

PRONOMINAL SYSTEMS IN TAMIL AND SINHALA¹

M.A.Nuhman

1. Introduction

An attempt is made in this paper to study the pronominal systems in Tamil and Sinhala in order to find out the similarities and differences between them.

There are a number of regional and social dialects existing in both Tamil and Sinhala. However, the Tamil data represent the author's own dialect, the Batticaloa Muslim Tamil which is a socio-regional sub dialect of Sri Lanka Tamil. The Sinhala data represent the Colombo Dialect of Sinhala.

2. Pronouns

Pronouns differ from nouns in their syntactic function. They can be either deictic or anaphoric. In their deictic function they can refer to the speaker, hearer or the person or things other than the participants of the discourse. In their anaphoric function they can replace a noun Phrase (NP) which can be the antecedent of the pronoun.

2.1 Sub-Categories of Pronoun

The pronouns in both Tamil and Sinhala are sub-categorized into two major sub-groups viz. personal pronouns and non-personal pronouns.

2.2. Personal Pronouns

The personal pronouns are classified further into three sub-groups viz. first person, second person and third person pronouns.

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The pronouns that denote the speaker and the hearer of the discourse are referred to as first and second person respectively. The pronouns that denote the non-participants of the discourse are referred to as third person.

2.3 First person pronouns

First person pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala are further sub-categorized into singular and plural and the plural in Tamil into inclusive and exclusive. The Table-I shows the first person pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala.

Table -1

First person	Tamil	Sinhala
Singular	naan	mamə mañ
Plural	Inclusive naama ²	api
	Exclusive naanka ²	

naan is the only first person singular pronoun in Tamil. In Sinhala, there are two forms mamə and mañ and they are free variants in the subject position.

(1.S) mamə yanəva

(1.Sa) mañ yanəva

(1.T) naan pooran

I going
'I am going'

The oblique stem of naan is en- and mamə/mañ has two variants maa- and ma- for case inflection.

Case	Tamil	Sinhala
Nominative	naan	mamə/mañ
Accusative	enna	maavə

² The final /ɪ/ of the first and second person pronoun and the third person honorific and plural pronouns is retained only when they take suffixes.

Dative	enakku	maṭə
Genitive	enta	mage
Instrumental	ennaala	magen

Tamil maintains inclusive and exclusive distinction in the first person plural pronouns which is totally absent in Sinhala. Thus, api is the only equivalent for the two different pronominal forms naama and naanka in Tamil. The oblique stems of these pronouns are namma and enka respectively and the Sinhala counterpart api has no variant. Consider the following examples.

- (2.T) nammajukku kaacu veenṭum
we (Incl.) Dat money want
'We (Incl.) want money'
- (3.T) enkajukku kaacu veenṭum
we (Excl.)Dat money want
'We(Excl.)want money'
- (2/ 3.S) apitə salli oonə
we Dat money want
'We want money'

The inclusive and exclusive distinction in Tamil is syntactically insignificant, regarding the verbal endings. Consider the following examples.

- (4.T) naanka koḷumpukku poovam
We (Excl) Colombo-Dat will go
'We (Excl) will go to Colombo'
- (5.T) naama koḷumpukku poovam
we (Incl) Colombo-Dat will go
'We (Incl) will go to Colombo'

2.4 Second Person Pronouns

The second person pronouns in both Tamil and Sinhala are sub-categorized into singular and plural and the second person singular pronouns in Tamil are further sub-categorized into honorific and non-honorific whereas in Sinhala both singular and plural pronouns are sub-categorized into honorific and non-honorific. In Tamil, there is no honorific distinction in the second person plural pronoun.

In Sinhala, unlike in Tamil, we find four levels of honorificness in the second person pronouns. The second person honorific and non-honorific pronouns in Sinhala are further sub-categorized into two levels viz. honorific-I and honorific-II and non-honorific-I and non honorific-II. The second person pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala are given in the Table 2 for comparison.

