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A Linguistic analysis of the Lexical borrowings in *The Whirlwind* by A. Santhan

S. Rajashanthan¹ and C.D. Senaratne²

Abstract

Most of the postcolonial writers are used to maintaining a strategic vocabulary to make sure that they propagate their ideologies by means of implication. In this context, many bilingual writers have adopted the strategy of language mixing by means of integrating lexical borrowings to make their work sound native to their home environments. As a result, in Sri Lankan Anglophone literature, most writers tend to incorporate lexical borrowing to reflect their ideological dimensions related to various issues they are confronted with in their daily lives. Against this background, this research focuses on *The Whirlwind* by A. Santhan, which describes issues of the identity, history, culture, and way of life of the Tamil people living in Jaffna, in Northern Sri Lanka, during the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) occupation in the late 1980s. The award-winning novel in English, *The Whirlwind* by the Jaffna Tamil writer A. Santhan, uses lexical borrowing as a powerful tool for portraying ideological struggles and power dynamics. So, the linguistic patterns and contexts of these lexical borrowings are analyzed to explore their ideological implications. Strevens' cultural presupposition framework, along with Norman Fairclough's textual analysis using mixed methods, examines the types, patterns, and ideological implications of borrowings. The findings of the study reveal the distinctive forms of borrowings shaped by various socio-cultural ideologies.

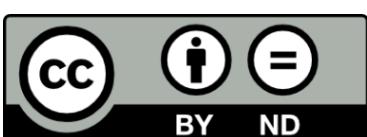
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INTRODUCTION

In multilingual societies, language contact becomes a common linguistic phenomenon, which leads to the copying or transfer of vocabulary from one language into another. Many linguists identify different processes of borrowing at the phonological and morphosyntactic levels (Poplack et al., 1988; Myers-Scotton, 2002; Haspelmath, 2009). Language exchanges are common when different languages have coexisted for a long time. In the Sri Lankan context, the English language interacted with local languages, Sinhala and Tamil, and locally established colonial languages like Portuguese, Dutch, and other South Asian languages (Ilangakoon, 2021; Gunasekara, 2005). The borrowings enrich the vocabulary of the recipient language and always reflect socio-cultural and historical influences of the donor language (Haspelmath, 2009; Myers-Scotton, 1992, 2002).

The contact of British English with colonized local languages paved the way for the evolution of World Englishes or new varieties of Englishes. In the Sri Lankan context, the prolonged interaction of Sinhala, Tamil, and other regional languages with British English has contributed to a distinctive linguistic identity

characterised by a vocabulary enriched with loanwords, calques, hybrids, and compounds (Ilangakoon, 2021). These borrowings function not only as lexical incorporations but also as cultural and national identity markers deeply rooted in Sri Lanka's sociolinguistic landscape (Fernando, 2011; Gunasekara, 2005; Mendis & Rambukwella, 2010; Bernaisch, 2015; Senaratne, 2009).

Velautham (2000) observes that linguistic innovations, particularly borrowings in non-native writing or new literatures in English from Asia and Africa, represent writers' attempts to generate meaning within new socio-cultural contexts. The innovations and borrowings from native languages bring native flavor along with socio cultural ideologies into Anglophone literature (Lowenberg, 1992; Lisa, 2002; Puthucheary, 2006; Rajendran, 2018). The discourse style of English in these writings is shaped by native thought patterns¹ and sociolinguistic concerns.

This paper examines the role of lexical borrowings in the novel *The Whirlwind* by Santhan (2010) by analysing the linguistic types of borrowings and their ideological implications. The study forms part of an ongoing PhD research project that investigates lexical borrowing in Sri Lankan Anglophone

¹ Native Thought patterns 'of Asians and Africans. This aligns with Chinua Achebe's use of English to carry the weight of his African experience in a form of English that remains in communion with its ancestral roots

but is transformed to suit its new African surroundings (Kachru, 1986, p.11).



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literature, with a particular focus on its patterns and ideological significance. *The Whirlwind*, a novel by Sri Lankan Tamil author A. Santhan, is selected for the pilot study. As an award-winning novel, it serves as a rich source of borrowings embedded with ideological meanings. The analysis adopts Haugen's (1950, 1953) typology of borrowing, which distinguishes between morphemic importation and substitution. Borrowings that fill lexical gaps reveal the cultural ideologies of a community and reflect the linguistic integration of the recipient language.

According to Fairclough (1992), "a text is produced by drawing upon a society's Members' Resources (MR), which refers to a society's knowledge of language, representations of natural and social worlds they inhabit, values, beliefs, assumptions, and so on" (p.24). This perspective has important implications for this study, as it helps to understand how culture is expressed through language. In Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse analysis, this study focuses on the textual analysis of the experiential, relational, and expressive values of vocabulary, guided by the four key questions proposed in his 1989 framework to interpret vocabulary in relation to its social context.

To reflect and capture the MR of the Jaffna Tamil sociolinguistic context, the frameworks of Fairclough (1989) and Strevens (1987) are employed. Strevens (1987) reveals the "cultural

presuppositions of a society, when they are transmitted through language related to the expression of culture through its basic mechanisms and value-systems, including the domains of philosophy, nature, government, science, literature, and society's ultimate reality" (Strevens, 1987, p.174). These domains are used in this study to classify the semantic fields in which borrowings occur in *The Whirlwind* and to explore their functional role in the sociolinguistic context of the Northern Tamil community in Sri Lanka.

