

## From ‘Facebook’ to ‘Bukiya’: Language Change in Facebook among Undergraduates of the University of Vocational Technology

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Language transmits cultural values, norms and beliefs. Media has always influenced the constant change of language. Especially with the rapid change of technology, from internet to smartphones, it has changed the way people communicate. It is said that human communication has become easier and quicker through social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. As long as human communication has become quicker through social networking, language has also changed rapidly. It has contributed to English language by adding words and phrases such as ‘OMG’, ‘LOL’, unfriend, etc. among the users. The aim of the research is to investigate the changes occurred in the language being used in the social media among Sri Lankan users with particular focus on Facebook. Data is collected in snowball sampling technique from the undergraduates of University of Vocational Technology, through six voluntary research agents. They are active users of Facebook and collected data for four months. These voluntary research agents are undergraduates of University of Vocational Technology, Sri Lanka. In collecting data, morphological changes were focused in status updates and comments in Facebook, in Sinhala, Tamil and English among the undergraduates of University of Vocational Technology. Findings were thematically categorized and analyzed. Results shows interesting findings across languages, such as the variations of the same word in Sinhala ‘*supiri*’, ‘*patta*’, ‘*pata pata*’ to ‘*fatta*’ throughout the time, and a similar word for the same in status updates in Tamil ‘*sattapadi*’. Further, according to findings, many morphological changes have occurred with blending and borrowing. However, comments made in English language show a comparative reduction to ‘likes’ and emojis. Findings illustrate the necessity of further research in analysis of discourse across three languages in social media since the language change is rapid, complex and unprecedented.

**Key words:** Social Media, Facebook, Language Change, Undergraduates, Morphology