

# A MORPHOLOGICAL AND SYNTACTICAL STUDY OF NOUNS IN BUTHSARANA

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## **Introduction**

This is a morphological and syntactical study of nouns in *Buthsarana*. This research is important for both Linguistics and Sinhalese Classical Literature. There isn't any other syntactical study done on *Buthsarana* which was written during the Polonnaru literary era in Sri Lanka.

The scope of this study is Linguistics. Linguistics is the scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of grammar, syntax, and phonetics. Major subfields of Linguistics include phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. Specific branches of Linguistics include Historical Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Dialectology, Psycholinguistics, Computational Linguistics, Comparative Linguistics, and Structural Linguistics.

In Linguistics, syntax is the study of the rules that govern the ways in which words combine to form phrases, clauses, and sentences. Syntax is one of the major components

of grammar. It is a branch of Linguistics (and one of the major components of grammar) that studies word structures, especially in terms of morphemes.

*Buthsarana* is considered as the incomparable Classical Sinhala prose. It was written by *Vidyachakravarthi* at the end of 12<sup>th</sup> century or at the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D. *Buthsarana* reflects a fully developed stage of Sinhalese language and literature. By the time when *Buthsarana* was written the Sinhalese language had developed with some characteristics peculiar to it alone. The extent of the evolution of the syntax during the period from the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. to the 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D. is remarkably significant when we compare the changes that took place in the subsequent period that is until about the 18<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

Noun is a word that refers to a person, a place or a thing, a quality or an activity. In Linguistics, a noun is a member of a large, open lexical category whose members can occur as the main word in the subject of

a clause, the object of a verb, or the object of a preposition. The syntactic rules for nouns differ from language to language.

The aim of this study is identifying morphological and syntactical features of nouns in *Buthsarana*. After giving a definition of nouns, a classification, basic morphological features and the sentence structure where noun is used in *Buthsarana* have been presented through this research.

The main conclusion of this research is almost all the morphological and syntactical features of Sinhala nouns have been established in Sinhala language by the time when *Buthsarana* was written.

### **Objectives**

To identify the morphological and syntactical features of nouns in *Buthsarana*.

### **Methodology and Materials**

This morphological and syntactical study of nouns in *Buthsarana* has been done by using the principles of traditional and modern Sinhala grammarians. The *Sithath Sanngara* is the oldest Sinhala text in Sinhala grammar. It was written by Rev. Wedeha thero who was the head monk of the *Pathiraja Pirivena* during the Dambadeni literary era in Sri Lanka. It reflects the principles of traditional Sinhala grammarians.

Munidasa Kumarathunga, W.S. Karunathilaka and J.B. Dissanayake can be mentioned as some modern Sinhala grammarians. This research was done by using their grammatical principles. As I think that is the most

suitable method to identify the morphological and syntactical features of nouns in *Buthsarana*, because *Buthsarana* is considered as the incomparable classical Sinhala prose. *Buthsarana* which was edited by Rev. Labugama Lankananda thero, the *Sithath Sanngara* which was edited by Rapiyal Thennakoon and grammatical texts which were written by above mentioned modern Sinhala grammarians have been used for this research.

First of all I went to libraries at University of Peradeniya and University of Kelaniya and collected books and articles relevant to Linguistics, morphology, syntax, *Buthsarana*, traditional Sinhala grammar and modern Sinhala grammar. Secondly I read them. Thirdly I collected nouns of *Buthsarana* and categorized them. Then I was able to identify morphological and syntactical features of nouns in *Buthsarana*.

### **Results**

Animate nouns, inanimate nouns, first person nouns, second person nouns, third person nouns, female nouns, male nouns, singular nouns, plural nouns, definite nouns, indefinite nouns and nouns relevant to nine cases in Sinhala can be seen in *Buthsarana*. Nouns of *Buthsarana* can be categorized into structural classification and functional classification. Structural classification of nouns is consisted of simple nouns, complex nouns and compound nouns. Functional classification of nouns consists of indicative nouns, pronouns, numerical nouns and participial nouns. Indicative nouns are consisted of common nouns, substantial nouns,

adjectival nouns, abstract nouns, personal nouns and pronouns. The utilization of these nouns in sentence structure will be explained in the research symposium.

#### **Discussion**

These morphological and syntactical features of nouns in *Buthsarana* are similar to the present morphological and syntactical features of nouns in Sinhala language.

#### **Main Conclusion**

As a whole it is clear almost all the morphological and syntactical features of Sinhala nouns have been established in Sinhala language by the time when *Buthsarana* was written.

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