Research Questions

Accordingly, this study will explore two main research questions: What are the types of borrowings used by the author in *The Whirlwind* to reflect ideological dimensions? What are the ideological implications of these borrowings in the novel?

The linguistic analysis of *The Whirlwind* investigates how borrowings from Tamil and other languages, such as Hindi, Punjabi, Malay, Sanskrit, and Portuguese, are linguistically integrated into English and highlights their cultural significance. Findings from this pilot study explore the need for further research into how the English lexicon of Sri Lankan Anglophone literature is enriched and expanded through such borrowings.



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LITERATURE REVIEW

Language contact has given rise to the use of language components from different languages by speakers within a single discourse. Language contact results in borrowing and code-switching, which are two distinct processes in speech communities, but not necessarily in bilingual or multilingual speech communities (Poplack, 2001). Literature on theoretical and empirical studies shows the features of borrowing and code-switching. In this regard, borrowing is defined by Thomason and Kaufman (1988, p. 37) as "the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language: the native language is maintained but is changed by the addition of the incorporated features." Their distinctive features have been extensively examined through theoretical discussions as well as empirical analysis of data in different language contexts. It is also argued that these two phenomena have a close relationship with each other while at the same time having distinctive features which are even seen as being at two ends of a continuum (Adamou et al., 2016; Manfredi et al., 2015; Myers-Scotton, 1992).

The studies of Bloomfield (1933), Haugen (1950), and Weinreich (1953) first initiated complete research on language contact, emphasizing lexical borrowings. According to Weinreich (1953, p. 56), "the vocabulary of a

language, considerably more loosely structured than its phonemics or its grammar, is beyond question the domain of borrowing par excellence." The research conducted later focused on the process and constraints of borrowings (Moravcsik, 1978; Muysken, 1981, as cited by Treffers-Daller, 2010). The empirical research on borrowings by Poplack, Sankoff, and Miller (1988) tested a large corpus for social correlation. The borrowings and code-switching processes are distinguished by many researchers based on the productivity (Pfaff, 1979; Poplack, 1980; Appel & Muysken, 1987). Thomason and Kaufman (1988) discussed the structural borrowing and its role in language change in terms of sociolinguistic influences. The emergence of World Englishes paved the way for language adaptation for specific terms related to geography, flora, and culture (Ilangakoon et al., 2021; Schneider, 2003)

This study explores the ideological implications of the borrowings in the novel *The Whirlwind* by a Sri Lankan Tamil writer. Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model² focuses on textual analysis, processing analysis, and social analysis for description, interpretation, and explanation, respectively (Janks, 1997, p.329). Vocabulary in a discourse plays a key role in transmitting ideological meanings and power dynamics (Fairclough, 1989). In this regard, Fairclough's analytical framework not only considers the text and the way it's



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constructed but also the socio-historical settings in which it is produced. Vocabulary analysis centres around experiential, relational, and expressive values, where experiential values are attributed through classification schemes, ideological implications, and word relations. Relational value addresses social relationships and hierarchies through language. Expressive values are implied through ideological attitudes that shape the perceptions of readers (Fairclough, 1989).

The study by Sivagowri (2013) explores the role of literature in preserving historical consciousness. In this context, Santhan's use of borrowings in *The Whirlwind* balances historical evidence with literary representation as expresses as "the signification of words, idioms, phrases, and style of writing, apart from the note on own experience that are sometimes hidden or vividly present should essentially contain history if we have a sense of history" (Sivagowri, 2013, p.2). This statement is supported by Macintyre (2012) while describing Santhan's ability to express Tamil identity in English, which shows the way literature is rooted in specific cultural contexts.

Santhan's portrayal of the Tamil community in Jaffna has its uniqueness (Sivagowri, 2013, Macintyre, 2012; Thiruvarangan, 2012). The use of borrowings brings the readers to the socio-cultural settings and political

realities. According to Macintyre (2012), the language strategies employed by Santhan give authenticity to the Tamil life portrayed.

The borrowings in the standard variety of English emerge as a distinctive feature, and in the Sri Lankan context, Sivapalan et al. (2010) emphasize the variety of English used in Sri Lanka with Tamil borrowings. Their analysis of Santhan's '*The Whirlwind*' includes morphologically integrated borrowings such as English + English compounds (*cow dung paste*) and Tamil-English hybrids (*cholakam wind, maruthu tree, kanchipuram saree*). They indicate the way borrowings in the novel reflect the cultural identity.

Rajashanthan's (2016) study identifies the use of borrowings by Jaffna Tamil writers to reflect ethnic and social identity with the classification of borrowing as transfers, loan translations, and hybridizations, based on their functional aspects in the Anglophone literature. These borrowings fill the lexical gap related to kinship, rituals, taboos, religious practices, and societal norms.

Classification of Borrowings

The borrowings become an important phenomenon in language contact situations, and they are classified by various linguists. The categorization of borrowings depends on the way they are formed and the reasons for borrowing, and this study primarily



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adapts the categorization of Haugen (1950, p.53).

