemey.  
  Siri.NOM Colombo FNEG/NEG go.PST.E NEG/FNEG

  ‘It is not to Colombo that Siri did not go.’

159 As in the following example:

  Siri kolɔ*bɔ giyaa nemey.  
  Siri.NOM Colombo go.PST FNEG

  ‘It is not that Siri went to Colombo.’
C-focus:

b. Siri giyee nætte/*nemeey kolo"bə nemeey/*nætte.
   Siri.NOM go.PST.E NEG/*FNEG Colombo FNEG/*NEG

‘It is not to Colombo that Siri did not go.’

The focus constituent occurs preverbally in (32a) and post-verbally in (32b). According to Kariyakarawana’s definition, (32a) and (32b) would be called E-focus and C-focus respectively. As these two sentences illustrate, the only difference between them is the order of the constituents. They both have the same meaning. Regardless of the constituents’ order the negator used remains unchanged.

6.3.3 Morphological Marking of Focus

The presence of the obligatory marking of focus in sentences such as (29c), (compare with (28b)), has also been taken as evidence for Kariyakarawana’s two types of focus. However, it can be argued that this evidence is insufficient to justify the existence of these two focus types.

As mentioned earlier, the optional marking of the focus constituent in post-verbal position applies only to tamay (and to tamaa and -yi, all of which have the same function and identical meaning).\(^{160,161}\) All the other focus markers, including nemeey and the interrogative marker də, must be overtly present in post-verbal position if used. If the post-verbal constituent is not marked with a focus marker, it will always be interpreted with the meaning of tamay (provided that the verb is in the appropriate form). This fact seems to have gone unnoticed in the literature on Sinhala focus.

Tamay can be treated as the default focus maker, as all the others must be overtly present in post-verbal position. It is possible to consider the optional marking of tamay in the post-verbal position as a specific characteristic of tamay, instead of assuming that a particular type of focus allows optional marking. Kariyakarawana’s assumption that the presence or absence of tamay indicates different focus types, is

\(^{160}\) See sentence (7) in the text; also see the discussion in § 6.4.4.3.

\(^{161}\) Also note that tamay is optional only in the post-verbal position.
clearly not supported by the fact that all the other focus markers do not behave in the same way as \textit{tamay} in post-verbal position.\footnote{Focus markers \textit{tama} and \textit{–yi} are similar to \textit{tamay} in terms of the meaning and distribution, as mentioned before. Therefore, they are all treated as having the same function.}

We argue that there does not appear to be any evidence to warrant two different types of focus construction. Therefore, we will treat sentences like (28b) and (29c) as structurally the same. This position is also supported by other studies such as Gair (1970, 1983), Hagstrom (1998) and Kishimoto (1999), none of which consider two structurally different focus types such as E-focus and C-focus.\footnote{Fernando (1973), de Abrew (1980) and Paolillo (1986) are mentioned in Kariyakarawana (1998: 92-96) as containing analyses of focus involving rightward movement. (These sources were not available for us to study their approach.) Kariyakarawana states that “they [these three studies and Gair (1970, 1983), DKH] all share the assumption that the focus element is generated inside the sentence and then moved to a rightward position” (p.92). This means that these studies also (just like Gair 1970, 1983) appear to propose an analysis not based on dual structures.}

In the present study, focus clauses without the overt focus marking of \textit{tamay} will be discussed under the heading ‘clause-final focus’ in (see § 6.4.4.3).

6.4 Colloquial Sinhala Focus: An Analysis

6.4.1 Introduction

As shown in § 6.2, the $E$-marker and focus markers interact with each other. In some constructions they must co-occur, while in others they do not. NV predicates do not inflect for the $E$-marker. Therefore, the co-occurrence condition does not apply to focus in NVSs. Accounting for the co-occurrence of these particles in some constructions, and the lack of it in others, is crucial to any analysis of Sinhala contrastive focus. The characteristics of individual focus markers (e.g. the allowability of multiple occurrences of the question marker $d\breve{o}$ in a single clause) and constructions (e.g. multiple focus constituents occurring in MCCs) add to the complexity of any analysis of colloquial Sinhala focus. Sometimes focus assignment can be solely morphological and sometimes it is based on a combination of morphological and configurational means. Therefore, an analysis of Sinhala contrastive focus should capture the interaction between the morphological and configurational assignment of
focus. In the present analysis, we provide an account of focus that covers all types of contrastive focus across different clause types in colloquial Sinhala.

In what follows, we will demonstrate how the Sinhala focus constructions discussed in § 6.2 may be formally modelled using LFG. The present analysis of Sinhala focus constructions will be based on the general well-formedness conditions on the f-structures of LFG, the principles of Functional Uncertainty and Morphological Blocking. The language specific requirements of Sinhala focus are built into the formulations of lexical entries for focus markers and other associated particles. In the next sections we provide a brief outline of Functional Uncertainty (§ 6.4.2) and Morphological Blocking principles (§ 6.4.3) that we will be applying to Sinhala focus throughout this chapter. For a discussion of general well-formedness conditions consisting of Completeness, Coherence, the Extended Coherence Condition and the Uniqueness Principle, the reader is referred to Chapter 2.

6.4.2 Functional Uncertainty

Long distance dependency constructions such as focus are modelled in LFG using the principles of Functional Uncertainty (henceforth ‘FU’). FU designators were first introduced in to LFG for modelling long distance dependencies by Kaplan and Zaenen (1987). Since then, FU designators have been employed for modelling various constructions, such as anaphoric binding (Dalrymple 1993), topic/focus (King 1995, Berman 2000 and Kroeger 1993), Constructive Case (Nordlinger 1998) and extraction (Bresnan 2001).

FU designators allow us to identify two f-structures which have a variety of relationships in a clause. To be more precise, a topic or focus argument, for instance, may be identified with another clause internal grammatical function using an FU designator, which is attached to one of the arguments. For instance, consider (33), which has a topic in clause-initial position:

(33) ‘Siri, Sena saw __ yesterday’

The object of saw is Siri, which is also the topic of the clause, as graphically shown by the line linking the two functions in the f-structure (34).
This relationship between the topic and the object of *saw* can be expressed using a functional equation such as the following which is defined in terms of the f-structure, but not on the basis of the c-structure of the clause:

\[(f_1 \text{TOPIC}) = (f_1 \text{OBJ})\]

In this equation, the f-structure value for TOPIC is identified with the f-structure value for OBJ. In other words, \(f_2\) is identified with \(f_4\). The \(f_1\) in this equation refers to the outermost f-structure in (34). But to state the constraint, it is necessary to have more than (35), because there are more possibilities than just OBJ for the TOPIC. Now consider a clause with a number of embedded clauses and how a long distance dependency relationship can be expressed in terms of functional equations:

\[\text{‘Siri, Wimal thought that Gune said that Sena saw ___ yesterday’}\]

The f-structure for (36) is given in (37):

\[\begin{align*}
\text{TOPIC } f_5 \quad &\text{[ PRED ‘Siri’] \\
\text{SUBJ } f_3 \quad &\text{[ PRED ‘Sena’] \\
\text{COMP } f_2 \quad &\text{[ PRED ‘say <(↑SUBJ) (↑COMP)>’] \\
\text{SUBJ } f_3 \quad &\text{[ PRED ‘Gune’] \\
\text{COMP } f_2 \quad &\text{[ PRED ‘see <(↑SUBJ) (↑OBJ)>’] \\
\text{OBJ } f_4 \quad &\text{[ ]} \end{align*}\]

Again, the preposed topic in (36) is also the object of *saw*. The line connecting the two f-structures graphically indicates their association with each other. The f-structure value \((f_4)\) for the object of *saw*, which is deeply embedded within two subordinate clauses, is thus identified with the f-structure value \((f_5)\) for the topic. We
can express the long distance dependency relationship of these two functions with the following equation:

\[(38) \quad (f/TOPIC) = (f/COMP COMP OBJ)\]

The f-structure path leading to the OBJ in this equation is expressed as a sequence of attributes. Equations of this type can be endlessly long, as any number of clauses can occur in principle. Depending on the number of clauses involved, the path linking one f-structure value (e.g. an argument) to another may have a large number of possibilities. Therefore, the relationship between the two f-structures in question cannot be stated as a finite expression. FU designators allow us to simplify statements such as (38) by using variable strings of attributes involving a Kleene star operator (Kaplan and Zaenen 1987). Functional equation (38) can, thus, be generalised in terms of FU principles, as the following:

\[(39) \quad (f/TOPIC) = (f/COMP* OBJ)\]

In (39), the TOPIC is identified with the grammatical function OBJ, which is deeply embedded within COMP clauses. The COMP attribute in this regular expression is the path leading to the OBJ grammatical function. The path may include zero or more COMPs and may be endlessly long. FU designators of this sort involving variable chains of attributes are very general, and may generate an infinite number of possibilities as to which argument is identified with the discourse function. Hence, these statements are referred to as involving ‘functional uncertainty’. Other conditions, such as off-path constraints, may be used in conjunction with FU equations to locate the correct f-structures in a complex clause structure.

There are two kinds of FU designators: Outside-In Functional Uncertainty (OIFU) and Inside-Out Functional Uncertainty (IOFU). FU designators such as \((f/COMP* OBJ)\), presented earlier, are OIFU equations, as they define the path from the least embedded f-structure to the most embedded one. OIFU equations are annotated to the filler position.

IOFU is the opposite of OIFU. First, let us consider Inside-Out designators for a single attribute. Earlier we presented Outside-In designators such as \((f/TOPIC)\) and \((f/OBJ)\). The expression \((f/OBJ)\) indicates that the f-structure \(f\) has an OBJ attribute (see the simplified f-structure in (40)). As can be seen in (40), \((f/OBJ)\) refers to the f-structure \(f^4\), which is the value of the OBJ f-structure. Thus, we can state the
relationship between $f_1$ and $f_4$ using an Outside-In designator with the equation $(f_1 \ OBJ) = f_4$.

\[
(40) \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{TOPIC} \\
\ldots \\
\text{OBJ} \\
\end{array} 
\begin{array}{c}
\text{f2[} \\
\text{f4[} \\
\text{]}
\end{array}
\]

Alternatively, the same Outside-In designator can be expressed as an Inside-Out designator, in which the f-structure $f_4$ appears at the end of the path, preceded by its attribute(s). Thus, the Inside-Out function designator for $(f_1 \ OBJ)$ is $(\OBJ f_4)$. In this expression, the starting point of the path is the f-structure designated as $f_4$. The path moves upward past OBJ (see (40)). Designators of this sort are annotated to the gap in the lower node in a dependency relationship, and indicate that $f_4$ is the value of the OBJ f-structure. For instance, such a designator can be used to constrain the distribution of accusative case (see Constructive Case in Nordlinger 1998). Unlike Outside-In designators, Inside-Out designators are always functionally uncertain.

A simple Inside-Out designator like $(\OBJ f_4)$ can be extended for a sequence of attributes, as with Outside-In designators discussed earlier. For instance, the Outside-In designator $(f_1 \ COMP \ COMP \ OBJ)$, which refers to the $f_4$ in (37), can be written as (41a) indicating the path leading from the most embedded $f_4$ to the outer f-structures. Again, as with Outside-In designators, we can generalise Inside-Out designators such as (41a) using regular expressions (for instance, see (41b)).

\[
(41) \quad \begin{array}{a}
\text{a.} \quad (\text{COMP} \ COMP \ \OBJ f_4) \\
\text{b.} \quad (\text{COMP* GF} f_4)
\end{array}
\]

In this case both (41a) and (41b) are same, except that the (41b) is more general than (41a).

Now, let us consider the way in which the relationship between two f-structures can be expressed using the FU designators discussed so far. The functional equation in (35), repeated below as (42a), has two Outside-In designators. We can alternatively restate the relationship between designators in (42a) as (42b), in which the Inside-Out designator $(\OBJ f_4)$ has been prefixed to TOPIC replacing $f_1$, as shown by the arrow. The equation in (42b) says that $f_4$ has the same value as TOPIC, which is reachable through
Equation (42b) is a combination of Inside-Out and Outside-In designators, and is similar to regular existential equations such as (fI TOPIC) or (fI OBJ), which have the format ((PATH) ATTRIBUTE).

\[(42)\begin{align*}
&\text{a. } (fI \text{ TOPIC}) = (fI \text{ OBJ}) \\
&\text{b. } (\text{OBJ} f4 \text{ TOPIC}) = f4
\end{align*}\]

Likewise, the FU equation in (39), which is made up of two Outside-In designators, can be restated as (43):

\[(43)\begin{align*}
&\text{((COMP* OBJ} f4 \text{ TOPIC}) = f4
\end{align*}\]

In the present study, lexical entries for focus markers and other associated affixes will be defined on the basis of FU principles as we have just described.

### 6.4.3 Morphological Blocking Principle

In what follows we will explain the Morphological Blocking Principle (MBP), which will play an important role in our analysis. The MBP requires that a lexical item be blocked if its specifications contributing to the f-structure of the sentence subsume the specifications of another lexical item (Andrews 1982, 1990).