Table - 2

		+ Singular				- Singular			
		-Honorific		+ Honorific		-Honorific		+ Honorific	
		I	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
S	uṁbə			obə		uṁbəla		obəla	
	tamuse	too		obətumaa	oyaa	tamuse	topi	obətumaala	oyaala
				obətumii	ohee			obətumiila	oheela
				obəvahanse				obəvahansela	
				tamunnaanse				tamunnaansela	
T	nii	niinka!							

In Tamil, we find only two distinct forms of second person pronouns in which the form niinka is homo-phonous and denotes both the second person singular honorific and plural. In contrast to this in Sinhala we find a number of forms and the use of these forms is socially determined.

The Forms specified by the feature [+Honorific-I] are used to address the highly respectable person in the social hierarchy and they are not frequently used. The plural form tamunnaansela is generally used to address the gatherings in a public meeting. The forms obatumii and obatumiila are feminine and others are masculine.

The pronouns specified by the feature [+Honorific-II] are used to address equals and others towards whom the speaker has or likes to express respect. The forms ohee and oheela are generally used among elderly persons and strangers.

The pronouns specified by the feature [-Honorific-I] are generally used to address subordinates or inferiors by superiors. They are also mutually used among friends. The forms tamuse and tamusela are generally restricted to males.

The pronouns specified by the feature [-Honorific-II] are used to address those who are at the lowest level of social hierarchy and to abuse someone. They express the disrespect of the speaker towards the hearer. Hence, they can be considered as derogatory forms.

We find these socio linguistic variations of the second person pronominal forms also in syntax in a restricted manner. As D.M.Wickramasinghe [A Study in the Syntax and Phonology of Modern Colloquial Sinhalese. [Unpubl. Ph.D.diss.(1973) pp. 115-116] points out, "these variations are mainly limited to the imperative form of the verbals". For example, the verb kanava 'eat' has the following four different imperative forms.³

kanuməṇṇəvi	-	[+ Honorific - I]
kannə	-	[+ Honorific - II]
kaapan	-	[- Honorific - I]
kaapiyə	-	[- Honorific - II]

³ Not all the verbs in Sinhala have these four distinct forms. Some of them have three. The form kanuməṇṇəvi is restricted to literary usage. In the spoken dialect the pronominal form obavahanse co-occurs with the verbal form kannə; hence (6.S) is literary.

The following sentences show the co-occurrences of these verbs with the appropriate pronominal forms.

- (6.S) obəwahanse kanuməɳɳvi
'Lord, please have your meals'
- (7.S) oyaa kannə
'You eat Please'
- (8.S) umbə kaapan
'You eat'
- (9.S) too Kaapiyə
'You eat'

In Tamil, unlike in Sinhala only the singular pronominal forms show honorific and non-honorific distinction and Tamil maintains only two levels of honorificness in contrast to the Sinhala four levels. However, the honorific and plural forms in Tamil behave alike in Syntax. The verbs take -iinka(1) ending for subject predicate agreement and -nka ending for imperative. See the following examples.

- (10.T) nii eppa poonaay
You (Sg.N.Ho) when went
'When did you go'
- (11.T) niinka eppa poon-iinka
You (Sg.Hon) when went
'When did you go?'
- (12.T) niinka eppa poon-iinka
You (Pl) when went
'When did you go?'
- (13.T) nii naalaykku poo
You (Sg.N.Ho) tomorrow go
'You go tomorrow'
- (14.T) niinka naalaykku poo-nka
You (Sg.Ho.) tomorrow go
'You (Sg.Ho) go tomorrow'
- (15.T) niinka naalaykku poo-nka
You (pl) tomorrow go
'You (pl) go tomorrow'

In Sinhala, we find gender distinction in some second person pronouns. The forms obə tumaə and obə tumaala are masculine and obə tumii and obə tumiila are feminine. But in Tamil gender distinction is totally absent in the second person.

2.5 Third person pronouns

The third person pronouns are demonstrative in both Tamil and Sinhala and they are derived from the demonstrative bases. In Tamil, the third person pronouns show two way deictic distinction, namely proximate and remote while in Sinhala they show three way distinctions, namely proximate, remote-I and remote-II. The remote-I pronouns refer to those away from the speaker, but near to the hearer and the remote-II pronouns refer to those away from both the speaker and hearer.

