

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL SINHALA 'ISA:' AND MODERN SINHALA 'SAHA'/'HA:'

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Introduction

'Saha' and 'ha:' are the particles in modern Sinhala that are used to combine nouns and adjectives. The meaning of 'saha' and 'ha:' is the same and the tradition is employs both to combine more than two words. e.g.: *Velēnda: saha velēndijə bat ha: pa:n vikunəti*. Unlike in modern Sinhala, they have been employed in classical Sinhalese to express the meaning 'with'. They are particles with an Old Indo-Aryan origin (Karunatilake 2012, p. 286, 322). In this research, 'saha' and 'ha:' are considered as particles with the meaning 'and', i.e. as devices of co-ordination. Various graphical representations for 'saha' and 'ha:' can be found in inscriptions of Prakrit Sinhala era and Medieval Sinhala era, namely ca, ce, ica and isa:. Here, attention is paid to 'isa:' in Medieval Sinhala inscriptions. The research is based on the Anuradhapura slab inscription of King Kassapa V, the Mihintale slab inscriptions and the Badulla pillar inscription. The meaning underlying Mediaeval Sinhala 'isa:' and Modern Sinhala 'saha' is the same. Although both of them can be considered as particles expressing the meaning 'and', one can see that they are employed in a different ways. This study examines how these differences can be identified. A clear understanding about Medieval Sinhala 'isa:' and Modern Sinhala 'saha'/'ha:' is expected through the comparative study.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research based on the Anuradhapura slab inscription of King Kassapa V, Mihintale slab inscriptions and Badulla pillar inscription. These inscriptions will be examined for their use of 'isa:'. Their contexts and patterns will be recognized. After that, it will be compared with the use of Modern Sinhala 'saha'/'ha:' and important points will be identified. Through these points, the study will conclude whether the meaning and employment of medieval Sinhala 'isa:' and modern Sinhala 'saha'/'ha:' are the same or different.

Discussion and Results

When examining particular inscriptions, using 'isa:' can be found in several contexts. Sometimes it combines two nouns and these nouns may be in dect case or oblique case. e.g.: *seyi giri veherhi isa: abahayi giri veherhi isa:, gekuli: isa: maṇuvæ:sarə isa:* (Mihintale slab inscriptions). In complex sentences, the particle 'isa:' can be found without a limitation. It may be used to coordinate many subjects and many objects in the same sentence. e.g.: *a:kæmija: isa: veherleja: isa: karanda leja: isa: ... eknaṭ pas kiri: bægin isa:....* (Ibid.). Sometimes it is difficult to understand the meaning in these kinds of contexts. 'Isa:' has been always placed at the end of every word that is combined with it. Apart from nouns, 'isa:' has been employed with gerunds. In this case, graphical representations of gerunds may vary though they have combined with 'isa:', *gas koḷ nokarənu isa: mela:tsi: novadna: isa:, gedad noganna: isa: des nojavanu isa:* (Anuradhapura slab inscription). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that 'isa:' has been used to combine two or more clauses in complex sentences. e.g.: *dadə ganut misæ anija: nokarənu isa: ... tiræ genæ dadə noilvanu isa... piṭat kotə no genæ janu isa....*(Badulla pillar inscription). When examining particular inscriptions, it can be seen that one inscription may consist of two or three sentences. Sometimes more than twenty-five lines have been combined with the particle 'isa:'.

Moving onto the employment of 'saha'/'ha:' in Modern Sinhala, one can clearly see that it is limited to combine two words in the sense of co-ordination. Unlike 'isa:' *saha* is never used more than once. In modern Sinhala, the pattern is to combine words with commas and employ 'saha' before the last word. When combining gerunds, they should be kept in the same form. i.e. *karəru saha balanu piṇisa* instead of *karənu saha bæli:mə piṇisə*. When there are more clauses to combine, 'da', 'isa:' and 'ha:' is mixed in modern Sinhalese. e. g.: *Amma: da mamə da potpat ha: a:ha:rə rægenə pa:saləṭə saha pantijəṭə gijemu*. If 'da', 'ha:' and 'saha' in this sentence are replaced with 'isa:', the result is, **Amma: isa: mamə isa: potpat isa: a:ha:rə isa: rægenə pa:saləṭə isa: pantijəṭə isa: gijemu*. It is difficult to get a proper idea from the sentence.

When comparing these points, 'isa:' can be identified as a particle with various meanings such as 'and', 'furthermore', and 'not only... but also'. Depending on the contexts, the meaning of the particle varies.

Contrastingly, 'saha''ha:.' in modern Sinhala is employed only with the sense 'and'. When comparing the patterns, it could be seen that 'isa:.' has been widely used in several sentence structures more than 'saha''ha:.'.

Conclusion

Considering these facts, it can be understood that medieval Sinhala 'isa:.' is not identical with modern Sinhala 'saha''ha:.' in its use. Though it is considered that 'saha''ha:.' are the results of the development of the particle 'isa:.', differences have occurred with that development. Thus, apart from just identifying modern Sinhala 'saha''ha:.' as the particles developed from Medieval Sinhala 'isa:.', it should be recognized that both particles have their own meanings and uses as pointed out above.

References

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