

1.18 *Kaduva*?- Creating Affinity Towards English through Judicious Integration of Sinhala

Rohini Chandrika Widyalanlara

English Language Teaching Unit, University of Kelaniya.

ABSTRACT

Kaduva is a double edged lexical item, an antagonistic descriptor for English, which has been in existence within the vocabulary of colloquial Sinhala since the 70s. Some of the key words associated with the lexical item in existing theory and research on *Kaduva* are- elitists, privileged, language of power, social indicator, rural masses, oppression, subjugation, resistance etc. After a dormant period the lexical item is re-emerging within the linguistic repertoire of the undergraduate community of the faculty of Arts.

The paper explores the current sociolinguistic status of the term and discusses whether the usage has undergone a semantic change. The findings of the study are interpreted as reflecting an attitudinal shift which is indicated by the new terminology associated with *Kaduva*. Yet within a minority of undergraduate respondents the former associations are still very much alive. With this attitudinal change in the majority, language planners should maximize the opportunity to provide language teaching mechanisms which not only accelerate learning but also create further affinity towards the language- English. One such mechanism is the judicious integration of Sinhala in teaching English as a second language. Such mechanisms should be able to pave a path towards linguistic socialism- a society where proficiency in a language, English in this instance, should be equally distributed and every individual has the fundamental right for linguistic equality. But this results in a paradoxical situation where according to the current statistics on the proficiency levels in English among the first year undergraduates who have registered for ESL courses in 2007 it seems just linguistic utopia.