The third person pronouns in both Tamil and Sinhala are further sub-categorised by the features [\pm Singular],[\pm Human] [\pm Masculine],[\pm Honorific]. In addition to these in Sinhala these pronouns are further specified by the feature [\pm Animate]. The Tables 3 and 4 show the third person pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala respectively.

Table 3

Third person pronouns in Tamil

			+ Proximate		- Proximate	
			+ Sing	- Sing	+ Sing	- Sing
- Hon		+ Masc	ivan	ivanuka _l	avan	avanuka _l
		- Masc	iva _l	ivaluka _l	ava _l	ava _l luka _l
+ Hon	I	\pm Masc	ivanka _l / ivaka _l	-	avanka _l / avaka _l	-
		II	+ Masc	ivar	ivanka _l ivaka _l	avar
	- Masc		iva	ava		
- Human			itu	ituka _l	atu	atuka _l

Table 4

				+ Proximate		-Proximate-I		-Proximate-II		
				+ Singular	-Singular	+ Singular	-Singular	+ Singular	-Singular	
+ Animate	+ Human	+ Honorific	I	+ Masc	munnæhe metumaa	munnæhæla metumaala			unnæhe etumaa	unnæhæla etumaala
				-Masc	metumii	metumiila			etumii	etumiila
		II	± Masc	meyaa	meyaala	oyaa	oyaala	eyaa	eyaala	
	- Human	- Honorific -fic		+ Masc	meeka muu	mevun mun	ooka uu	ovun un	eeka aruu	evun arun
				-Masc	meeki	meekila	ooki	ookila	eeki	eekila
	-Animate				meekə	meeva	ookə	oova	eekə	eeva

In Tamil, there is no one to one equivalent for the remote-I pronouns in Sinhala⁴. The remote pronoun in Tamil may be considered as the equivalents of both the remote-I and remote-II pronouns in Sinhala as shown in the Table 5.

Table 5

	Proximate	Remote-I	Remote - II
Sinhala	meeə	ookə	eekə/ arəkə
Tamil	itu	atu	

In Tamil, the third person pronouns show human and non-human distinction while in Sinhala they show human, non-human animate and inanimate distinction. The non-human animate pronouns are totally absent in Tamil. This is another important distinction between the pronominal systems in Tamil and Sinhala.

The non-human animate and inanimate pronouns in Sinhala can be represented by a single non-human pronoun in Tamil as shown in the Table 6.

Table 6

	Sinhala	Tamil
Human	meyaa	ivar
Non-human animate	meeə	itu
Inanimate	meeə	

⁴ In the Jaffna dialect of Tamil we find the remote-I category of pronouns uvan [+Hum, + Masc], uva [+Hum, -Masc], utu [-hum], etc. which can be considered as one to one equivalent for the Sinhala remote-I pronouns.

The Sinhala third person pronouns maintain three levels of honorificness unlike the second person pronouns. The forms metumaa, metumii, munna, etc. are used to refer to highly respectable people in the social hierarchy and are specified by the feature [+Honorific-I]. The meyaa set of the pronouns are used to refer to equals, friends, and also inferiors with respect. They are the polite form and specified by the feature [+Honorific-II]. The non-human animate pronouns uu, muu, eeka, eeki, etc. are also used to refer to human with the implication of disrespect.⁵ Hence, they are considered as the derogatory forms of the third person pronouns and are specified by the feature [-Honorific].

In Tamil also the third person pronouns show three levels of Honorific distinction, that is Honorific-I, Honorific-II and non-Honorific. The pronouns ivan, iva, avan, ava, etc. are non-honorific forms in Tamil and they are also used to refer to equals and friends. The pronouns ivar, iva, avar and ava are the honorific-II forms and are used to refer to a person with respect. The forms ivanka, ivaka and avanka, avaka are also used as a singular high honorific to refer to highly respectable persons like father, mother, husband, teacher, etc. and it depends on the affection and the attitudes of the speaker towards the referent. They are specified as Honorific-I.

In Sinhala the meyaa set of the third person polite forms are used to refer to both male and female without showing gender distinction while Tamil has separate forms for masculine and feminine. The Tamil equivalents of the Sinhala forms are given in the Table 7.