Suppose the structure S has a preterminal node P occupied by a lexical item l₁, and there is another lexical item l₂ such that the f-structure determined by the lexical entry of l₁ properly subsumes that determined by the lexical entry of l₂, and that of l₂ subsumes the f-structure associated with P in S (the complete structure, after all unifications have been carried out). Then S is blocked. (Andrews 1990:519)

Let us consider two verb forms in Literary Sinhala to see how the MBP works.∗ The two variant forms of the present tense singular form ‘to run’ are duwəni (run.1SG.PRE) and duwayi (run.SG.PRE).164 The former occurs only with first person subjects, while the latter is used for second and third person subjects:

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* We assume that a simple sentence from literary Sinhala would be best suited for the purpose of illustrating the MBP; colloquial Sinhala lacks this type of morphological complexity. Later on in this chapter, we discuss the MBP with colloquial Sinhala examples involving focus.

164 These are the present-day usage of the verb forms. The older second person form duwəhi is no longer used.
It is arguable that *duwayi* is unmarked for person, while *duwɔmni* has a requirement that its subject must be first person [subject person = 1st person]. Lexical entries for these two verb forms can be expressed as in (45).

(45)  
\[ \begin{align*} 
\text{a. } & \text{duwɔmni} \quad (\uparrow \text{PRED}) = 'run <(\uparrow \text{SUBJ})>' \\
& \quad (\uparrow \text{SUBJ PER}) = 1 \\
& \quad (\uparrow \text{SUBJ NUM}) = \text{SG} \\
\text{b. } & \text{duwayi} \quad (\uparrow \text{PRED}) = 'run <(\uparrow \text{SUBJ})>' \\
& \quad (\uparrow \text{SUBJ NUM}) = \text{SG} 
\end{align*} \]

Given the lexical entries in (45), a mismatch in the unification of values in f-structures will rule out an unacceptable structure such as (46), which has the third person subject and the first person form of the verb.

(46)  
\[ \begin{align*} 
\text{eyaa} & \quad \text{duwɔmni} \quad 3\text{SG.NOM} \quad \text{go.1SG.PRE} \\
& \quad * \text{‘He run.’} 
\end{align*} \]

However, consider the following sentence with the first person subject and the unmarked form of the verb:

(47)  
\[ \begin{align*} 
\text{mamɔ} & \quad \text{paasætɔtɔ} \quad \text{duwayi} \quad 1\text{SG.NOM} \quad \text{school-DAT} \quad \text{go.SG.PRE} \\
& \quad * \text{‘He run.’} 
\end{align*} \]

Given the specifications in (45), a first person subject can occur with *duwayi*, which is unspecified for the person value of the subject. This unacceptable sentence (47) should be ruled out, and this is where the MBP comes into effect. The specifications of *duwayi* (45b) are a subset of those in *duwɔmni* (45a). Hence, *duwɔmni* is the most informative form. The MBP requires that the most informative form compatible with the context should occur in a structure such as (47) when f-structures are computed.

In the following section, we will explain the verb marking patterns related to focus constructions in terms of the MBP.
6.4.4 Focus Analysis

Focus in Sinhala is predominantly morphologically encoded. Morphological encoding involves the attachment of a focus marker to the constituent to be focussed and suffixing a special marker to the verb, as described in the previous section. The interaction of these two markers varies from construction to construction. They co-occur in constituent focus clauses; only the focus marker is present in predicate focus clauses; and in clause-final focus, the verb is marked with the E-marker, but no constituent is focus marked. Furthermore, the verb marker, as mentioned earlier, is only applicable to verbs. Therefore, there is no such marking on non-verbal predicates, which are another construction in which the verb marker and focus markers may not co-occur. We argue that clause-final focus involves phrase structural encoding of focus as well as morphological encoding. These generalisations made on the basis of the data presented in § 6.2, are summed up in Table 6-2.

In what follows, we will analyse these focus marking strategies and the interaction between verb marking and constituent marking, and offer a syntactic treatment of Sinhala focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal clauses</th>
<th>Focus markers</th>
<th>E-marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituent focus</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicate focus</td>
<td>√</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause-final focus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Verbal clauses</th>
<th>Focus markers</th>
<th>E-marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituent focus</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicate focus</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause-final focus</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6-2: Interaction between focus markers and the E-maker in verbal and non-verbal clauses

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165 Clause-final focus in both verbal and non-verbal clauses occurs only with the focus marker *tamay*. Other focus markers do not participate in this construction.
6.4.4.1 Simple Clauses: Constituent Focus

In constituent focus, focus markers can occur with any constituent and the verb is marked with the -e affix. Sentence (2a), repeated below as (48), is an example of constituent focus:

(48)    Nuwəsə bas_eko tamay daŋ giye.
Kandy bus_DEF FOC now go.PST.E

‘It is the Kandy bus that left just now.’

What is most crucial about this construction, and Sinhala focus in general is the presence of morphological encoding on the focussed constituent and the verb. As discussed above, verb and focus marking may co-occur in some constructions, while in others only one of them may be present. Their distribution depends on a number of factors, such as: what is being focused (e.g. a predicate or a constituent); whether or not focus is interpreted in terms of phrase structural position (in the case of clause-final focus); and the individual characteristics of predicate types (e.g. verbal and NV predicates). Further, the co-occurrence relation between the E-marker and focus marker may hold not just within a simple clause, but also in MCCs in which the focus may occur in a deeply embedded clause, while the E-marker may occur with the matrix verb. What makes the matter further complicated is the fact that the co-occurrence relation does not hold in MCCs in which the E-marker is attached to the embedded verb, and the focus is present in the matrix clause, as shown by (15). An analysis of Sinhala focus needs to capture these interactions and the behaviour of verb and focus markers.

Verbal E-marking appears only with constituent focus and clause-final focus. As shown earlier in § 6.2.2.1, the E-marked verb defines the potential focus domain, which we will revisit below in relation to complex structures involving more than one clause. However, at this stage it is sufficient to say that E-marking simply indicates that one of the constituents of the verb is focussed.

On the other hand, the focus marker indicates that the constituent to which it is attached is the focus. Both the focus marker and the E-marker should co-occur in constituent focus clauses\(^{166}\) or the sentence would be unacceptable, in other words,

\(^{166}\) Non-verbal predicates cannot be assigned the E-marker.
whenever the verb is marked with -e a constituent should have the focus interpretation, and vice versa. The co-occurrence of the E-marker and the focus marker is graphically represented in (49) which is the c-structure for (48).

(49)

We propose the following lexical entry for the affix -e:

(50)  

This lexical entry ensures that there must be a GF with the feature FOCUS whenever the verb is marked with -e. On the other hand, the focus marker tamay is annotated with the following lexical entry, which states that the GF, to which tamay is attached, is the focus of a higher f-structure:

(51)

Lexical entry (51) satisfies the Extended Coherence Condition (Bresnan 2001) by designating itself as the focus of the clause. As a part of the well-formedness conditions in f-structures, the Extended Coherence Condition requires all discourse functions to be identified with argument functions of the clause.

The f-structure for (48) is given in (52):
In (52), the relation between the FOCUS function and the SUBJ function is represented by a line linking both f-structures. The verb marking and the focus marking on the SUBJ noun phrase carry information about the focus interpretation of the clause. Therefore, in sentences of this sort, focus is not phrase structurally encoded.

The interaction between the E-marker and the focus marker is captured in our lexical entries. The present analysis can account for a focus clause with the type of (53a), and rule out ungrammatical structures such as (53b-53c).

(53) a. [ .... constituent-FOCUS .... verb-E ] (=48)
   b. *[ .... constituent-FOCUS .... verb-A]
   c. *[ .... constituent .... verb-E ]

Let us consider how the present analysis can rule out structures like (53b-53c). In (53b) a constituent is marked with a focus marker, and the verb is not marked with the -e affix, but with the regular -a affix. The inflectional suffixes -a and -e, which occur following the tense marker in verbs, indicate mood.167 Thus, non-focus declarative form -a alternates with the focus/emphatic form -e. We consider the -a form of verb to be the default or unmarked form, whereas the -e form (along with other verb forms expressing different moods/aspects) is considered to be marked. Thus, E-marked verbs will be considered emphatic forms, which require an argument (or adjunct) in the clause to bear a special emphatic interpretation, which may be realised as one of the various types, such as focus, question, reportative, dubitative, conditional, etc. This special requirement of the E-marker is specified in its lexical entry with a constraining equation: see (50). When computing the f-structure of (53b), the MBP will be invoked, and the structure with the -a verb will be ruled out. The MBP prefers the most specific

167 For instance, [kæ-dju-w-a] ‘break.PAST.A’ and [kæ-dju-w-e] ‘break.PAST.E’ have the morphological structure: [Stem + Tense + Mood].
structure over the less specific one. The f-structure information contributed by the E-marked verb is a subset of that provided by the A-marked verb, thereby making the E-marked verb the most specific form. Therefore, the E-marked form must be present whenever the conditions of its appearance are satisfied.

Now let us consider how (53c) will be ruled out in this analysis. In this ungrammatical structure only the -e affix is attached to the verb, no focus marker is present. The absence of a focus marker is not allowed in a structure like (53c), which has the E-marker, because the lexical entry of -e demands that there be a focussed GF in the clause (see (50)). This requirement is not satisfied, hence the ungrammaticality. Thus, the combined application of the proposed lexical entries with the MBP will ensure the co-occurrence of both verb and focus marking in constituent focus constructions.

**Accounting for variations in meaning and function in focus markers**

All focus markers are different from each other in terms of the meaning and function. These different functions specify the type of clause. Thus, for instance *tamay, tamaa* and *yi* function as emphatic focus markers, and *lu* is reportative. These three particles appear in non-interrogative clauses. The question marker *d* identifies the clause as interrogative, while *nag* is conditional. Therefore, we need to specify focus markers according to their meaning and function, and classify the clause type accordingly, as the individual focus markers contribute to the overall meaning of the clause. Such a classification would also provide an explanation as to why different focus markers behave differently from others. For instance, the question marker (*d* ) can occur more than once in a single clause, unlike other focus markers (cf. (8c) and (8d)). Therefore, we include the membership symbol ∈ in the lexical entry for the question marker *d* to indicate that it is one of the elements of a set of f-structures with the same value. (54) is an illustration of how lexical entries for focus markers may be specified.

(54) a. *d*: CL, ↓ ∈ ((GF↑) FOCUS) (INTERROGATIVE = +) (to be revised)

b. *tamay*: CL, ((GF↑) FOCUS) = ↑ (EMPHATIC = +)

c. *lu*: CL, ((GF↑) FOCUS) = ↑ (REPORTATIVE = +)
To sum up our analysis so far, the distribution of focus markers and the
E-marker is lexically specified. The analysis presented so far can account for the
interaction between the verb morphology and focus markers in constituent focus.
Furthermore, it can rule out multiple focus markers in a single clause, while allowing
multiple question markers. With the basic analysis presented so far for constituent
focus we now proceed to predicate focus.

6.4.4.2 Simple Clauses: Predicate Focus

Predicate focus is generated when a focus marker appears after the verb. In such
clauses the whole proposition may have the focus interpretation. The -e marking does
not occur in these sentences, as shown by (5), repeated here as (55).

(55)  
Kandy   bus_DEF   now  {*go.PST.E / go.PST.A}  FNEG/FOC/Q/REP 

nemey (FNEG): ‘It is not that the Kandy bus left now.’
tamay (FOC): ‘The Kandy bus DID leave now.’
d the Kandy bus leave now?’
lu (REP): ‘The Kandy bus left now, (so they say).’

We argue that e-marking in a clause serves two purposes. Firstly, it indicates
that one of the constituents in the clause bears the focus interpretation, and that focus is
not on the verb. Secondly, being the scope marker, it indicates the ‘potential focus
domain’, relative to which the focus is interpreted. The E-marking is not present when
the verb bears the focus and what is relevant for predicate focus is only the focus
markers themselves. We need to modify the lexical entry for focus markers, proposed
earlier in (54), in order to account for predicate focus. By adding the functional
equation \((\uparrow \text{FOCUS} = \uparrow \text{PRED})\) to the lexical entries for focus markers proposed earlier,
we can account for both constituent focus and predicate focus. The revised lexical
entries are given in (56):

(56) a. \(\downarrow \in ((\text{GF} \uparrow) \text{FOCUS})\)  
\(\uparrow \text{FOCUS} = \uparrow \text{PRED}\) 
(INTERROGATIVE = +)
The pattern of predicate focus exhibited by the sentences in (55) can be illustrated by structure (57):

(57)  
   a. [ .... constituent .... verb-A FOCUS ]  
   b. * [ .... constituent .... verb-E FOCUS ]

The lexical entry for focus markers contains no restriction as to where they can or cannot appear. Any constituent, whether it be a verb, a nominal constituent or even a sentence, can be interpreted as in focus when followed by a focus marker. The presence of a focus marker does not require the e-marker to appear. To be precise, it simply does not make any reference to verb morphology. Therefore, the grammatical sentence (57a) can be generated by our analysis. The simplified f-structure for (55) is given in (58). On the other hand, our analysis also rules out (57b) since the presence of E-marking requires that a GF in the clause bears focus, not the predicate. This is achieved by the constraining equation $\left( \uparrow \text{FOCUS} \right) = \left( \uparrow \text{GF} \right)$ in (50). The GF in this equation will only allow an argument (or an adjunct) to bear the focus, but will rule out predicate focus structures in which the predicate bears focus.\(^{168}\)

\(^{168}\) Also, note that COMPs or even S can have focus, as it will be shown later.
Simplified F-structure for (55):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PRED} & \quad \text{‘go } \uparrow \text{SUBJ} >' \\
\text{TENSE} & \quad \text{PAST} \\
\text{FOCUS} & \quad \text{[}\\
\text{SUBJ} & \quad \text{[ PRED ‘Kandy bus’ ]} \\
\text{ADJ} & \quad \text{[ PRED ‘now’ ]}
\end{align*}
\]

A remark on lexical entry for the question marker (\(d\check{s}\)) is due here. As mentioned earlier, more than one argument in a single clause may be marked with the question marker (i.e. multiple foci). Therefore, a structure like (59a) is grammatical and is allowed by our lexical entry (56a). However, the language does not allow a constituent and the predicate to be focussed at the same time, regardless of the type of focus marker. Therefore, such structures as (59b-c) are ungrammatical. The proposed lexical entry for the question marker in (56a) can rule out such ungrammatical structures. Further, the formulation of the lexical entry allows either the predicate or the argument(s) to be marked with the question marker, but not both at the same time.