Bloomfield (1933), Haugen (1950, 1953), Weinreich (1953), and Poplack & Meechan (1995) offer insights into its structural, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic dimensions. Bloomfield (1933) divided the borrowings as dialect borrowings, which 'come from within the same speech-area' and cultural borrowings 'come from a different language' (Bloomfield, 1933, p.444). According to him, the borrowings are motivated by the need to express various cultural and conceptual realities.

While Haugen (1950, 1953) imposed the structural constraints and effects on borrowings, Weinreich (1953) discussed syntactic and phonological interferences. He defined borrowing as a process and distinguished loanwords, hybrids, and semantic loans. According to Haugen (1950), borrowing is categorized as loanwords with morphemic importation without substitution, loan blends with morphemic importation with partial substitution, hybrids, and loan shifts with morphemic substitution without importation.

Loan words in borrowings are further classified by Haugen (1953) in his study of Norwegian-English bilingualism as unassimilated, partially assimilated,

and fully assimilated, and loan blends as stem, derivative, and compound types. Loan shifts, on the other hand, are categorized as loan creation and extension, with both literal and approximate interpretations. Poplack and Meechan (1995) differentiated borrowings based on the linguistic integration and diffusion as established borrowings and nonce borrowings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to analyse lexical borrowings in *The Whirlwind*, a novel by Santhan (2010) that vividly portrays the socio-political and cultural landscape of Jaffna during the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) period in the late 1980s.

A corpus of approximately 40,000 words from the digitized version of *The Whirlwind* was developed for analysis. Pre-processing steps included the removal of punctuation, formatting inconsistencies, and symbols. All non-British English (BrE) words, excluding proper nouns, were extracted using LangsBox², a corpus analysis software developed by Lancaster University.

Borrowings were identified based on the researcher's bilingual proficiency and subsequently cross-verified for accuracy and consistency. The Key Word in Context (KWIC) tool in LangsBox was used to extract

² LangsBox is a corpus analysis software developed by Lancaster University, widely used for studying language data.



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concordance lines for selected borrowings, revealing how these words are embedded in the narrative.

Quantitative analysis included the frequency distribution of borrowings. Semantic categorisation was conducted using Strevens' (1987) six-domain framework³. Qualitative analysis focused on the discursive contexts of borrowings. With Fairclough's (1989) emphasis on 'vocabulary as a key medium of encoding ideology,' this study examines the ideological implications of borrowings in terms of nouns, synonymy/antonymy, overlexicalisation, formality, kinship terms as pronouns, and euphemism (Bamunusinghe & Senaratne, 2023).

To ensure the trustworthiness of the content analysis, the study followed strategies recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985). A coding framework based on Strevens' (1989) cultural domains was developed and pilot-tested on a single novel (as part of the broader PhD corpus of nine novels). This test enabled the refinement of categories and ensured interpretive clarity.

A Cohen's Kappa coefficient⁴ of 0.68 was achieved through inter-coder reliability testing with two independent researchers, indicating substantial agreement. A detailed

coding manual with definitions of categories/subcategories supported consistency in application. In this research LancsBox software introduced by Lancaster University was utilized to calculate the frequencies and identify the borrowing. Google search was used to track the etymology of the borrowings. The researcher's bilingual awareness identified the borrowings, excluding the names of the places and persons, with independent coder validation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Drawing on Haugen's (1950, 1953) framework and refined through empirical observation, this study proposes the following fourfold classification of borrowings identified in *The Whirlwind*:

1. Pure Loans
Words that are borrowed with little or no adaptation to the recipient language's phonology or morphology (Table 1).
2. Loan Blends
Borrowings that exhibit partial morphemic substitution, such as hybrid formations where a native morpheme combines with a borrowed root or affix (Table 2).
3. Loan Translations (Calques)
Borrowings are translated literally into a recipient language,

³ i. Philosophy and religion, ii. Concept of nature, iii. Notions of government, iv. Concepts of science, v. Literature, and vi. Society's ultimate myths.

⁴ Cohen, J. (1960). A coefficient of agreement for nominal scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 20(1), 37–46.



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replicating the structure and meaning of the source (Table 7).

4. Loan Creations
Borrowings that involve conceptual transfer without phonological importation—e.g., where an existing English word takes on a new, culture-specific meaning (Table 8).

The first two categories correspond to Haugen's original division of loanwords into pure loans and loan blends. The latter two are expansions within semantic shift types, further differentiated as literal translation or neologism, which introduces culturally embedded new terms and semantic extension, where English terms are given additional, localised meanings.

Borrowings from each category will be analysed quantitatively (frequency and etymology) and qualitatively (discursive and cultural function). The next section discusses pure loanwords and their contextual applications as seen in concordance lines.

Pure Loan Words with Ideological Implications

Kinship terms occur with high frequency in *The Whirlwind*, with over 100 instances recorded. Lexical items such as *amma* (mother), *akka* (elder sister), *maamaa* (uncle), *thamby* (younger brother), and *anna* (elder brother) account for approximately 31% of the total dataset. These terms indicate the significance of the

characteristic roles of these terms in the Tamil community and emerge as the markers of socio-cultural identity.