Table 7

	Tamil	Sinhala
Masculine	ivar	meyaa
Feminine	ava	
Masculine	avar	eyaa oyaa araya
Feminine	ava	

⁵ J.W.Gair *Colloquial Sinhala Clause Structures*, Mouton, The Hague (1970) p.32 terms these forms as 'animal-derogatory'.

2.6 The use of Personal Pronouns

In Sinhala we can observe a tendency to avoid the second person pronouns to address an elderly person, a superior or a stranger. Instead a Sinhala native speaker tends to use a kinship term, a proper noun, a proper noun plus a kinship term or a common noun as an address term. This peculiar linguistic behaviour is to avoid the problems of selecting a proper second person pronoun suitable to the honorific level of the addressee.

See the following example:

maama/sunil/sunil ayya/mahataya kohedaya yanne,
'Uncle, Sunil, Sunil brother, Sir, where you going
'Uncle/Sunil/Brother Sunil/Sir, where are you going?'

In Tamil the translation equivalent of the above sentence would be as follows:

maamaa/sunil/sunil anne/ayya(niinka) enka pooriinka
'uncle, Sunil, sunil brother, Sir where (you) going
Uncle Sunil, Brother Sunil, Sir, where are you going'

Although in Tamil the second person pronoun niinka 'you' is optional in this context (as it is given within brackets) the personal ending -iinka which denotes the second person in the verb is obligatory. While the Sinhala finite verbs do not take personal ending, the Tamil verbs always take a person, number and gender (PNG) marker obligatorily.

2.6 Non-Personal Pronouns

In both Tamil and Sinhala the non-personal pronouns can be further sub-categorized into four sub-groups.

- (1) Anaphoric pronouns
- (2) Interrogative pronouns
- (3) Indefinite pronouns
- (4) Universal pronouns

2.6.1 Anaphoric Pronouns

Anaphoric pronouns are those pronouns which have antecedents.

In Tamil, the pronominal forms taan and taankaḷ which are singular and plural respectively are used exclusively as anaphoric pronouns. They are human and common for both masculine and feminine. Consider the following sentences.

- (16.T) avan taanum poorataa connaan
 he he-also going-Adv said
 'He said that he was also going'
- (17.T) aval taanum poorataa connaal
 she she-also going-Adv said
 'She said that she was also going'
- (18.T) avanka taankaḷum poorataa connaaka
 they they-also going-Adv said
 'They said that they were also going'

taan in (16.T) and (17.T) refers to the subject NPs avan and aval of the matrix sentences and taankaḷ in (18.T) refers to the subject NP avanka of the matrix sentence.

Similar to this in Sinhala we find the pronominal forms tamun / taman which do not show number and gender distinction and are exclusively used as anaphoric pronouns. Consider the following sentences:

- (19.S) arə lamay tamunge pantivaləḷə giyaa
 those boys their classes-Dat went
 'Those boys went to their classes'
- (20.S) taatta tamunge saukyayḷḷəḷə hituve nəḷḷə
 father his health about thought Neg
 'Father did not care about his health'

tamun in (19.S) and (20.S) refers to the subject NPs lamay and taatta respectively.

The third person remote pronouns are also used as anaphoric pronouns in both Tamil and Sinhala as shown in the following examples.

- (21.T) maamaa avar-ra peenaya enakku tantaar
- (21.S) maama eyaa-ge p^una ma^u dunna
uncle his pen-Acc I-Dat gave
'Uncle gave me his pen'
- (22.T) naan oru pottakam vaaciccan. atu nallatu
- (22.S) mamə potak kiyevva eeke hoñday
I a book read it good

'I read a book. It is good'

In the above sentences the remote pronouns avar 'he' and 'atu 'it' in Tamil and the remote-II pronouns eyaa 'he' and eeke 'it' in Sinhala refer to the antecedents maamaa 'uncle' and pottakam 'book' in Tamil and maama 'uncle' and potə 'book' in Sinhala respectively.

2.6.2. Interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns in Tamil except aar 'who' are derived from the interrogative base e- and they are specified by the features [\pm Human] and [\pm Masculine]. Some of the interrogative pronouns are given below.