(59)   a.   [ .... constituent Q constituent Q .... verb-E ] \quad (= 8c)   
b. * [ .... constituent Q constituent .... verb-E Q ]   
c. * [ .... constituent Q constituent Q .... verb-E Q ]

In the next section we move on to discuss clause-final focus.

6.4.4.3 Simple Clauses: Clause-Final Focus

The focus constituent can occur in any position within the clause in constituent focus. Further, the focus position is not associated with any phrase structural position in focus clauses that we have considered so far. However, in clause-final focus, the constituent to be focussed is not marked with a focus marker, instead it occurs in clause-final position. Consider, for instance, (7) repeated here as (60):

(60)  \text{mahatt\(\ddot{s}\)ya oyaa-\(\ddot{s}\) \text{m\(\ddot{x}\)leriyaaw-\(\ddot{s}\) dunne \text{sudupaat\(\ddot{a}\) pettak}.} \\
mister.NOM 2SG-DAT Malaria-DAT give.PST.E white_tablet.IND

‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave you for Malaria.’

Note that the focus marker is absent from the focus constituent which follows the \(E\)-marked verb. (However, other focus markers, including the question marker \(d\check{s}\),
should be overtly present if required regardless of their phrase structural position.)
The sentence structure of a clause-final focus clause may be illustrated as follows:

(61)  \[ \text{[constituent}_x^* \quad \text{verb-}_{E} \quad \text{constituent}_{y}^* \quad \text{constituent}_z]_S \]

In this structure the clause-final constituent has the focus interpretation (unless another constituent is marked with an overt focus marker in which case the overtly marked constituent bears the focus). Recall that the presence of an \( E \)-marked verb requires a constituent in the clause be focussed, or else the sentence becomes unacceptable.

The same facts may be observed from a different angle. When an \( E \)-marked verb is present in a clause, if no constituent carries a focus marker, then the right most constituent following the \( E \)-marked verb is interpreted as in focus. In this construction, a constituent must follow the \( E \)-marked verb in order to be interpreted as in focus. Otherwise the sentence becomes ungrammatical (see the structure in (53c)).

We consider that clause-final position is the default focus position. In the absence of an overt focus marker, the constituent that occurs in clause-final position is interpreted as in focus. Thus, focus is phrase-structurally determined in the absence of morphologically assigned focus markers. This would mean that Sinhala employs both phrase structural position and morphological means to encode focus.

We contend that clause-final focus constructions, such as (60), have the C-structure given in (62).

(62)  \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{FP} \\
\text{F'} \\
\uparrow \text{FOCUS} = \downarrow \\
\text{XP} \\
\text{F}^\circ \\
\text{S} \\
\end{array}
\]

\(^{169}\) Kleene star (*) denotes zero or more constituents.
The exocentric S has a flat structure and the constituents of S are freely ordered (see Chapter 7 for a discussion of Sinhala phrase structure and the formulation of phrase structure rules based on functional categories such as this). We need to account for the flexibility of the constituent order within S, as evidenced in sentences such as (63). More than one constituent may follow the E-marked verb, but the rightmost constituent is interpreted as the focus (see (63)). In this regard, the proposed phrase structure can explain the word order freedom in Sinhala and the scrambling of focus constituents in simple and complex clauses. There are a number of reasons to support the adoption of the above phrase structure with functional projections, as will be shown in Chapter 7. In § 7.5.1, we discuss relevant aspects of phrase structure and focus in some length.

(63) a. mahattya dunne sudupaata pettak meleriyaaw petta.
mister.NOM give.PST.E white_tablet.IND Malaria-DAT

‘It is for Malaria that the gentleman gave (you) a white tablet.’

b. mahattya dunne meleriyaaw petta sudupaata petta.
mister.NOM give.PST.E Malaria-DAT white_tablet.IND

‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave (you) for Malaria.’

c. dunne meleriyaaw petta sudupaata petta mahattya.
give.PST.E Malaria-DAT white_tablet.IND mister.NOM

‘It is the gentleman who gave (you) a white tablet for Malaria.’

The c-structure category of focus constituents, indicated by XP in (62), may include an NP, PP, AP or even an S. The only focus interpretation available in clause-final focus is that of tamay, i.e. emphatic interpretation. Therefore, the XP node is annotated with the focus type (EMPHATIC = +).

The c-structure in (62) is produced only for clause-final focus constructions. Our analysis does not assume that focus constituents always occur in the XP position in (62), nor does it hold that focus is moved to or from a specific phrase structural position. For instance, the focus constituents in sentences such as (6a-6d) are assumed to occur under S (in 62). Compare c-structures given in (64-65):
Another important point that needs to be clarified is the structure of (6e), repeated below as (66). This sentence seems to have two possible structures. All the constituents including the focussed one can be assumed to occur under S, as in a constituent focus clause. Alternatively, it can be analysed as clause-final focus with the structure given in (65), since the focus interpretation of *tamay* and the focus interpretation associated with the XP position in (62) is the same. It is to be noted that not every clause with a focus constituent in the sentence final position is treated as clause-final focus. Sentences with focus interpretations other than that of *tamay* are not
available for clause-final focus, even when the focus constituent in such clauses occurs clause-finally.

(66) mahatt_ya oyaa-tə məleriyaaw-tə dunne sudupaag̱o pettak tamay. (=6e).
mister.NOM 2SG-DAT Malaria-DAT give.PST.E white_tablet.IND FOC

‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave you for Malaria.’

The lexical entries proposed for constituent focus are consistent with the clause-final focus construction. When a constituent occupies the phrase structurally identified focus position, the -e form of the verb will be present by application of the MBP. On the other hand, the constraint equation of the E-marked verb (i.e. (↑ FOCUS) =C (↑ GF)) can be satisfied by the constituent occupying clause-final position. In our solution the presence of an E-marked verb does not demand an overt focus marker, but only a focussed constituent (other than the predicate itself).

When a constituent occupies the XP position, no other constituent in the clause can bear focus due to the well-formedness conditions of the f-structure, in particular the uniqueness condition. Further, under the theoretical framework of LFG the proposed analysis does not need to assume that focus is always generated in the XP position in (62), and moved to other phrase structural positions to explain word order variations, since LFG allows both lexical and syntactic means of focus encoding.

6.4.4.4 Focus in Multi-Clause Constructions

Observations made previously regarding focus encoding and the co-occurrence of focus markers and the E-maker are also applicable to focus in multi-clause constructions (MCC). Any direct constituent of a clause can be focussed and each focussed constituent should be licensed by an E-marked verb (in verbal clauses). A predicate itself may be focussed in a clause, in which case the verbal predicate may not have the -e marking. The characteristics of focus in MCCs not applicable to simple clauses are:

- The co-occurrence relation between focus markers and the E-marker does not have to be local to a single clause.

- The focus constituent should reside within the potential focus domain, which is defined by the E-marking on the verb, i.e. a constituent of a higher clause cannot be focused while the -e marker appears on a lower verb.
More than one constituent may be focused, provided that each focus is licensed by an E-marked verb.

Sentence (67), from Gair (1983), is an example of focus in MCCs. Note that the subject of the deeply embedded clause, Gunapala bears the focus, while kiwwe, the matrix verb, has the E-marker indicating the potential focus domain. Although in the case of (67) the focused element occurs inside the matrix clause, it need not be so, and may occur in in situ position (see (9a), for instance).

(67) ∅₁ ee badu horɔkamkɔlaa kiyɔla Siripala kiwwa kiyɔla Sunil
dannɔwa kiyɔla oyaa kiwwe Gunapala do? know.PRE COMP 2SG say.PST.E Gunapala.NOM Q
‘Was it Gunapala who you said that Sunil knows that Siripala said stole the merchandise?’ Gair (1983/1998:57)

The structure of (67) can be illustrated as in (68).

(68) [ … constituent … matrix-verbenco[ … [ … constituent FOCUS … embedded-verb] ] ]

The premise behind the lexical entries proposed in relation to constituent focus in simple clauses is also consistent with the characteristics of focus in MCCs. To account for the long distance co-occurrence relationship of focus markers and the E-marker, we need to amend the relevant lexical entries (50) and (56) by specifying the path between the f-structure of the E-marked verb and that of the focus constituent. As is evident in MCCs such as (67), the focus constituent may be deeply embedded within one or more complements clauses. Therefore, the Outside-In functional designator (↑COMP* GF) is added (by replacing the (↑GF) in (50)) to the lexical entry of the E-marker, as in (69). This is because an E-marked verb may allow a focus constituent embedded within any number of complements.

(69) -e: AFF, [V __ ], (↑FOCUS) =c (↑COMP* GF)

Likewise, the position of focus markers relative to the E-marked verb is redefined by adding COMP* to the Inside-Out designator (GF ↑), as in (70).
The IOFU designator in (70) states that the GF, to which the focus marker is assigned is the focus of a higher f-structure that may be reached through zero or more COMPS.

The f-structure for (67) can now be computed on the basis of the revised lexical entries, as in (71).

(71) Simplified F-structure for (67):

On the basis of the analysis proposed so far, along with other relevant principles such as the MBP, FU and the general well-formedness conditions of f-structures, we now move on to discuss a number of constructions.

As mentioned before, the focus constituent should reside within the potential focus domain. For instance, if the embedded verb is marked with -e, a constituent of the embedded clause must be focussed. However, when the matrix verb is E-marked a constituent of either the embedded or matrix verb can be focussed. This is illustrated in (72):
The ill-formedness of (72a) is due to two reasons. Firstly, the embedded clause does not contain a focussed GF, hence it violates the requirement enforced by the lexical entry of the E-marker. Note that the focussed constituent in the higher clause is outside the potential focus domain, which is the embedded clause in this case. Consequently, the focus constituent does not satisfy the requirement \((\uparrow \text{FOCUS}) = C (\uparrow \text{COMP* GF})\), which is associated with the E-marker on the lower verb. Secondly, the \(a\)-marked verb in the higher clause violates the MBP. The presence of a focussed constituent could satisfy the condition of the E-marker’s appearance in this sentence. Hence, the \(-e\) form of the verb must be present in accordance with the MBP. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (72a) results from its violations of the co-occurrence relation between the E-marker and focus markers, and such a structure would be ruled out by our analysis. On the other hand, in the case of (72b), the focus marker occurs inside the potential focus domain, which is the higher clause in this case. Therefore, the focus marker and the E-marker satisfy the co-occurrence condition, required by (69) and (70). Further, more than one focus constituent may occur in MCCs as long as each one has a different corresponding verb marked with \(-e\), as shown by (16). Thus, both structures in (73) are acceptable, and follow from our analysis.

As mentioned previously, there are restrictions as to what cannot be focussed in a clause. While any immediate constituent of S can be focussed, those which cannot be focussed include possessors, complements of postpositions and relative clauses, as shown by the examples in (17-20). This restriction applies to all types of focus constructions in Sinhala whether they be simple clauses or MCCs, and is automatically captured within the present analysis. The GF in the constraining equation in (69) also serves this purpose (as well as it rules out predicate focus).
6.4.4.5 Focus in Non-Verbal Sentences

In this section, we will demonstrate how focus in NVSs can be accounted for by our proposed analysis of focus. As shown in § 6.2.3, NV predicates do not inflect for the E-marker, and hence do not indicate the scope of focus, e.g. the potential focus domain, unlike verbal ones. Therefore, the strict co-occurrence relation between the E-marker and focus markers in verbal clauses is not applicable to NVSs. NVSs, however, exhibit other characteristics of verbal clauses, such as word order flexibility, constituent focus and predicate focus. Clause-final focus is restricted to adjectival, postpositional and action nominal clauses. No equational clauses with definite or indefinite predicates allow clause-final focus, as mentioned in § 6.2.3. Equational clauses with indefinite predicates only allow predicate focus (see (26)).

One of the important characteristics of focus encoding in NVSs, compared with verbal clauses, is the absence of scope marking indicated by the E-marker on the predicate. Therefore, focus encoding in NVSs is limited to focus markers and the phrase structural encoding of focus (e.g. clause-final focus), which is restricted to some NV predicate types. The absence of the scope marker makes focus in NVSs less complex.