Strevens' (1989) domain of government consists of kinship borrowings which have relational value according to Fairclough (1989). The kinship borrowings bring a sense of solidarity, intimacy and hierarchical relations in terms like *maamaa*, *akka*, *anna*, *thamby*, *thangachi*, *machchan*, and *aarchi*. For example, *Thevar*, an elderly retired schoolmaster, is affectionately called *maamaa* by his community. In Tamil, though, the term *maamaa* denotes a maternal uncle; in this context, the borrowing is used for a male elderly person, symbolizing respect, warmth, and familiarity.

The kinship terms such as *anna*, *akka*, *thamby*, *thangachi*, *machchan*, and *aarchi* are used to refer to communal solidarity, intimacy, and hierarchical relations. As these kinship terms are associated with expressing family ties in the Tamil community, on some occasions, the use of kinship terms creates ambiguity and irony for the readers.

As Fairclough (1989) notes, relational values revealed in vocabulary through kinship terms can both reflect and obscure social relationships, adding layers of meaning.



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Table 1. Pure Loans

Assumptions	Codes for Conceptual Content Analysis	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	Percentage
				$*FO=100\% \times nN$ [FO=100% $\times 10$]
Philosophy and Religion	Gods	21	21	11.5%
	Rituals	5	26	3%
	Hymns	3	29	2%
	Festivals	2	31	1%
Concept of nature	Flora	5	36	3%
	Fauna	3	39	2%
	Objects	5	44	3%
Notions of governm	Kinship	57	101	31%
	Food	9	110	5%
	Dress & ornaments	5	115	3%
Concepts of Science	Titles/ profession	8	123	4%
	Expression	13	136	7%
	Building	26	162	14%
	Household items	11	173	6%
Literature	Agricultural tools	3	176	2%
	Books	2	178	1%
	Authors	1	179	0.5%
Society's ultimate myth	Characters	3	182	2%
	Superstitions/myths related to death	0	0	0%

According to Table 1, the borrowings from the domain Philosophy and religion such as *amman*, *yaman*, *vairavar*, and *murukan* constitutes 11.5% of the total data. Hindu deities are indexed through these borrowings. Semantic category of five under the domain of philosophy and religion records the

frequency of more ten for each with ideological significance.

There are instances where borrowings are transferred with slight phonological adaptation. The clipped forms such as *mudali* (from *mudalali*) and *chinna* (from *chinnanna* or *chinnannai*) are examples of pragmatic functions. *Mudali* in the Tamil context reveals status and power, while *chinna* expresses a relational hierarchy. According to Fairclough (1989), such linguistic phenomena are deeply tied to the ideological and cultural context of language. For example, word relations like *kutty annai* and *chinna* function as synonyms, both referring to a "younger elder brother." On the other hand, antonyms such as *anna* ≠ *thambi* (elder brother, ≠ younger brother) and *akka* ≠ *thangachchi* (elder sister, ≠ younger sister) encode familial hierarchy and age-based respect, which are crucial in Tamil kinship structures.

The term *sempaadu* is used to refer to socially marginalised communities in the novel, though it doesn't denote social hierarchy or caste explicitly. But the term in the novel highlights social exclusion and power dynamics as follows:

"Some people from *sempaadu* used to come there to collect palm fruits in the early mornings. So, that must be some innocent chap from *sempaadu*" (Santhan, 2010, pp. 126–127).

Borrowings such as *sempaadu*, *mudali*, and *Thevar maamaa* carry ideological



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significance of MR as Fairclough (1989) suggested. They index collective notions of ownership of land, knowledge, and 'pure' culture, which are linked to caste and class identity (Thiruvarangan, 2012, p.131). The use of traditional dress terms such as *verti* further localises the social identity.

We see the community's voice against injustice emerging from two primary social bases of power: wealth and education. The language of resistance in these instances is couched in an ideology of ownership (Thiruvarangan, 2012), which further reveals the indexical value of the community through Tamil lexical borrowings such as *mudali*⁵ and *kanji*⁶, each carrying distinct social meanings in context; while *mudali* connotes affluence and dominance, *kanji* (porridge) denotes simplicity, ritual, and community.

In the novel, borrowings from Tamil are identified as interjections such as *thoo, thoo*, and *aiyo, aiyo*, revealing disgust and distress respectively in the discourse portray strong expressive values related to the cultural familiarity in the absence of a glossary. These interjections carry indexical values of the Jaffna Tamil community. The borrowings, such as *vellai*, fair complexioned, and *kuddian*, the youngest small person in the novel,

express the physical features of the characters, which add uniqueness⁷ to the characterizations.

Norman Fairclough's (1989) framework on lexicalization concerning synonymy expresses ideological expression in borrowings such as *aandavaa, thayee*, and *raama*, which appear in 11.5% of occurrences as near-synonyms for addressing or referring to God. The religious connotations indirectly reveal the functional dimension of the context. Although these terms do not share identical meanings, they operate within a shared semantic field to express supplication. This functional synonymy underscores the cultural and religious connotations in the Tamil context, where context and usage define the relational and emotive dimensions of these expressions.

