Different types of usage of the suffix '*hu*' (හු) as a noun case in Sinhala writing

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Suffixes of noun case are special suffixes that are followed by a noun and they can imply singular or plural meanings. After combining these suffixes to the nominal root, it converts to a noun and deserves to be used in a sentence. The suffix 'hu' has been used in different cases since the Anuradhapura era. The main purpose of this research is to find out how the suffix '*hu'* has been used in different cases, its origin and evolution and the way it becomes a plural nominative suffix prior to the art of Sinhala witting. This research is based on literary sources and inscriptions. The suffix 'hu' is hardly used in the cases, except in the nominative case, at present. According to the research, *hu* has been used in different cases including the nominative from the Anuradhapura era to 1936.

Case	Examples	Period
Nominative case	*Tavasarahu dam desat (Subjective)*	Dambadeniya
	Kisivakhu nodæka (objective)	Kurunagala
Accusative case	*Vastuhu shudda vana bævin*	Polonnaruva
Instrumental case	*Maharajhu sat læbu*	Anuradhapura
Dative case	*Veledahuta badu de*	Dambadeniya
Ablative case	*Piyarajahu atin*	Kurunagala
Genitive case	*Maharjhu sohovur*	Anuradhapura

Considering the examples found in Sinhala literature and inscription, '*hu'* suffix has been used with different faces which can be categorized as follows:

As suffix of case

Vastuhu shudda vana bævin

Here, *hu* is isolated and it indicates the meaning of accusative case.

As a helping suffix of case

Rathnakarayakhuge Sri vibuthi abibhavamin

In this sentence, the *hu* suffix has been used as a helping suffix to the suffix '*ge'*

As a helping suffix with proposition

Sunanda nam ajeevakayakhu visin

'*hu'* is used with a preposition in cases like instrumental, ablative and locative.

The suffix 'hu' originated in Anuradhapura era and was frequently used in different cases in inscription. So, it has been used in Sinhala literature up to 1936 in some ways, but after the *Piyasamara,* 'hu' is limited to plural suffix in nominative case. Specially, it can be seen in Gamperaliya written by Martin wickracmasinghe in 1944. The influence of western literature and the use of colloquial language for writing mainly caused the disappearance of it.

Finally, as a conclusion, it can be mentioned that the suffix 'hu,' which starts in the Anuradhapura era has evolved up to date. Although it has been functioned in many cases with different faces from the Anuradhapura era to 1936, at present it is limited to nominative case.