Focus encoding and the interpretation of focus in NVSs are consistent with our analysis proposed earlier. One of the important aspects of the analysis of focus in verbal sentences is to account for the co-occurrence relationship between the E-marker and focus markers. This task was achieved by means of lexical entries and the MBP, which ensures that the E-maker appears where its conditions of appearance are satisfied. The presence of the E-marker demands the presence of focus marking in the clause. However, the presence of focus markers does not demand the presence of the E-marker. This is why we can extend our earlier solution to NVSs, in which the E-marker, being a verbal affix, does not appear.

We will not dwell on demonstrating how the analysis works for examples of different types of non-verbal predicate, as examples such as (21-26) simply involve focusing a constituent or the predicate of a clause. For instance, the focus marker tamay (or də) attached to horə ‘unwilling’ in (21) gives the predicate the focus

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170 See footnote 151.
interpretation. Likewise, the focus marker attached to *nangi* ‘younger sister’ in (22) gives the subject constituent the focus. The f-structure (simplified) for (22) can be illustrated as in (74).

(74) Simplified F-structure for (22):

Thus, our proposed analysis, along with the general well-formedness conditions of f-structure, accounts for focus in NVSs. In what follows we discuss a noteworthy issue relating to focus in embedded NVSs.

6.4.5 Summary

The present solution is in based on standard principles of LFG. These principles that we have made use of include FU, MBP and other well-formedness conditions of LFG. The use of FU principles in the present study allows us to capture the varied observable behaviour of focus markers. Whether they occur in the same clause as an E-marker or deeply embedded inside an MCC, their relationship with the E-marker is captured in the lexical entry. The MBP plays an important role by requiring that the -e form of the verb be present wherever its conditions of appearance are satisfied. What this means is that the presence or the absence of -e is simply regulated by the conditions of the MBP. Whenever the E-marker is present, it requires the presence of a focused constituent in the clause. This is achieved by the constraining equation \( \uparrow \text{FOCUS} =_C (\uparrow \text{COMP}^* \text{GF}) \), which demands that a GF be focussed, but not necessarily the presence of a focus marker. Note that the formulation of this equation is especially relevant to clause-final focus, in which the clause-final constituent is focussed although it is not overtly marked with a focus marker. Finally, the presence of focus markers does not necessarily demand the presence of an E-marker in a clause, as evidenced in predicate focus in which the E-marker does not occur. Our formulation of
lexical entries for focus markers is thus applicable to predicate focus as well as to constituent focus.

The symbol $GF$ in the constraining equation $(\uparrow FOCUS) =_c (\uparrow \text{COMP}^* \ GF)$, which is attached to the $E$-marker, is intended to serve three purposes in our analysis. First, it allows the focussing of any $GF$, including $S$, $\text{COMP}$, $\text{XCOMP}$, $\text{ADJ}$ and so on. Second, it excludes the predicate being focussed, which we do not want in ‘predicate focus’ constructions. Third, it also excludes constituents which cannot be focussed in colloquial Sinhala. As shown earlier, possessors, relative clauses, modifiers of NPs, etc, cannot be focussed; only the immediate constituents of S can be focussed. The way we formulated the constraining equation allows for what can be focussed and rules out what cannot be focussed.

Our analysis of focus in NVSs follows from that of verbal sentences. Lexical entries proposed for focus markers are applicable to focus in both verbal and non-verbal clauses.

6.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, we have extensively discussed contrastive focus in various constructions in colloquial Sinhala, and proposed a simple solution based on the existing theoretical principles of LFG.

There are a number of important advantages of the present analysis. It offers a single account that covers all types of contrastive focus constructions across different clause types. Whether constituent focus, predicate focus or clause-final focus, the present solution is applicable to all regardless of the clause type in which they occur (i.e. simple clauses, complex sentences with embedded clauses, VVs or NVVs).

The second important aspect of the present study is its ability to handle the co-occurrence condition, or the relationship between the $E$-marker and focus markers in various focus constructions. This is implemented simply by using the MBP and defining the lexical entries of those markers in terms of $FU$.

Sinhala focus encoding is predominantly carried out through morphological marking although sometimes through a combination of morphological and configurational means. Where configurational assignment of contrastive focus is
involved, there is an interaction between the morphology and the phrase structure. We dealt with this interaction (in clause-final focus) by proposing a configurationally defined focus position that can be interpreted as in focus only when it is morphologically licensed (by attaching the E-marker). Thus, our analysis accounts for the interaction between phrase structure and morphology, while at the same time being consistent with the word order flexibility in other contrastive focus constructions.

This analysis also captures and accounts for the complexities of focus interpretation in MCCs, in particular the alternation between ‘the embedded focus interpretation’ and ‘the matrix focus interpretation’.

Finally, it is worth pointing out two characteristics of Sinhala that we observed in this chapter. Firstly, according to the co-occurrence condition, the E-marker and a focus marker must co-occur. Apart from focus in NVSs, the only instance when this does not apply is in clause-final focus, which is when a focus marker is absent and the focus constituent is, therefore, configurationally identified. Given the nature of the strict co-occurrence relation, and the fact that the language employs morphological means for encoding contrastive focus (and GFs), we can interpret clause-final focus as an instance where the language makes use of configurational function assignment, if no other constituent is morphologically marked. In other words, Sinhala employs configurational focus assignment where morphology alone cannot be used to determine the function of a constituent.

Secondly, the interaction between focus and phrase structure throws some light on the nature of Sinhala phrase structure. As evidenced in this chapter, only the immediate constituents of S can be focussed, including constituents of subjects, objects and other GFs. On the other hand, possessors, relative clauses and complements of PPs cannot be focussed. The evidence shown so far (and to be discussed in detail in § 7.3.4) confirms our claim that only direct daughters of S can be focussed.\(^{171}\) Our claim has implications for the nature of the phrase structure of Sinhala. It means that colloquial Sinhala has no VP, and that S has a flat c-structure (this is because the object is claimed be an immediate constituent of S). Our claim appears to be correct

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\(^{171}\) In this regard, Sinhala focus is reminiscent of Malayalam clefts (see Mohanan 1982), although there are a number of differences in focus/clefts between the two languages (also, see Mohanan and Mohanan 1999).
because those constituents that can be focussed can also be moved freely within a clause. Sometimes even a constituent of a lower clause can be focussed and moved to a higher clause. This explains why complements of PPs, possessors of NPs or parts of relative clauses cannot be focussed: these constituents are restricted in terms of reordering, and cannot be moved away from their heads whether or not focussing is involved.\textsuperscript{172} Next we take up this issue and argue that S in colloquial Sinhala has a flat c-structure.

\textsuperscript{172} Also, see (Mohanan 1990:19) and (Butt 1995:44-45) in which these authors claim that only the direct daughters of S can scramble freely in Hindi and Urdu.
7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we investigate some characteristics of Sinhala phrase structure. The constituency order is free in Sinhala, although the unmarked constituency order is SOV (see Inman (1993) and Henadeerage (1995) among others). The head-final nature of the language can be seen in PPs, NPs, APs in which the head is always the right-most item. Nominal modifiers precede the noun. Postpositions follow their complements; complementisers occur in the right-most position of a clause. Though Sinhala is considered an SOV language, it is not strictly head-final in S.

Sinhala has also been characterised as a non-configurational language (Gair 1983). Grammatical functions are not encoded in c-structure configurations, but can be identified in terms of features of individual arguments such as case marking. We will examine the facts relating to the non-configurationality in Sinhala in § 7.3, and show that Sinhala has a non-configurational S.

Another characteristic of Sinhala is the lack of evidence for a VP constituent. The language does not exhibit enough evidence to prove that the object argument and verb form a constituent. In § 7.3.3, we discuss a number of constructions that can be considered as theory-neutral evidence for the lack of VP in Sinhala. However, interestingly there appears to be evidence for other maximal categories such as NPs, PPs and APs, as will be shown briefly.

Although Sinhala is a free word order language, in some constructions, in which the case marking may not determine grammatical functions, the function identification is based on the constituent order. The relation between the function identification and the fixed constituent order is discussed under the topic of word order freezing in § 7.4.

In § 7.5, we will show that Sinhala has both non-configurational lexocentric S and endocentric functional projections. The two functional projections proposed,
Complement Phrase (CP) and Focus Phrase (FP) allow us to explain some restrictions on word order and the structural assignment of contrastive focus.

### 7.2 Unmarked Constituent Order

The unmarked constituent order of a main clause with a verbal predicate is SOV. In the unmarked order, the agent/actor (if there is any), appears in the clause-initial position. The patient or the theme argument appears immediately before the verb. Generally, adverbs occur somewhere between the first argument and the verb. However, the constituents can appear in any order as in following sentences:

\[(1) \quad a. \text{SOV: }\text{la} m\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{balla-} w\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{tallu}_k\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{la.} \]
\[
\quad \text{child.NOM dog-ACC push.PST}
\]
\[
\quad \text{‘The child pushed the dog.’}
\]
\[b. \text{SVO: }\text{la} m\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{tallu}_k\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{balla-} w\text{\textordm{\`a}}
\]
\[c. \text{OSV: }\text{balla-} w\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{la} m\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{tallu}_k\text{\textordm{\`a}}.
\]
\[d. \text{OVS: }\text{balla-} w\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{tallu}_k\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{la} m\text{\textordm{\`a}}.
\]
\[e. \text{VOS: }\text{tallu}_k\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{balla-} w\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{la} m\text{\textordm{\`a}}.
\]
\[f. \text{VSO: }\text{tallu}_k\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{la} m\text{\textordm{\`a}} \text{balla-} w\text{\textordm{\`a}}.
\]

While (1a) occurs more often than the others, sentences in (1b-f) occur with special pragmatic effects. (It is to be noted that all the clauses above are different from the focus construction, in which the verb is morphologically marked: see Chapter 6. Both arguments of clauses in (1a-f) indicate the semantic relation they hold with the verb by way of morphological marking: the subject is in nominative case, which is the unmarked case, and the object is in accusative case. As can be seen in these examples, the object need not be adjacent to the verb.

We do not intend to discuss the phrase structure of non-verbal sentences (NVSs) in this chapter. However, most generalisations and conclusions we make with regard to verbal sentences will also be applicable to NVSs. One important distinction between verbal sentences and some NVSs that is worth mentioning here is that in clauses with nominal predicates (i.e. equational sentences) the word order is not free, as mentioned in § 5.2.3. The predicate always follows the subject in such clauses.
7.3 Non-configurationality and Sinhala

Sinhala has been characterised as a non-configurational language (Gair 1983). It exhibits such non-configurational characteristics as free word order, lack of pleonastic subjects, pro-drop (null anaphora) and a rich case system, which are generally seen as signalling the non-configurational nature of a language (Hale 1983; also see Speas (1990)).

The defining criteria for non-configurationality in the literature vary, and may depend on the theoretical framework. Under the framework of GB and Minimalism, configurationality refers to the hierarchical organization of the phrase structure evidenced by the subject-object asymmetries and the presence of a VP (see Speas (1990)). Further, word order freedom, though present in many putative non-configurational languages, is not considered as a defining property of (non)-configurationality by some researchers under this approach. For instance, Hale states that free word order is ‘not criterial for configurationality’ (Hale 1989:294).\textsuperscript{173}

The linear precedence (free word order) and the hierarchical relations (configurationality) in the phrase structure are considered as two different things by Speas (1990:128). The hierarchical arrangement of the phrase structure is, therefore, treated as not depending on the linear precedence.

In this study we follow the definition of (non)-configurationality given in Lexical Functional Grammar (Bresnan 2001 and Nordlinger 1998) in analysing Sinhala as non-configurational. Nordlinger defines (non)-configurationality along the lines of grammatical function identification. In configurational languages, grammatical function identification is structurally-based, i.e. grammatical functions are mapped onto the phrase structural positions. On the other hand, in non-configurational languages grammatical functions are identified by other means such as case marking, verb agreement and so on. Thus, according to this definition, non-configurational languages are those without fixed argument positions, and those in which the word order can be free, though it does not need be.

\textsuperscript{173} Hale (1983) in his study of Warlpiri discusses the association of free word order with non-configurational languages.
In what follows we discuss a number of non-configurational characteristics as the evidence for non-configurationality in Sinhala. Following the definition of Nordlinger, we consider colloquial Sinhala to be a non-configurational language. However, the evidence discussed below in support of this claim on non-configurational nature and the lack of VP in colloquial Sinhala is largely theory-neutral.

Finally in § 7.3.5, we present evidence from pronominal binding to illustrate that pronominal binding in Sinhala is based on precedence relations, but not on hierarchical relations. These findings show that c-command relations do not play a crucial role in pronominal binding.

### 7.3.1 Discontinuous Constituents

Gair (1983) states that colloquial Sinhala allows discontinuous constituents. The following examples, taken from Gair (1998:52), show how parts of NPs can be separated from their head.174 In (2a), the relative clause \([ee\ paare\ yan\]σ), which modifies the head noun \(bas\) ‘bus’ has been separated and moved to the sentence-final position. (2b) has multiple dislocations as both the relative clause, marked with subscript ‘2’, and the genitive phrase, marked with the subscript ‘1’, have been moved to the right of their head.

(2) a. \(bas\ ho'do\ nave\ [ee\ paare\ yan\]σ].
   buses good not [that road go. PRE.VADJ]
   ‘Buses that go on that road are not good.’

   b. \(ae\ danne\ naxddo\ bag\ [1] [2] [miniha]
   what know.E not.Q fellow(you) [man]
      [ar\ Lilii-ge], [harak mar\σ]\σ,
      [that Lily-GEN] [cattle kill.PRE.VADJ]
   ‘What, you (impolite) don’t know that man of Lily’s that kills cattle?’