The domain of science, as categorized by Strevens (1989), consists of borrowing *sombu* (water vessel) from household terms with the frequency of seven. The borrowing *sombu* is identified as a unique borrowing in the novel, which is uncommon in English usage. The borrowing carries the community's embedded identity, and offering water in *sombu* symbolizes a traditional act of hospitality and respect. The conversation in the novel

⁵ *Mudali* is known as the clipping of the term *adalali*- business owner.

⁶ *Kanji*, the term used to indicate rice porridge made in a traditional way in Tamil cuisine which has similar connotation to *congee* in Chinese cuisine.

⁷ *Vellai, vellaian* are from Tamil naming tradition based on social hierarchy, similar to *kaddaiyan* and *neddaiyan*, while *kuddian* is derived from the Tamil word *kuddy*. The honorific suffixes *-ar* and *-an* reflect the hierarchical order.



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between Thevar and Sivan: "Whatever it is, we are one people, aren't we?" Sivan's remarks (Santhan, 2010, p.120) provide belonging and integrity, while Gopalan from IPKF offered water in a *sombu*. The driver Gopalan's later revelation of his Malayalee identity, made while handing over the *sombu*, captures the anxiety and identity tensions brought about by the political unrest of the period.

Architectural terms such as *kovil*, meaning temple, and *gopuram*, tower of the temple, which contribute nearly 14% of the data set, and these borrowings give unique Tamil architecture under the semantic domain of science. Household objects like *aduppu*, meaning hearth, and *sombu*, a vessel used for giving water, accounting for 6% of borrowings, illustrate how Tamil domestic tools have been practically incorporated into English usage. Literature-related borrowings, especially the names of the books such as *Ramayanam*, *Ambulimama*, writers (*Valluvar*), and characters (*Chera*, *Chola*, *Pandiyar*), mark a very low level of contribution of the data with less than 2%. According to the data set, Tamil lexical borrowings in English predominantly appear in culturally significant domains such as family and religion.

As far as the pure loans are concerned, they are fully assimilated in phonology in instances such as partial or no phonemic assimilation (Haugen, 1953), as seen in words like *Rama* (from

Raman), *Sita* (from *Sitai*), *Yama* (from *Yaman*), and *Ramayana* (from *Ramayanam*). These examples demonstrate varying degrees of adaptation, where the original phonetic and morphological structures are either preserved or slightly modified to fit the phonological norms of Tamil. Similarly, in names such as *mammootty* (from *manvetty*), phonemic structure is transformed by Tamil phonology. This partial assimilation points out how linguistic borrowing maintains cultural identity while adapting to the borrowing language's phonetic patterns. Such borrowings bring social contexts and emphasize the socio-cultural identity of particular social groups.

The second category of borrowing is introduced in the following section.

Loan Blends and Ideological Implications

The Table 2 shows the frequency of loan blends that are formed by morphosyntactic integration. Using Haugen's framework (1950, p.53), borrowings are categorized as loan blends based on their hybridization as importation or partial substitution. Unlike pure loans, loan blends reflect active adaptation processes and display a unique interplay between Tamil linguistic forms and English grammatical conventions.



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Table 2. Loan Blends

Assumptions	Codes for Conceptual Content Analysis	Absolute Frequency	Relative frequency	Percentage *FO= 100%*nN [FO=100%*10]
Philosophy and Religion	Gods, Goddess	4	4	13%
	Rituals	2	6	6%
	Hymns	2	8	6%
Concept of nature	Flora	5	13	15%
	Natural Objects	1	14	3%
Notions of government	Kinship terms	1	15	3%
Concepts of Science	Culinary	2	17	6%
	Building	4	21	13%
	Household items	1	22	3%
Literature	Agricultural tools	2	24	6%
	Infrastructure	4	28	13%
	Characters	4	32	13%

According to the analysis, the religious terms such as God *Murugan*, *Almighty Amman*, and *Lord Ramaa* contribute 13% of the date implying that the Tamil devotional borrowings are modified with English honorific terms. The religious terminology from the semantic field of philosophy and religion expresses the communal identity in the form of loan blends. According to Rajashanthan (2016) and Velautham (2000), this process is identified as linguistic pollination, where the global language is influenced by the native terms. The ritualistic expressions, such as *thoondaamani lamp*

and *melam troops*, compromising 6% of the data, are identified as loan blends which reveal the the indexical value of the Tamil community.

The semantic domain of nature consists of the highest number of loan blends (15%) with Tamil flora and fauna in English discourse. These borrowings help to portray a naturalistic picture to the audience with the authentic nature of the landscape. The study identifies the following loan blends based on morphosyntactic structure.

1. Blended Derivatives

Tamil root words are added with English morphological suffixes, resulted as blend derivatives. Pluralization is the common feature of this process (Tamil N + English suffix). *Thevarams* (plural of *Thevaram*, devotional hymns) are formed by appending the English plural marker */-s/* to the Tamil base. Likewise, *Mammoties* (plural of *mammoty*, a type of hoe) demonstrates the use of English plural formation by replacing */-y/* with */-ies/*.

These examples indicate how Tamil root words are syntactically accommodated within the morphological structure of English, reflecting lexical integration through grammatical adaptation.

