

Abstract

This thesis, with the title of 'An Exploration of Dependency Grammar for Sinhala Language', discusses the syntactico-semantic relations of Literary Sinhala within the framework of Dependency Grammar (DG). Accordingly, the grammatical features that affect valency, dependency relations of Sinhala was primarily investigated in this research. Although there are different grammar frameworks in Dependency Grammar, only the basics of DG was considered in this analysis and examined the sentences for three main elements of a sentence: i.e., root verb, arguments, and adjuncts. The datasets used for the analysis include a collection of sentences extracted from a text corpus, a list of simple verbs and generated argument structures, and a list of complex predicates and auxiliary verbs collected from several sources. According to the findings of the study, there are 3 grammatical features, namely, volitivity, ergativity, and causativity affects valency of Sinhala sentences. Further, valency is operated for 8 verbal categories in Sinhala which can be identified as verbal heads. Consequently, Sinhala verbs were classified into three classes where the grammatical features affect only for one of these. In addition, the main dependency elements (arguments) were identified for 12 argument groups. All the functional categories identified through the analysis were included into these 12 classes. This study proposes that the Sinhala sentences with simple verbs can be analyzed for 8 valency structures. The findings of this thesis as highlighted in chapters 5, 6, and 7 suggest that the theory of Dependency Grammar is suitable for analyzing free word order languages.

Keywords: Dependency Grammar, Dependency Relations, Predicate-Argument Structure, Sinhala Syntax, Valency Change