Discontinuous constituents are considered one of the characteristics of non-configurational languages (Hale1983, Speas 1990). However, due to insufficient data and research on Sinhala it is difficult to conclude that the constructions in (2) are discontinuous constituents, such as those in other non-configurational languages like

---

Warlpiri (Simpson 1991) and Wambaya (Nordlinger 1998). Therefore we leave this construction for future detailed research.

### 7.3.2 Pro-drop

Sinhala, sometimes referred to as a ‘super pro-drop’ language (Gair et al. 1989; Gair & Karunatillake 1998), allows pro-drop or null anaphora in which arguments may be freely omitted in all argument positions with the exception of complements of postpositional phrases. In spoken Sinhala pro-drop is much more prevalent, and more often than not arguments may be freely omitted. Sentence (3), taken from Gair et al. (1989:98), illustrates this point. Two arguments in this sentence have been omitted resulting in ambiguity, as can be seen in the gloss. The context helps resolve the ambiguity.

\[
\text{(3) } \begin{array}{c}
\_ \text{mat} \_
\_ \text{en} \_
\_ \text{kot} \_
\_ \text{okkom} \_
\_ \text{kaala} \_ \text{iwrayi}.
\end{array}
\]

\[
[1\text{SG.DAT come.PRE.VADJ PTK } , \text{ all eat.PST.PTCP finished}]
\]

‘By the time, (it/they), came to me, all (the food), was eaten and finished.’

‘By the time, (it/they) came to me, all (everybody) had finished eating.’

‘By the time, (it/they) came to me, (they) had finished eating everything.’

### 7.3.3 Does Sinhala have a VP?

In what follows we examine a number of syntactic processes in colloquial Sinhala that can be used to show if the verb and object forms a single constituent. These syntactic processes include VP constituency tests, predicate gapping and the focus construction --some of which have been used as standard diagnostics to demonstrate the presence of VP in languages like Korean (Choi 1999) and English or absence of it in languages like Malayalam (Mohanan 1982) and some Australian languages (see Nordlinger 1998).

Unlike in other languages, which have a VP, Sinhala does not have syntactic constructions in which the verb and its complements can be moved, deleted, fronted or replaced by a proform as a single unit. Thus, in Sinhala, there is no parallel construction to English VP preposing, as in ‘I said I would borrow it, and [borrow it] I will’. Further, Sinhala does not have proforms like English ‘do/did (so)’ that can pronominalise the verb and object that occurred in the preceding clause. Thus, a parallel for an English sentence like (4) would be (5a), in which the object generally does not surface. This means that Sinhala verbs do not pronominalise the whole VP, which includes the object.
Just like the object, the subject too can be optionally dropped as in (5b). Further, verb and the object need not be adjacent.

(4)  

\[ \text{Gune didn’t write a book, but Siri did.} \]

(5)  

a.  

\[ \text{Gune po} \text{tak li} \text{wwe n} \text{ææ, nam} \text{ut Siri li} \text{w} \text{wa.} \]

Gune book.IND write.PST.E NEG, but Siri write.PST

‘Gune didn’t write a book, but Siri wrote.’

b.  

\[ \text{Gune po} \text{tak li} \text{wwe n} \text{ææ, nam} \text{ut liy} \text{umak li} \text{w} \text{wa.} \]

Gune book.IND write.PST.E NEG, but letter.IND write.PST

‘Gune didn’t write a book, but (he) wrote a letter.’

In Sinhala, a predicate may be gapped by adding a pro-adverb \text{ehemayi} ‘like that’, which occurs as the continuation of a sentence. As has been shown elsewhere in this study (see § 3.3.7), predicate gapping provides no evidence for subject-object asymmetry in Sinhala. The following examples illustrate that either the subject or the object may be gapped, suggesting that the object and verb do not act as a single constituent.

(6)  

a.  

\[ \text{wa} \text{‰‰‰} \text{goyam winaas} \text{‰‰‰} \text{wen} \text{‰‰‰} \text{wa, ... niy} \text{‰‰‰} \text{ge} \text{‰‰‰} \text{a-t ehema-yi.} \]

rain-DAT rice.ACC destroy_become.PRE, ... drought-DAT-also like.that-AM

‘Rain destroyed the rice, ... as did the drought.’

b.  

\[ \text{wa} \text{‰‰‰} \text{goyam winaas} \text{‰‰‰} \text{wen} \text{‰‰‰} \text{wa, ... mal gasut ehema-yi.} \]

rain-DAT rice.ACC destroy_become.PRE, ... flower_tree.also like.that-AM

‘Rain destroyed the rice, ... as well as the flowering trees.’

7.3.4 Focus: further evidence against VP

Focus and topicalization in many languages provide useful information about the phrase structure organization of a language, in particular the constituency structure. This can be seen in such languages as Malayalam (Mohanan 1982), German, Korean (Choi 1999) and Russian (King 1995). The focus construction in Sinhala is by far the most useful source of information for Sinhala phrase structure.

In Sinhala any constituent in a clause can be focussed simply by attaching a focus marker to the right of a constituent, and marking the verb with an affix, as was shown in the previous chapter. A focus marker can only focus the constituent that immediately precedes it. Just as in non-focus constructions, the focussed constituent may be moved to any position of the clause: see (7). Further, the focussed phrase may
even be moved to a different clause, as in (8). Thus, there is no restriction against separating the object from verb.

(7) a. \textit{sudupaat pettk tamay mahatta\_ya oya\-ja m\textae{}leriyaaw\-ja dunne.}  
white\_tablet.IND FOC mister.NOM 2SG-DAT Malaria-DAT give.PST.E

\begin{itemize}
\item b. \textit{mahatta ya sudupaat pettk tamay oya\-ja m\textae{}leriyaaw\-ja dunne.}
\item c. \textit{mahatta ya oya\-ja sudupaat pettk tamay m\textae{}leriyaaw\-ja dunne.}
\item d. \textit{mahatta ya oya\-ja m\textae{}leriyaaw\-ja sudupaat pettk tamay dunne.}
\item e. \textit{mahatta ya oya\-ja m\textae{}leriyaaw\-ja dunne sudupaat pettk tamay.}
\end{itemize}

‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave you for Malaria.’

(8) \textit{mee pot tamay Gune kiiwe \{ lam\_ya \emptyset kiyewwa \} kiy\_la.}  
this book FOC Gune.NOM say.PST.E \{ child.NOM read.PST \} COMP

‘It is this book that Gune said that the child read.’

Just like any other constituent, the verb as a whole may be focussed and moved to any position of the clause, but it does not include the object. Consider (9):

(9) a. \textit{lam\_ya kiri biwwa tamay.}  
child milk drink.PST FOC

\begin{itemize}
\item b. \textit{kiri lam\_ya biwwa tamay.}
\item c. \textit{biwwa tamay lam\_ya kiri.}
\end{itemize}

‘Certainly the child drank the milk/The child DID drink the milk.’

In these constructions, the object does not form part of the VP. This is especially evident in the following sentences. When the verb is focussed, the domain of focus does not include the object. Alternatively, when the object bears focus, the focus domain does not extend to the verb. In order to determine the focus domain of (9), we can use a simple test such as (10) involving an extra phrase with the focus negation \textit{nemey}. The \textit{nemey} phrase is only acceptable if it contrasts with the focussed constituent in the clause. In sentence (10a), only the phrase \textit{ahak\_da\textae{}mma nemey}, which is in contrast with the verb, is acceptable. When the subject is being contrasted with \textit{Sena nemey} or the object being contrasted \textit{watur nemey}, the clause becomes unacceptable or highly unnatural. If the domain of focus extends to the object, the sentence should be acceptable when contrasted with a phrase like \textit{watur nemey}. On the other hand, in (10b) the object bears the contrastive focus, and accordingly only a phrase contrasting with the object is acceptable.
(10)  
a. lamāya kiri biwwa tamay.
child.NOM milk drink.PST FOC,

\{ahakā dāmmâ nemey / *Siri nemey / *watur nemey \}
\{spill.PST FNEG / *Siri.NOM FNEG / *water FNEG \}

‘The child DRANK the milk, (but) did not SPILL (it).’
* ‘The child DRANK the milk, (but) not SIRI.’
* ‘The child DRANK the milk, (but) not WATER.’

b. lamāya kiri tamay biwwa,
child.NOM milk FOC drink.PST,E,

\{watur nemey / *ahakā dāmmâ nemey / *Siri nemey \}
\{water FNEG / *spill.PST FNEG / *Siri.NOM FNEG \}

‘The child drank THE MILK, (but) not WATER.’
* ‘The child drank THE MILK, (but) DID NOT SPILL (it).’
* ‘The child drank THE MILK, (but) not SIRI.’

The facts exhibited by (10) go against postulating a VP in Sinhala, and can be contrasted with some constructions in configurational languages like English. For instance, Jackendoff (1972) discusses focus adverbs such as only and even, and shows that the object or the whole VP may have the focus reading in sentences like ‘John even bought a book’, in which ‘even’ precedes the VP. Such a focus reading is possible because in English, as Selkirk (1984:207) explains, a constituent (a VP for instance) may bear focus if its head or another constituent contained within it (that is an argument of the head) bears focus. Choi (1999) has discussed a similar construction in support of the evidence for VP projection in Korean. When the object is focussed by adding the focus marker (-un), the focus domain may be extended to the whole VP, as in (11). Thus, readings in both (a) and (b) are possible. However, the subject is not included in the focus.

(11)  
a. Mary-ka [chayk-un]_{FOCUS} ilk-nun-ta.
Mary-NOM book-FOC read-PRE-DCL\textsuperscript{175}

‘Mary reads books (but reads nothing else).’
(Choi 1999:45)

b. Mary-ka [chayk-un ilk-nun-ta]_{FOCUS}
Mary-NOM book-FOC read-PRE-DCL

‘Mary reads books (but does nothing else).’
(Choi 1999:45)

\textsuperscript{175} In Choi, the focus particle -un has been glossed as TOP. We assume that the abbreviation DCL stands for ‘declarative’.
Further, when the focus marker is attached to the verb, either the verb itself, the entire VP, or any part of the VP can be focussed. Again, as Choi explains, the subject is excluded in such VP focus clauses. The focus characteristics exhibited in English and Korean are due to the fact that the verb forms a separate syntactic domain together with the object in these languages. However, in Sinhala when the verb is focussed, the focus interpretation does not include object, just as it does not include the subject, thus providing no evidence for a VP.

As shown by constituency tests so far, there appear to be no constructions in Sinhala that refer to the verb and object as a single constituent. Further, there is no evidence for a subject-object asymmetry in the sense that subject occupies a different phrase structural position compared with the object. We now move on to discuss two sets of data with the focus construction, which provide further support for a flat structure in Sinhala.

While any constituent including objects and adverbs can be focussed, complements of PP, modifiers of NPs such as possessors or relative clauses cannot be focussed, as mentioned in the previous chapter. For instance, a part of a relative clause or the entire relative clause that acts as a modifier of an NP cannot be focussed, as shown in (12a-12c):  

     Gune.NOM [ shop.LOC FOC work do.PRE.VADJ] man-DAT talk.PST.E


     Gune.NOM [ shop.LOC work do.PRE.VADJ ] man-DAT FOC talk.PST.E

     ‘It is to the man [who works in the shop] that Gune talked.’

Now consider (13), which relates to predicate adverbs in Sinhala. The predicate adverb ikmənə `quickly’ has been placed between the subject and the relative clause, which modifies the object. As can be seen in the gloss, the meaning of sentence (a) is ambiguous since the predicate adverb can be interpreted as part of the main clause or the relative clause. On the other hand, when the adverb is focussed, as in (13b-c), it no

176 The reader is directed to § 6.2.2.2 for examples involving possessors and complements of PPs.
longer functions as part of the relative clause, and the meaning ‘Gune talked to the man who works QUICKLY in the shop’ is not available.

(13) a. Gune ikm=˘ı km ˘ın-t=˘ı k ad =˘ı w Q d=k r˘ın miniha-3˘ı kataa_k˘e.
   Gune.NOM quick-DAT shop.LOC work do.PRE.VADJ man-DAT talk.PST
   ‘Gune QUICKLY talked to the man who works in the shop.’

   ‘Gune talked to the man who works QUICKLY in the shop.’

b. Gune ikm=˘ı tah˘ay [ k ad =˘ı w Q d=k r˘ın ] miniha-3˘ı kataa_k˘e.
   Gune.NOM quick-DAT FOC shop.LOC work do.PRE.VADJ man-DAT talk.PST.E
   ‘Gune QUICKLY talked to the man who works in the shop.’

c. ikm=˘ı tah˘ay G une [ k ad =˘ı w Q d=k r˘ın ] miniha-3˘ı kataa_k˘e.
   ‘Gune QUICKLY talked to the man who works in the shop.’

The example (13) also throws some light on Sinhala phrase structure. Sinhala does not make a distinction between predicate adverbs and sentential adverbs, as both types can freely occur in any position of the clause, unlike in languages such as English in which different classes of adverbs have a different distribution within the clause. In particular (13b-c) support our argument that predicate adverbs, just like objects, are not part of the constituent of the verb, but are separate and can be moved to any position of the clause.