2. Hybrid Compounds

In Loan blends, Tamil and English words join together in forming



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compound nouns with the following four structural patterns.

- Tamil noun + English noun (head)
Eg: *Pillaiyar temple*
Here, *Pillaiyar*(God) modifies the English head noun *temple*, combining native religious ideology with the global significance of religious architecture. (See: Table 3)
- English noun + Tamil noun (head)
Eg: *Goddess Amman*
The English title *Goddess* acts as a modifier for the Hindu deity *Amman*. (See: Table 4)
- English adjective + Tamil noun
Eg: *Towering gopuram*
Here, the English adjective *towering* modifies *gopuram* (temple tower), with a religious image and Hindu architecture. (See: Table 5)
- Tamil adjective + English noun
Eg: *Thoondaamani lamp*
The Tamil adjective *thoondaamani* (referring to a particular type of lamp used in temple poojas) qualifies the English noun *lamp* in this loan blend. (See: Table 6)

Table 3. Loan blends- Tamil N+ English N

Tamil noun	English noun as head	Hybrid phrase	Meaning
<i>cholakam</i>	Wind	<i>Cholakam</i> wind	A type of North wind in SL
<i>vadali</i>	grooves	<i>Vadali</i> grooves	Palm grooves
<i>melam</i>	troops	<i>Melam</i> troops	Group of

<i>aal</i>	Tree	<i>Aal</i> tree	drummers
<i>Varathanara yani</i>	Tree	<i>Varathanara yani</i> tree	Banya n Tree A tree defined with Delonix elata
<i>ambulimam a</i>	Man	<i>Ambulimam a</i> man	A character from Tamil children literature
<i>thinnai</i>	Style	<i>Thinnai</i> style	A raised platform or higher pillar-like structure
			Typically located at the front of a traditional Tamil house

These compound structures illustrate the bidirectional nature of borrowing (Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002), where English syntax accommodates Tamil semantics, and Tamil lexicon finds expression within English morphological conventions. The integration of local culture through borrowings in the global language expression emphasizes Fairclough's



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(1989) assertion that vocabulary carries experiential, relational, and expressive values. In this regard, loan blends both transmits cultural information and locate text ideologically within the Tamil worldview.

Table 4. Loan blends- English N+Tamil N

English noun	Tamil noun as head	Hybrid	Meaning
Almighty	Amman	Almighty Amman	Almighty goddess
Almighty	Vairavar	Almighty Vairavar	Almighty god
Lord	Rama	Lord Rama	God Vishnu's incarnation, hero of Indian epic <i>Ramayanam</i>
King	Raavanan	King Raavanan	King of Lanka- anti-hero of Indian epic <i>Ramayanam</i>
God	Murugan	God Murugan	A prominent Hindu God known for war, victory

In addition to the structural patterns already discussed, loan blends such as *big anna* (3%) and *extra rotti* (6%) illustrate how Tamil familial and culinary lexicons are adapted with English modifiers to express culturally elevated concepts. These items fall under the semantic domain, notions of government, and reflect the connection between social, familial, and institutional structures in the Jaffna Tamil context.

Table 5. English Adj. +Tamil N

English adjective	Tamil nouns as head	Hybrid	Meaning
heavy	<i>cholakam</i>	Heavy <i>cholakam</i>	SW monsoonal wind in SL
grand	<i>pongal</i>	Grand <i>pongal</i>	Offering cooked milk rice to God
spacio us	<i>panthal</i>	Spaciou s <i>panthal</i>	Canopy
tall	<i>vilathi</i>	Tall <i>vilathi</i>	Wood apple tree
toweri ng	<i>gopuram</i>	Towerin g <i>gopuram</i>	Temple tower
big	<i>anna</i>	Big <i>anna</i>	Elder brother
extra	<i>rotti</i>	Extra <i>rotti</i>	Extra Food (flat round bread made of wheat flour)
rotten	<i>chapathis</i>	Rotten <i>chapathis</i>	Rotten Food (flat round bread made of atta flour, a type of rotti)

Loan blends in the domain of government under the category of geographical places contribute 13%, with terms such as *Arasady Junction* and *Puliyady Lane*. These compound toponyms illustrate how the novel localises the narrative space through culturally significant ecological features. *Arasady* junction derives from the Tamil *arasu* (peepal tree, *Ficus religiosa*) and *ady* (proximity), referring to a crossroads near a sacred peepal tree. In the Tamil context, the huge trees often function as communal spaces for meetings, religious rituals, and social gatherings in the villages, and change



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the location into an icon of cultural identity and a reflection of communal life. Likewise, *Puliyady* lane, from *puli* (tamarind) and *adi* (nearby), also reflects a traditional way of naming places and natural landmarks that become the defining communal spaces. Tamarind and Peepal trees are significant in Tamil traditions.