We can make two observations about the phrase structure on the basis of examples in (12-13). First, any constituent that can be focussed can also be moved to any position within S. Thus, object NPs and predicate adverbs can be focussed and/or moved freely within a sentence. However the same cannot be said for parts of NPs such as possessors and fragments of relative clauses, which cannot be separated from their heads regardless of being focussed or not. Secondly, it appears only the direct arguments of S can be focussed. This view, based on characteristics of the focus construction, in turn suggests that the phrase structure in Sinhala is flat. Interestingly, Malayalam appears to be the same in this regard.

The focus construction in Sinhala is comparable to that of Malayalam in a number of ways. One of the characteristics in Malayalam that is also present in Sinhala is the fact that in both languages only the immediate constituents of S can be focussed. Mohanan (1982) argues that what he calls ‘clefts’ offers the strongest evidence for flat structure in Malayalam. In both languages, constituents with free word order can be focussed. Constituents that are not immediately under S do not have the same word
order freedom that the object argument has, and consequently cannot participate in constructions like focus. Thus, the ability to be moved freely in a clause and the ability to be focussed are somehow related at least in these two languages (see Mohanan & Mohanan 1994).

7.3.5 Pronominal Binding Relations

So far we presented some theory-neutral evidence for non-configurationality in Sinhala. The aim of this section is to demonstrate briefly that pronominal binding relations, which is often used in literature as evidence for subject-object asymmetry and hierarchical structure of the phrase structure (see Speas 1990), are determined by linear precedence relations in Sinhala, but not by hierarchical relations. The following sentences illustrate this point.

Consider (14), which has a pronoun in the subject position and a proper name Sudhat in the relative clause, which modifies the object argument.

(14)  
\[ \text{ad} \varepsilon \]  [\text{eyaa}_1/2]_\text{SUBJ} [\text{Sudhat}_1] \_\text{iyye} \_\text{hamb}_\text{wunu} \\
\text{today} 3SG.NOM Sudhat-DAT yesterday meet.PST.VADJ \\
\text{gwh}_\text{enu} [\text{am}_\text{eyaa}_1/2]_\text{REL} \_\text{kataa} \_\text{kyla.} \\
girl-DAT talk.PST

‘Today he\textsuperscript{1/2} talked to the girl who Sudhat\textsubscript{1} met yesterday.’

In this sentence, the pronoun precedes its antecedent, and therefore the coreference is not possible.

An explanation for the ungrammaticality of (14) is possible under the binding theory of GB and related principles such as c-command. The binding principles of GB stipulate that a pronoun cannot bind an NP that it c-commands.\textsuperscript{177} In the case of (14), the pronoun eyaa ‘he/she’ and the NP ‘Sudhat’ are in a c-commanding relationship, and they should not be coreferential. The c-structure of this sentence is schematically given in (15):

\textsuperscript{177} C-command:
A node A c-commands a node B iff
(a). A does not dominate B;
(b). B does not dominate A;
(c). the first branching node dominating A also dominates B. (Haegeman 1991)
Now consider (16), in which the pronoun (the subject) follows the NP ‘Sudhat’ (which is a part of the object). In this case only the surface constituency order has changed, but not the grammatical functions of arguments: see the c-structure in (17).* However, coreference between the pronoun and the NP is now possible.

Thus, the hierarchical phrase structure based on c-command is not necessary to explain the pronominal binding patterns illustrated by these examples, and instead linear order constraints can simply account for them. The following examples further support the linear order constraints that we are assuming:

* It is to be noted that (15) and (17) are not actually the proposed c-structures for (14) and (16), but what would be proposed within a hierarchical framework.
Again, when the pronoun precedes its binder, it cannot bind (18a), and when it follows the binder, it can bind (18b). Interestingly, in these sentences, the pronoun does not c-command its binder. Thus, coreference is not disallowed. Given that no binding constraints such as c-command or the Principle C are being violated, we would expect the sentence to be acceptable.

With regard to binding of overt pronominals in Malayalam, Bresnan (2001:195) makes the generalisation that ‘a pronoun cannot precede its binder’; see also Mohanan (1982) and Bresnan (1998). This statement is also applicable to Sinhala pronominal binding, as illustrated by the above examples. It is not only in Sinhala and Malayalam, but also in Korean, Japanese, Mandarin and South Min, that linear precedence constrains overt pronominal binding, according to Bresnan (2001).178

### 7.3.6 Summary and Concluding Remarks

So far we have considered a number of properties characteristic of Sinhala phrase structure. The conclusion that may be reached from the preceding discussion is two-fold; first, it demonstrates the free word order and the non-configurational nature of the language, and second, it shows the lack of evidence for a VP and subject-object asymmetries in Sinhala.179 As a consequence of the lack of VP projection, all the arguments including the subject are assumed to be sisters to the verb. This in turn has implications on binding principles of some frameworks in which binding relations are hierarchically defined, structurally distinguishing the subject from the object. We also demonstrated that the surface word order determines the pronominal binding in Sinhala,

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178 Bresnan states that null pronouns in these languages do not behave in the same way as overt pronouns do. Therefore this generalisation does not apply to them. As for null pronominals in Sinhala, they have not yet been studied to the best of our knowledge.

179 Two other characteristics of Sinhala that we did not discuss above are the presence of a rich case system and the absence of pleonastic NPs, which are also seen as observable properties of putative non-configurational languages.
but not the hierarchical organization of the phrase structure. Therefore it is not necessary to postulate a phrase structure based on dominance relations to account for colloquial Sinhala pronominal binding.

### 7.4 Word Order Freezing

As mentioned earlier grammatical functions and some discourse functions like contrastive focus may be determined morphologically through case or particles. However identification of functions is based on the constituent order in some instances in which morphological means of function identification fail. For instance, in contrastive focus construction the post-verbal constituent is interpreted as focus if no other constituent in the clause bears an overt focus marker (see § 6.4.4.3 for details). Further, sometimes grammatical functions cannot be identified on the basis of case marking, as the following sentences illustrate.\(^{180}\) "Lankaawə ‘Sri Lanka’ and indiyaawə ‘India’, both being inanimate nouns, are not overtly marked for nominative and accusative cases.

\[\text{(19)}\]
\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{lankaawə} & \text{indiyaawə} & \text{pəræədhuwa}.\\
\text{Lanka-Ø} & \text{India-Ø} & \text{defeat.PST}
\end{array}
\]

‘Sri Lanka defeated India.’

[The Sri Lankan team defeated the Indians (in the semi-final).]

\[\text{b. indiyaawə} \text{ lankaawə} \text{ pəræədhuwa}.\\
\text{India-Ø} \text{ Lanka-Ø} \text{ defeat.PST}
\]

‘India defeated Sri Lanka.’\(^ {180}\) (Henadeerage 1995:42)

In these examples, grammatical functions are based on the canonical SOV order. Thus, under some circumstances the free word order becomes fixed. This phenomenon, known as word order freezing has been shown to exist in a number of free word order languages like Hindi (Mohanan & Mohanan 1994) and Korean (Lee 2001).

\[^{180}\text{Nominal equational clauses, discussed in § 5.2.3, can also be considered another instance of word order freezing.}\]
This section is purely descriptive. Word order freezing phenomena and other issues related to function identification in Sinhala must be left for a future detailed study.\textsuperscript{181,182}

7.5 Sinhala Phrase Structure

As discussed previously, Sinhala phrase structure lacks a VP constituent and subject-object asymmetries in the sense that object is a complement of the verb. Considering the evidence shown in § 7.3 for a flat phrase structure, for Sinhala we assume the non-projective exocentric phrasal category S that is available in LFG for the non-endocentric organization of phrase structure in languages (Bresnan 2001:109-112). This type of phrase structure is also known as \textit{lexocentric}, since grammatical functions in such languages are determined on the basis of morphological case marking and/or agreement features; as opposed to the \textit{endocentric} model in which phrase structure is hierarchically arranged, based on the X’ Theory, and grammatical functions are structurally determined on the basis of PS positions.

S is non-projective since it lacks a c-structure head, and is exocentric in the sense that its head may belong to a different category like V, N, NP, A, AP, P and PP. ‘S’ stands for ‘sentence’ or ‘small clause’ and consists of the subject, predicate and other arguments (Bresnan 2001, Kroeger 1993).

\textsuperscript{181} It appears that the discourse context also plays an important role in identifying grammatical relations in a clause in which the arguments are not easily recognised in terms of the case marking. The nominative case for animate nouns and nominative and accusative cases for inanimate nouns are zero, as can be seen in the following sentences. In these sentences, regardless of the constituency order, the context can determine the grammatical relations of the arguments.

\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textit{lamba\textsuperscript{wa} pot\textsuperscript{wa} kiy\textsuperscript{wa}n\textsuperscript{wa}.
        
        child-Ø  book-Ø  read.PST

        ‘The child reads the book.’
  
  \item \textit{pot\textsuperscript{wa} lam\textsuperscript{wa} kiy\textsuperscript{wa}n\textsuperscript{wa}.
        
        book-Ø  child-Ø  read.PST

        ‘The child reads the book.’
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{182} For other instances of word order freezing and the bi-directional optimization, the approach that is used to handle the word order freezing phenomenon within the framework of Lexical Functional Grammar and Optimality Theory, the reader is directed to Lee (2001), Donohue (1999) and references therein.
The non-configurational S that we assume for Sinhala is similar to, and based on, what is being adopted in other configurational languages like Tagalog (Kroeger 1993), Warlpiri (Simpson 1991), Malayalam (Mohanan 1982) and Wambaya (Nordlinger 1998). Thus, S may be defined as:

\[(20) \quad S \rightarrow C^*\]

In (20), \(C\) stands for any phrasal category such as NP, AP, PP or lexical category such as V. The verb is the head in verbal clauses, while a non-verbal predicate like AP, NP, or PP may function as the head of non-verbal clauses.\(^{183}\) As (20) does not conform with the \(X'\) Theory, S has a flat c-structure, and can have multiple distinct categories as daughters, all of which are sisters of the verb, reflecting the free constituency order in Sinhala. The function identification for GFs and DFs (contrastive focus) is primarily carried out by means of case marking except in a very few cases like the structural assignment of contrastive focus (§ 6.4.4.3) and instances of word order freezing (§ 7.4). Therefore, the c-structure position is to a larger extent irrelevant for function identification in the non-configurational design of the phrase structure.

Though Sinhala has an exocentric S, and there is no evidence for a verbal projection (VP), other universally available categories N, A and P are endocentrically organised. In these phrases the head is always final. Complements and modifiers precede the head. Some examples are given below:

\[(21) \quad \text{P: } \text{la}m\text{a}y\text{a} \text{ ek}k\text{O} / *\text{ek}k\text{O} \text{la}m\text{a}y\text{a} \quad \text{child with} \quad \text{‘with the child’} \]
\[
\text{N: } \text{gu}r\text{u}w\text{a}r\text{a}y\text{a-ge} \text{ putaa } *\text{putaa gu}r\text{u}w\text{a}r\text{a}y\text{age} \quad \text{teacher-GEN son} \quad \text{‘teacher’s son’} \]
\[
\text{A: } [\text{wa}l\text{g}\text{i}y\text{O} \text{la}g\text{O}]_s \text{ paar}\text{O} / *[\text{la}g\text{O} \text{wa}l\text{g}\text{i}y\text{O}]_s \text{ paar}\text{O} \quad \text{more close road} \quad \text{‘the closer road’} \]

We do not intend to present a detailed analysis of these categories (NP, AP and PP) in this study. However it should be mentioned that there appears to be some

\(^{183}\) See Chapter 5 for examples of clauses with non-verbal predicates.
evidence for hierarchically embedded NP structures in Sinhala, as can be seen from these noun phrase structures:

(22)  a. [ mee [ sudu_potayi ] [ kalu_potayi ] ]
       this white_book.CONJ black_book.CONJ
       ‘this white book and black book’

       b. [ arə [ lamayi godak innɔ punci pantiyayi ] [ meekayi ] ]
       that child.PL many be.PRES.VADJ small class.CONJ this_one.CONJ
       ‘that small class with a lot of children and this (one)’

We use the terms NP, PP and AP for terminological simplicity throughout this study regardless of their internal structure as to whether they are single bar projections (X’) or maximal projections (XPs).

7.5.1 Functional Categories

Morphologically complete words which play a syncategorematic role in grammar such as marking finiteness, clause type and so on are treated as a specialised subclass of words, and are referred to as functional categories (Bresnan 2001:101). Auxiliary/modal verbs or particles indicating such information as tense and aspect usually form the functional category of I (Infl) in some languages. However, Sinhala lacks a copula (see § 5.5), and tense is indicated on the verb by inflectional morphology. These morphological features marking tense and aspect etc. cannot be separated from the verb as morphologically complete words. The Lexical Integrity Principle (Bresnan (2001:92) forbids such sublexical features being treated as phrase structure categories. Therefore positing a functional projection for IP in Sinhala is undesirable.

However, complementisers and contrastive focus markers in Sinhala can be considered as distinct functional categories, as will be shown in the next section.

7.5.1.1 Functional Category: CP

The complementiser kiyəla introduces subordinate clauses in Sinhala. Kiyəla always occurs to the right of the complement clause in line with other phrasal heads. See (23a),

184 The conditional marker naŋ ‘if’ may also be treated as a part of the functional category of C, as it shares some similarities with kiyəla. However, we do not intend to discuss it here.
for example. Just as in simple sentences, the constituency is order free in the matrix clause: the complement clause may occur in any position within the matrix clause, as shown by (23b-c).