Table 6. Tamil Adj. + English N

Tamil adjectiv e	Englis h nouns as head	Hybrid	Meaning
<i>Thoonda mani</i>	lamp	<i>Thoondama ni</i> lamp	A kind of lamp
<i>puliyadi</i>	lane	<i>Puliyadi lane</i>	A lane near tamarind tree
<i>maruthu</i>	tree	<i>Maruthu tree</i>	The large-girthed tree of rich foliage
<i>mathava dy</i>	road	<i>Mathavady road</i>	A road near conduit
<i>arasady</i>	junction	<i>Arasady junction</i>	A junction near peepal tree
<i>Naatsaar</i>	House	<i>Naatsaar house</i>	Traditional architectural house with open central courtyard surrounded by a closed structure on all four sides.

The loan blends from the domain of science under the category of buildings/places have Architectural blends such as *thinnai-style* and *towering gopuram*. These borrowings reveal the way the Tamil traditional architecture emerges through a globally accepted form. The term *thinnai* refers to a raised verandah in traditional Tamil homes, often used for receiving guests, and becomes a cultural marker of hospitality and social interaction. Towering *gopuram* blends an English adjective with the Tamil term for temple tower, enriching culture.

Terms like *silver sombu* with 3% of total data set, is an example of Tamil household term with English qualifiers. *Sombu*, a traditional water vessel used in domestic and ritual contexts, receives connotations when modified with "silver," signifying wealth, ritual purity, and hospitality norms in Tamil society.

The borrowings such as such as *mammoties* with 6%, derived from *mammoty*, related to an agricultural tool in the domain of science explain the adaptation of Tamil rural lexicon into English. Moreover, the inclusion of literary and mythological figures such as *Lord Rama* and *King Ravan*, constituting 13% of the data set, with English titles and Tamilised Sanskrit names, describes the cultural depth and religion connotations in global conversation.



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The ideological implications of loan blends are further evident in terms borrowed from Indian languages such as Hindi and Punjabi, which reflect the socio-political landscape of the novel's historical setting. Borrowings such as *jawans*, *Gurkhas*, *achcha*, and *chalo* capture the power dynamics between the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) and the Jaffna Tamil community during the late 1980s. According to Thiruvarangan (2012), these terms reveal a stratified social hierarchy where the armed Indian soldiers, though wielding physical power, are depicted as socio-economically inferior to the middle-class Vellala Tamil professionals and agriculturalists. These linguistic representations reinforce the class and cultural superiority perceived by the local community, while also illustrating the resistance narrative embedded in the Tamil identity.

The blending of Tamil and English lexical elements in derivative and compound forms reflects linguistic adaptation and cultural integration. Blended derivatives exemplify morphological assimilation, and Tamil roots conform to English grammatical structures (e.g., plural forms). Hybrid compounds maintain syntactic and semantic distinctiveness by preserving culturally specific references with ideological implications.

Loan translation and their ideological implications

In the category of loan translations, the writer directly translates Tamil cultural thought patterns and perceptions into English, and preserves semantic and ideology by adapting them to the English lexicon. Terms (1) and (2) in this category reveal religious presuppositions, while terms (3), (4), (5), and (6), which occur with the highest frequency, are associated with the notion of government (Table 7). These borrowings reflect the linguistic creativity.

Table 7. Loan Translation

Codes for CCA	Loan translation	Absolute Frequency	Relative frequency	Percentage
1.	Holy ash	1	1	5%
Philosophy and religion-rituals				
2.	Noon	1	2	5%
Philosophy and religion-rituals	pooja ⁸			
	bells			
3.	Front	2	4	10%
Government - people	house			
4.	This/that/	6	10	30%
Govern	Northern			
	/			

⁸ Pooja, originally a Sanskrit word referring to a religious ritual or offering, has been Tamilised

through phonological and cultural adaptation, becoming an integral part of Tamil spiritual vocabulary- *poosai*.



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ment - people	innocent/ Naagu Chap ⁹				
5. Govern	Noon meals	2 3	12 15	10% 15%	
ment- food	Plain water/tea /rice				
6. Govern	Red cent	1	16	10%	
ment- Econom					
7. Science- Buildin	Cadjan shed	2	18	10%	
g					
8. Society'	Funeral house	1	19	5%	
s					
ultimate myths/ superstitions					

The data set reflects that a very small number of loan translations are utilized by the author in the novel. The loan translations with religious connotations reveal the Tamil community's reflections on Hindu philosophy, and the terms related to the government domain express socio-political realities specific to the Jaffna Tamil context. These translations reflect cultural transfer with socio-political ideology, which meaningfully contribute to the evolution of the local variety of English.

In comparison to pure loans and loan blends, the frequency of occurrence for

⁹ Chap, in British English means "guy" or "person," which has a significant shift in meaning when used in Tamil contexts. Chap becomes a translation for Tamil words like *aal* (person), *inthaa aal* (this

loan translation is relatively lower. But their significance is notable. Loan translations bring functional aspects through equivalence in English for many culturally specific terms with linguistic hybridity, which is the unique characterization of Sri Lankan English (Illankagoon, 2022; Fernando, 2011).

Loan Creation and Ideological Implications

Loan creations in the novel *The Whirlwind* function as a linguistic strategy and as a collective identity marker enabling socio-cultural identity and reality of the Northern part of Sri Lanka.