(23) a. [Sumana bòruwak ĸiwwa] kiyála Gune dànñwa.
    Sumana lie.IND say.PST COMP Gune know.PRE
‘Gune knows that Sumana told a lie.’


We propose a functional category for complementiser(s) in Sinhala. Our phrase structure notation is based on principles of endocentricity defined by the X’ Theory. There are different versions of X’ Theory (see Chomsky (1970) and Jackendoff (1977), for example), and the version of X’ Theory adopted here is based on Bresnan (2001). The X’ structures to be formulated below are based on the following schemata, taken from Bresnan (2001:99):

(24) a. X’ → X°, YP
b. XP → YP, X’

In these notations, X° refers to zero level lexical category: V°, A°, N°, P°; or a functional category: C°, I°, D°, while X’ is the single bar projection of X (the head). The YP is a maximal projection of some other sort that is different from the head. The head and its phrasal projections share the same head relation, since these structures are endocentric.\(^{185}\) Thus, following the basic X’ notations in (24) the functional projection of CP for Sinhala can be formulated as in (25), in which we have substituted the variable X with C for complementiser:

\[ [ \text{oyaa eǹwa} ] \text{ nag.} \text{ maf} \text{ kiyannɔ.} \]
2SG come.PRE COND, 1SG.DAT tell.INF
‘Please tell me if you are coming.’

\(^{185}\) The reader is directed to Bresnan (2001) for a detailed explanation of the implementation of the X’ Theory in LFG, and the mapping between the c-structure and functional structure.
(25) **CP rule**

Tree structure illustration of CP

(a) \( \text{CP} \rightarrow \text{C}' \quad \text{YP} \quad \uparrow=\downarrow \)

(b) \( \text{C}' \rightarrow \text{XP} \quad \text{C}^\circ \quad \uparrow=\downarrow \)

Note that comma-separated categories in (24) are not ordered in terms of the precedence relations that a phrase structure of a particular language may impose. However, in our representation of the CP given in (25), the head follows the complement, reflecting the right-headed nature of the c-structure in Sinhala. The annotation \( \uparrow=\downarrow \) indicates that these nodes are heads of functional structure.\(^{186}\) The notation \( \uparrow_{DF} = \downarrow \) is to indicate that the YP node bears the discourse function of the clause.

The c-structure for (23a) is given in (26).

(26)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{S} \\
\text{CP} \\
\text{C}' \\
\text{S} & \text{C}^\circ \\
\text{[Sumana boruwak kiwwa] kiyəla} & \text{COMP} & \text{Gune} & \text{know.PRE} \\
\text{Sumana lie.IND say.PST COMP Gune dannəwa.} \\
\text{‘Gune knows that Sumana said a lie.’}
\end{array}
\]

The specifier YP node, which appears in (25a), is not included in the c-structure of (26), as it is an empty c-structure node, which is not dominated by any terminal element. The Economy of Expression principle (Bresnan 2001:91) requires such empty syntactic phrase nodes be removed from the c-structure.

---

\(^{186}\) For a brief outline of LFG theoretical framework, see Chapter 2.
As evident in (26), the non-configurational S rule assumed earlier reflects the word order freedom within S (in both matrix S and subordinate S). Further, the presence of the CP enables us to express some generalisations about the right-headed and left-branching nature of Sinhala phrase structure.

In the next section we discuss focus as a functional projection in Sinhala, and briefly revisit the discussion of CP towards the end of next section.

7.5.1.2 Functional Category: Focus Phrase ‘FP’

In § 6.4.4.3, we discussed the structural assignment of focus in such sentences like the following:

\[(mahatt\,\acute{y}a\,\text{\textipa{oyaa}-}\,m\,\text{\textipa{x}\textipa{leriyaaw}-}\,dunne\,\text{\textipa{sudupa}-}\,\text{\textipa{pett}\,k\,}}\]
\[\text{mister.NOM\ 2SG-DAT\ Malaria-DAT\ give.PST.E\ white_tablet.IND}\]

‘It is a white tablet that the gentleman gave you for Malaria.’

In this sort of sentence, as mentioned before, focus is not morphologically indicated by a focus marker, instead the clause-final constituent is interpreted as focus (in the absence of an overtly marked focus constituent). In § 6.4.4.3, we also assumed that the clause-final position is the default focus position, and proposed a structural assignment of focus, which was based on the c-structure configuration, repeated below as (28).

\[(\text{28})\]
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{FP} \\
\text{F'} \\
\text{XP} \\
\text{S} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
(\uparrow \text{FOCUS}) = \downarrow \\
(\text{EMPHATIC} = +) \\
\text{FP} \\
\text{F'} \\
\text{XP} \\
\text{S} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[ (=62\text{ in Chapter 6}) \]

In what follows we do not intend to discuss the structural focus assignment since it was sufficiently dealt with in § 6.4.4.3. The aim of this section is to discuss the formulation of this functional projection ‘Focus Phrase’ by demonstrating further evidence for positing such a functional projection. We will also look at how the
structure proposed in (28) can capture the distribution and functions of focus markers, and show how the FP relates to other phrase structural categories in Sinhala.

The focus markers exhibit clitic-like behaviour. They are not morphological affixes like case markers, but are phonologically independent words. These markers are adjoined to maximal projections of any lexical or functional category including S. Further, their hosts can be arguments, adjuncts or even the predicate itself. Examples below illustrate some characteristics of focus markers. The domain of focus spreads to the whole NP preceding the focus in (29a) and PP in (29b). In (29c), the adjectival phrase, which is also the predicate of the clause, has been focussed. Further, focus markers have phrasal scope over the conjoined constituents, as shown by (30), in which witær̃yi ‘only’ follows two conjoined NPs.

(29)  

a. [iskoole naapu tamay pasdeneku-t]Ê tamay yanño kiwwe.  
school.LOC absent child.PL five_of_them-DAT FOC go.INF say.PST.E  
‘(Someone) asked THE FIVE CHILDREN WHO DID NOT COME TO SCHOOL to leave.’

b. [meese udÊ]Ê tamay pot̃o tiyenne.  
table.LOC upon FOC book exist.E  
‘The book is ON THE TABLE.’

c. nangi iskoole-t yanño [hunkak horÊ]Ê tamay  
younger_sister.NOM school-DAT go.INF very unwilling FOC  
‘The younger sister is CERTAINLY VERY UNWILLING to go the school.’

(30)  

[mee potayi arÊ paamayi]Ê witær̃yi mam̃o genaawe.  
this book.CONJ that pen.CONJ EXC 1SG.NOM bring.PST.E  
‘I brought ONLY THIS BOOK AND THAT PEN.’

Thus, we treat focus markers as syntactically independent words. Given the fact that any constituent belonging to any category can be focussed, we can assume that any category can be projected to a Focus Phrase (FP). The FP, given in (28) and originally proposed in Chapter 6, can also be used to explain the syncategorematic role that focus particles, in such examples like (29-30), play in grammar. Thus, we can illustrate the focused constituent in (30) as a functional projection of focus, as in (31):

187 More examples can be found in Chapter 6.

188 See footnote 144.
The complement of $F^\circ$, which is marked as $S$ in (28), is an NP in this example (31). In the phrase structure rule for FP, we indicate this position as the variable $XP$ in order to capture the different types of lexical and functional categories that may be realised in this position (examples of the functional category CP in this position are given below): see (32b).

$$
\text{FP} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
\text{F'} \\
\uparrow=\downarrow
\end{array}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{XP} \\
\uparrow=\downarrow
\end{array}
\text{ (↑ FOCUS) = ↓}
$$

$$
\text{F'} \rightarrow \begin{array}{c}
\text{XP} \\
\uparrow=\downarrow
\end{array}
\begin{array}{c}
\text{F}^\circ \\
\uparrow=\downarrow
\end{array}
$$

In accordance with the c-structure and functional structure mapping procedure of LFG, specifiers of functional categories (XP in 32a) are mapped onto grammaticalized discourse functions, such as FOCUS (see Bresnan 2001:102). This is in fact the position in which the structural focus is realised in the clause-final focus construction in Sinhala, as mentioned earlier in § 6.4.4.3. This position is annotated with (↑ FOCUS) = ↓ in our phrase structure rules.

---

189 Note that specifier position of FP is not given in this phrase structure representation, as it is not dominated by any terminal nodes.
The assumed FP is in line with other lexical and functional projections in Sinhala in the sense that these projections reflect general characteristics of the phrase structure of the language. In the FP, the head is final, and complements and modifying phrases precede the head node $F^\circ$, just as in other projections. Under this assumption, the focus also can be considered as a head of the clause in the case of the clause-final focus construction.

So far we have presented some justifications for positing a FP, and how the proposed FP can be used to account for clause-final focus. In what follows we illustrate how the phrase structure of a complex sentence can be analysed in terms of phrase structure rules presented so far.

**Recursive Structures in MCCs**

Recall that the complement of the functional projection CP or FP is given as the variable XP (see XP in 25b and 32b) allowing any lexical or functional projection to occur in this position. Consequently, our rules predict recursive structures. As the following example illustrates, complex clauses involving focus suggest that such a recursive structure is required. In (33), there are two focus phrases, as indicated by arrows (each focus constituent is licensed by the $e$-marked verb). The underlined focus constituent in the embedded clause is of the type that we earlier referred to as the clause-final focus (i.e. the focus constituent, which is morphologically unmarked for focus, which occurs clause-finally). The second focus constituent in (33) is the whole embedded sentence, which is marked with the focus marker *tamay*. Thus, it is an example illustrating both morphologically marked and configurationally assigned focus in a single sentence. The c-structure for this sentence is given in (34).

(33)  
\[ eyaa \text{ hituwe} \rightarrow [\text{mam} \text{ kaam} \text{ re} \text{ tibbe} \text{ mee pot} \text{ kiya} \text{ la} ] \text{ tamay}. \]

‘What he thought was that it is this book that I kept in this room.’
The specifier position of the FP is filled by the focused constituent in clause-final focus constructions. As can be seen in this c-structure representation, mee potə ‘this book’,

190 F-structure for (34) may be given as:
which is the focused constituent in embedded clause, occupies this position. On the other hand, the specifier of the second FP position (i.e. the one immediately dominated by the matrix S) is not filled, as there are no terminal nodes matching this position.

Thus, the recursive nature of our phrase structure rules allow us to account for focus in complex MCCs such as the one shown above.

**Focussed S and CP**

Another characteristic of Sinhala focus is that any constituent including the CP can be focused. As evident in the above example, proposed phrase structure rules can capture this aspect of focus. Both the embedded S and the CP are expanded to FP in this above example.

As our phrase structure rule for the FP predicts, a sentence in Sinhala may also be realised as an FP. The embedded sentence in (33), repeated below as (35) is a case in point. It can occur on its own as an independent sentence, as shown by the c-structure in (36).

(35) \[ \text{mam} \acute{\text{k}} \text{am} \acute{\text{r}} \text{e} \text{tibbe} \text{mee pot} \acute{\text{o}}. \]

1SG.NOM room.LOC keep.PST.E this book

‘It is this book that I kept in this room.’

(36) \[
\begin{align*}
\text{FP} \\
\quad \text{F′} \\
\quad \text{S} \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad \text{V} \\
\quad \text{mam} \acute{\text{o}} \text{kaam} \acute{\text{r}} \text{e} \text{tibbe} \text{mee pot} \acute{\text{o}} \\
\end{align*}
\]

1SG.NOM room.LOC keep.PST.E this book

‘It is this book that I kept in this room.’

**Focused V**

Due to the lack of evidence for a VP, it was shown earlier that there is no VP projection in Sinhala. Therefore, V is considered to be a zero-level projection in this study. As
discussed under the predicate focus (§ 6.4.4.2) the verb itself can be focussed. Sentence (37) and the corresponding c-structure (38) illustrate an instance of predicate focus.

(37) mamə kaamə mee potə tibba tamay.
    1SG.NOM room.LOC this book keep.PST FOC

I DID keep this book in the room.’

(38)

\[ S \]
\[ FP \]
\[ F' \]
\[ NP \]
\[ NP \]
\[ NP \]
\[ V \]
\[ F \]

\[ mamə kaamə mee potə tibba tamay \]
    1SG.NOM room.LOC this book keep.PST FOC

I DID keep this book in the room.’

In this c-structure representation, the complement of F is realised as a lexical category (V).

Thus, proposed phrase structure rules can account for various focus constructions in both simple clause and MCCs.

7.6 Concluding Remarks

There appear to be no syntactic processes sensitive to or referring to the verb and the object as a constituent. However, we observed a number of processes giving evidence to the lack of a VP constituent. A number of constructions related to focus and constituent tests such as predicate gapping, showed that the object does not form a single constituent with the verb. The assumption of flat structure is also supported by predicate adverbs, which, like objects, are not part of the verbal constituent. Further, we showed that pronominal binding in Sinhala is based on the linear precedence of constituents. Therefore postulating a VP in Sinhala cannot be justified on theory-neutral grounds.

Grammatical functions and discourse functions (contrastive focus) are predominantly determined by morphological means in Sinhala. Although in a few cases
(see Word Order Freezing and the Clause-final focus, for instance), grammatical and discourse functions are phrase structurally determined, they cannot be exclusively associated with structural means by linking functions to PS positions. On this basis, Sinhala may be characterised as non-configurational.