Table 8. Loan Creation

Codes for CCA	Loan creation	Meaning	Absolute	Relative	Percentage	FO=100%*n/N FO=100%*x/10
Government-war	boys	LTTE	10	10	76%	
Nature-object	cow-dung paste	Cow-dung applied on floors of house s	1	11	8%	
Government-war	Jungle trainee d cadre	LTTE	1	12	8%	

person), *antha aal* (that chap), *vadakkaal* (a person from the north- Northern chap), and *saathuvaana aal* (an innocent chap).



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Govern	makes	The	1	13	8%
ment-	hift	guard			
war	sentry	in the			
	box	sentry			
		chang			
		es			
		freque			
		ntly			

The data show 43 borrowings from languages such as Hindi, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Urdu, Portuguese, and Malay, each used within distinct socio-political contexts (Table 9).

Table 9. Borrowings from Hindi and Other Languages

Word	Word origin & meaning	Assumptions	Absolute.	Relative.	Types of borrowing
Jawan	Hindi-Indian soldier	Govern-ment-war	5	5	Pure loan
Jawan	Hindi-Pl. Soldier s	Govern-ment-war	7	1	Loan blend
				2	
puwa	Hindi-wind	Nature-object	1	1	Pure loan
chalo	Hindi-come	Govern-ment-expressi on (V)	3	1	Pure loan
achch	Punjab i- good	Govern-ment-expressi on	3	1	Pure loan
				9	
Gurk	Sanskrit- Nepal soldier in British army	Govern-ment-war	2	2	Pure loan
ha				1	

Gurk	Sanskrit- Nepal soldier in British army	Govern-ment-war	1	2	Loan blend
Beedi	Hindi- Herbal cigars	Science-	2	2	Pure loan
		Herbal		4	
paani	Hindi-water	Nature-object	2	2	Pure loan
		water		6	
Khaki	Urdu-yellow colour	Govern-ment-attire	2	2	Pure loan
		to indicate		8	
Saron	Malay-male dress	Govern-ment-attire	1	2	Pure loan
g		attire		9	
Shalw	Sanskrit-wome n dress	Govern-ment-attire	1	3	Pure loan
ar		women dress		0	
Veran	Portuguese- a roofed, open-air hallway	Science-buildin g	1	4	Pure loan
dhai		open-air		2	
alava	Portuguese- Crow bar	Science-agricult ure tool	1	4	Pure loan
angu		agriculture tool		3	

Hindi borrowing *jawan* meaning Indian soldier and *Gurkha* meaning Nepalese soldier, with their respective plurals *jawans* and *Gurkhas*, reveal the power dynamic in the military hierarchy. These borrowings are utilized by the writer in the novel to mock the power structure and its domination over the



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Tamil community. The interjections like *chalo* ("come/let's go") and *achcha* ("good/okay") reflect interpersonal dynamics where authority and subordination are linguistically enacted, and these borrowings still exist in the Tamil community.

The borrowing *alavanca* (crowbar in English) is a Portuguese word that adapts Tamil phonology and becomes *alavangu* in Tamil. Though the shift from nasal /n/ to velar nasal /ŋ/ exemplifies Tamil phonological preferences, the core meaning of the word remains. Similar Portuguese borrowing *verandhai* from *veranda* illustrates how Portuguese-origin words are integrated into both Tamil and Sinhala, reflecting shared colonial linguistic legacies (Widyalankara, 2014, p.128).

The loan creations reflect the linguistic adaptation with ideological satire and cultural nuances. They serve not only to localise borrowed terms within Tamil phonological and syntactic norms but also to embed them within narratives of resistance, hierarchy, and communal identity.

CONCLUSION

The linguistic analysis of the novel *The Whirlwind* brings out the four distinctive categories of borrowings, such as pure loan, loan blend, loan creation, and loan translations, which have unique ideological and societal significance. The first category, pure

loans, is regarded as the direct borrowings from the donor language, i.e., Tamil Language, with minimal structural assimilation. These borrowings are culturally rooted and reflect various concepts of the MR, such as religion, philosophy, government, nature, science, and literature. Pure loans are utilized to fill the cultural gap. The kinship borrowings help to build solidarity through social formality, fulfilling the psychological need for emotional expressions. Loan blends with hybridization and morphological adaptation, give distinctive linguistic assimilation in borrowings such as silver *sombu*, *Amman* temple, *mamoties*, and *thevarams*. With grammatical integration, these borrowings also show socio-cultural ideological implications. Loan translations are already identified as a unique type of borrowing which contribute in formation of Sri Lankan English lexicons through the process of translating Tamil words, expressions, and idioms into English. Though the frequency of loan translation is comparatively low in the novel *The Whirlwind*, they display a random Sri Lankan socio-cultural expression with a unique identity. Loan creations, finally, reflect a complex interplay of power, satire, and cultural memory. Through borrowings from Portuguese, Hindi, Sanskrit, and Panjabi, A. Santhan highlights not only historical linguistic influence but also stratification and resistance.

Collectively, the borrowings employed in the novel paint a vivid lexical



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portrait of life in the Jaffna peninsula during the 1980s. The borrowings from Tamil, Hindi, Sanskrit, Portuguese, and Malay in the novel function as linguistic signifiers and connect power dynamics and social identity. The indexical value of the borrowings is celebrated by A. Santhan through a unique Tamil worldview expressed in a global language.

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