Most languages employ both configurational (i.e. phrase structural encoding) and non-configurational (i.e. morphological encoding) methods of function identification (Nordlinger 1998 and Bresnan 2001). In other words, grammatical functions are not solely identified on the basis of a single method in most languages. This was also evident in Sinhala with regard to both the argument functions and discourse functions (contrastive focus). Sinhala employs the both lexocentric and structural modes of function identification.

The phrase structure proposed in the present study is based on a mixture of endocentric and exocentric principles of structure organization. The two modes of structure organization that we have made use of is a reflection of both the non-configurational and configurational nature of function identification in Sinhala. We argued that Sinhala has a flat structure within S, and demonstrated the need for functional projections based on the hierarchical organization. The outcome of the study is that we can explain why certain elements are fixed in the Sinhala phrase structure, while some are free. Also related to the functional projections in Sinhala is the lack of evidence for IP (Infl) projection.
Chapter 8 Conclusion

This study has been a detailed investigation of colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax covering grammatical relations structure, argument structure, contrastive focus and phrase structure within the framework of Lexical Functional Grammar.

In this chapter, we first present a summary of the main conclusions reached in each chapter, and then we make general remarks concerning colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax which emerged from the overall discussion. Finally, we briefly look at three areas for further research.

8.1 Summary and Concluding Remarks

Grammatical Relations: In Chapter 3, it was shown that there is evidence for subject in colloquial Sinhala although the evidence is significantly weaker than previously assumed. Among the fourteen morphosyntactic phenomena discussed, a restricted neutralisation of semantic and pragmatic roles was found in only two constructions. As the present study shows, although the colloquial subject cannot be reduced to a particular semantic role, it is always the most prominent entity at the level of argument structure (i.e. logical subject or a-subject). Although the amount of evidence for subject is very small, the presence of the evidence itself is crucially important typologically and theoretically.

Moreover, colloquial Sinhala also lacks morphosyntactic phenomena sensitive to the gr-subject, the most prominent entity in the grammatical relations structure. Universally languages are shown to have features, some of which are sensitive to grammatical relations structure, while others are sensitive to the level of argument structure (Manning 1996). It was shown that processes such as relativisation, quantifier float, focussing and question formation, which are generally sensitive to the grammatical relations structure in many other languages, do not select the gr-subject in colloquial Sinhala. The consequence of the lack of any morphosyntactic phenomena sensitive to the grammatical relations structure is that the colloquial Sinhala subject can be defined in terms of argument structure. Further, the lack of evidence for gr-subject
can be considered a distinguishing characteristic of colloquial Sinhala syntax, and it would be interesting to investigate which other languages lack evidence for gr-subjects and why there is no need for it in defining any morphosyntactic phenomena in these languages.

It has also been found in this study that there is no evidence to postulate other grammatical relations such as primary object. While all the morphosyntactic phenomena that can be reliably used as evidence for grammatical relations in the language are sensitive to the most prominent argument in the a-structure, as far as we are aware there is no morphosyntactic phenomenon that is sensitive to other grammatical relations like primary object.

It has also been shown that one reason why it is difficult to postulate grammatical relations in colloquial Sinhala, in particular the gr-subject, is the lack of such processes as passive, in which grammatical functions and argument structure roles alternate.

We can make the following observation in relation to the subjecthood diagnostics on the basis of conclusions reached in the present study. Most of the morphosyntactic processes used in previous studies as diagnostics of subject were shown to be unreliable. The present study treated morphosyntactic phenomena as reliable tests only when they showed a restricted neutralisation of semantic and pragmatics roles. In this way, we have been able to eliminate many processes which are of no use in determining the subject in the language (e.g. –la participles, in which context or discourse factors determine the control relations; and the equi target, which is constrained by semantic factors). The method employed in the present study is thus a reliable technique for determining subject and object grammatical relations in languages.

**Valency, Volition and Argument Structure:** With the analysis of the agentless construction (Chapter 4), the present study makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the involitive construction, the agentless construction and related issues including valency alternations phenomena, the effect of volitionality and valency on clause structures and argument structure. One of the crucial findings in the present study is that volitive verbs do not become intransitive in the involitive form; in other words, the involitive marker has no effect on the transitivity value of verbs. With this
finding we have shown that the volitive/involitive distinction and the transitive/intransitive distinction are not in any way related. We have also shown that the agentless construction is a separate construction, and is not a part of the involitive construction, and that decausative verbs and involitive verbs have different functions.

The analysis of the agentless construction and the involitive construction in this study can explain a number of issues associated with these constructions. The intentional subjects that sometimes appear with morphologically involitive verbs pose no problem for the present analysis. As we have shown, such constructions belong to the agentless construction, but not to the involitive construction. The presence and absence of the atiŋ phrase has not received a satisfactory explanation previously under the assumption that the involitive construction and the agentless construction are all related. We argued that the atiŋ phrase is the involitive counterpart of the intentional agent in transitive volitive clauses.

Furthermore, it has been shown that the lexical semantics of individual verbs can be used to determine which verbs undergo the valency alternation and which verbs do not. In this way we have been able to explain why only some verbs undergo a valency alternation. In addition, the analysis of the present study is consistent with the fact that some involitive verbs can be transitive or intransitive (unlike some previous studies (e.g. Gunasinghe (1985) which assumed that all involitives are intransitives).

**Structure of Non-Verbal Sentences:** In the discussion of non-verbal sentences (Chapter 5) we showed that certain word classes share certain characteristics. In fact this appears to be the case in many languages (Bhat 1994 and Schachter 1985). Although such overlapping properties of word classes make it difficult to differentiate one class from another, there are certain syntactic phenomena, as we have shown, that can be used to motivate parts of speech classes in this language. While this syntactic evidence helps distinguish different word classes, there appears to be no evidence in colloquial Sinhala to show that the clause structure of NVSs is different from that of VSs, contrary to some previous studies (Kariyakarawana 1998). It is worth noting that verbal clauses and adjectives pattern together with regard to some constructions, while all other non-verbal clause types appear to form a different group. We have assumed that this observation may relate to verbs and adjectives being [+V –N] and other predicates being [-V +N]. Further, we presented strong arguments to show that certain verb forms that
appear in verbal paraphrases of NVSs cannot be treated as a form of underlying verb or
copula in colloquial Sinhala.

**Focus Construction:** This thesis shows how contrastive focus in colloquial Sinhala
can be modelled in terms of the framework of LFG. The proposed treatment accounts
for focus in various clause types in both verbal and non-verbal clauses. It has been
shown that while morphological encoding is the primary method of focus assignment,
sometimes the language makes use of a combination of morphological and
configurational encoding. The significance of the morphological encoding is the
complex interaction of verb morphology and focus markers in constituents. We have
proposed a treatment based on existing principles of LFG, such as Functional
Uncertainty. The complexity of the morphological encoding of focus, associated with
focus markers and verb morphology, was handled in the formulation of lexical entries
for focus markers and the verbal affix.

We have shown that any constituent that can be focussed can also be moved
freely within the clause, and even from an embedded clause to the matrix clause. This is
certainly true of arguments such as subject, object and some other arguments. We
argued that these constituents are direct daughters of S in colloquial Sinhala. One of the
implications of this finding is that it shows evidence against the VP in colloquial
Sinhala, and that phrase structure is flat. Further, we noted that constituents such as
possessors and complements of PPs cannot be focused. Another characteristic of such
constituents is that they also cannot be moved away from their heads. These
observations can be compared with similar findings in other languages, such as
Malayalam, for instance, in which only the direct daughters of S can be focussed
(Mohanan 1982), and Hindi and Urdu, in which only direct daughters of S can scramble

**Phrase Structure:** In Chapter 7, we discussed non-configurational S in colloquial
Sinhala and endocentric functional projections. The lack of evidence for the
subject-object asymmetries was a notable observation with regard to colloquial Sinhala
phrase structure. The focus construction showed strong evidence for the lack of a VP.
Further, there appears to be no construction which can be used to motivate a VP in the
language. The evidence discussed also shows that the pronominal binding in colloquial
Sinhala can be explained in terms of precedence relations, i.e. surface word order, of
phrase structure.
Although the constituents under S are generally free in colloquial Sinhala, there is evidence for dominance and precedence relations in the phrase structure. We also noted that in the majority of cases phrase structure is largely irrelevant for function identification. However, phrase structure does play an important role in a smaller number of constructions. Clause-final focus, in which focus is assigned jointly with morphological and configurational means, was a clear example of this. The implication of this observation is that the function identification cannot be completely implemented on the basis of morphological encoding on arguments in colloquial Sinhala, and phrase structure must also be taken into consideration. We have shown how the interaction of morphological and configurational function assignment could be handled by proposing functional projections in the case of the Clause-final focus construction. Further, proposed functional categories can also explain not only certain morphosyntactic phenomena like focus but also some characteristics of the phrase structure, such as the right-headed and left-branching nature of the complementiser phrase. However, the present study has some limitations in the sense that it does not provide a treatment for word order freezing phenomena in colloquial Sinhala.

8.2 General Observations on Colloquial Sinhala Morphosyntax

On the basis of the discussion of various morphosyntactic phenomena in this study, we can make the following general observations in relation to colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax.

The first issue is the interaction between different modules of the grammar. The fact that various morphosyntactic processes are constrained by semantic notions like volitivity in colloquial Sinhala is noteworthy. Recall that only volitional agents can be controlleres (see Table 3-7), and others such as patients, experiencers and non-volitional agents cannot be the controller of a construction. In this regard, non-volitional agents seem to function like Undergoers, as they lack control and agency, and consequently cannot be treated on a par with other volitional agents. Thus, we need to make a distinction between volitional and non-volitional agents in grammar. Further, the subject case-marking pattern itself is another example of the semantic conditioning of syntax.

The second is the role of verb morphology in colloquial Sinhala morphosyntax. We noted that verbal morphology in some constructions, such as the focus construction
and the reflexive construction, enforces constraints on grammar. The e-marker, for instance, in focus constructions interacts with focus markers indicating that one of its constituents bears focus. Further, it plays a vital role in focus interpretation in complex clauses. Likewise, verb morphology in reflexives is the deciding factor in the binding of domain of reflexive (§ 3.3.8). As we have already mentioned, the volitive/involitive marking on verbs indicates intentional involvement on the part of subjects and constrains subject case marking. Other constructions, which are not discussed in the present study, but are relevant in this regard are the causative constructions and the benefactive construction\textsuperscript{191}, both of which carry morphological reflexes on the verb and constrain argument structure.

Thirdly, we observed that colloquial Sinhala primarily employs morphological encoding for function identification, that is, both grammatical functions and the contrastive focus function. Only when morphological function identification fails does the language make use of configurational function assignment. This was shown in the clause-final focus constructions, in equational clauses and in verbal sentences with no overt case markers (as shown under word order freezing in § 7.4). It is also to be noted that we are not aware of an instance in which phrase structure alone determines the functions of arguments in colloquial Sinhala.

8.3 Future Research

In the light of the present study, we can propose three areas for further research.

**Argument Structure:** In a number of ways, the present study highlights the importance and the effect of argument structure in colloquial Sinhala grammar. This is seen more clearly in relation to grammatical relations and in some morphosyntactic constructions such as nominalisation and reflexivisation, which could be described in terms of argument structure. We assume that a detailed investigation of argument structure in colloquial Sinhala and various phenomena that are sensitive to it is required. Such an

\textsuperscript{191} This is an unexplained phenomenon and involves a complex verb formation in which \textit{den} ‘give’ is added to the past participle form of the verb, as in the following examples:

- \textit{bed\textasciitilde} ‘divide’ → \textit{bed\textasciitilde} ‘divide for somebody’
- \textit{uy\textasciitilde} ‘cook’ → \textit{uy\textasciitilde} ‘cook for somebody’
- \textit{geen\textasciitilde} ‘bring’ → \textit{genat\textasciitilde} ‘bring for somebody’
investigation may cover areas such as morphological causativisation, the benefactive construction, reflexivisation and nominalisation in terms of their effect on the argument structure.

**Word Order Freezing:** It was shown that in nominal equational clauses, word order is fixed, that is, the predicate always follows the argument. Both nominals in these clauses have nominative case. Likewise, we noted that in verbal clauses in which NPs do not have overt case marking, the canonical word order determines grammatical relations. This fixed word order phenomena in colloquial Sinhala has not been explored to date. The essential aspect of such a study would be to account for both fixed word order phenomena and free word order in the language.

Two recent studies on the same phenomena in other languages are worth mentioning here: Lee (2001) for Hindi and Korean, and Bloom (1999) for Russian.

**Copula-less Clauses:** Our discussion argued that non-verbal sentences do not have a copula (see also Gair and Paolillo (1988). It was shown that clauses such as nominal equational type have two NPs: one is the argument and the other is the predicate nominal. The lack of copula or verb form means that the PRED feature has to be introduced by some other means so that functions of arguments can be specified. As we mentioned before, languages such as Maori (Biggs 1969), Nakkara (Eather 1990), Tagalog (Schachter 1985) and Indonesian (Musgrave 2001) also lack copula or a verb form in similar constructions. As far as we aware, within the framework of LFG there is no standard treatment as yet for these constructions.