<u>Human</u>		<u>Non-Human</u>	
aar	'who'	etu	'which'
evan	'who-he'	enna	'what'
eval	'who-she'	ettina	'how many'
		evalavu	'how much'

The interrogative pronouns in Sinhala are derived from the interrogative bases mo- and k- and they are further specified by the features [\pm Animate] and [\pm Human]. The following are some of the interrogative pronouns in Sinhala.

<u>Human</u>	<u>Non-Human</u> <u>animate</u>	<u>Inanimate</u>
Kavuru...də	kooka...də	kookə...də
'who'	'which'	'which'
kiidenek...də	mokaa...də	mokak...də
'How many people'	'what; kiidenek...də	'what'
	'how many'	kiiyak...də
		'how many'

In Sinhala, unlike in Tamil the suffix -də always occurs as a part of the interrogative. The case suffixes always occur in between the interrogative base and the suffix -də. For example, the pronoun kavuru..də has the oblique form kaa..də and the following case forms.

Nominative	-	Kavuru..də (kavudə)
Accusative	-	kaa-və -də
Dative	-	kaa-tə -də
Genitive	-	kaa-ge -də
Instrumental	-	kaa-gen-də

Consider the following Sinhala sentences in which the suffix -də occurs continuously in(S) and discontinuously in (Sa).

- (23.S) kavudə bat kanne
 who rice eating
- (23.Sa) kavuru bat kanəvaadə
 who rice eating -də
 'who is eating rice?'
- (24.S) oyaatə pot kiiykdə oonə
 You -Dat book how many want
- (24.Sa) oyaatə pot kiiyak oonədə
 You-Dat book how many want -də
 'How many books do you want?'
- (25.S) Lamay kiidenekdə aave
 boys how many came
- (25.Sa) Lamay kiidenek aavaadə
 boys how many came-də
 'How many boys came?'
- (26.S) mee potə kaagedə
 this book whose
- (26.Sa) mee kaage potədə
 this whose book-də
 'Whose book is this?'

In the above examples the (S) sentences are emphatic and the (Sa) sentences are non-emphatic. In the emphatic sentences the suffix *-də* continuously occurs with the interrogatives and in the non emphatic sentences the suffix occurs with the predicates whether verbal as in (23.Sa)-(25.Sa) or nominal as in (26.Sa). In the emphatic sentences as in (23.S) and (25.S) the verbs are in their emphatic forms. However, the model verbs as in (24.S) do not under go any change.

The absence of the non-human animate forms in Tamil which are found in Sinhala is another distinction between the interrogative pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala. Hence, there is no one to one equivalent in Tamil for the non-human animate forms in Sinhala. The non-human forms in Tamil can be the equivalent of the both the forms in Sinhala as shown in the Table 8:

Table 8

	Sinhala	Tamil
Non-human animate	kooka..də	etu
Inanimate	kookə..də	

Consider the following sentences

(27.S) Kookadə oyaatə oonə
which one (+ Ani) you-Dat want

(28.S) Kookədə oyaatə oonə
which one (-Ani) you-Dat want

(27/28.T) etu onkaḷukku veeṇum
which one (± Ani) you-Dat want
'Which one do you want?'

In Tamil, we find the masculine and feminine distinction in the human non-honorific interrogative pronouns. Thus, evan is masculine and eval is feminine. But this distinction is not found in Sinhala. However, the human pronoun kavudā in Sinhala is identical in behaviour with aar in Tamil. Both are neutral for number, gender and respect. See the following sentences:

- (29.T) aar anta potṭiyan
 (29.S) kavudā arə kolla
 who that boy
 'Who is that boy?'
 (30.T) aar anta potṭa
 (30.S) kavudā arə kella
 who that girl
 'Who is that girl?'
 (31.T) aar anta aakkal
 (31.S) Kavudā arə minissu
 who those people
 'Who are those people?'

2.6.3. Indefinite pronouns

The indefinite pronouns in both Tamil and Sinhala show more similarities than differences. In both the languages the indefinite pronouns are further classified into specific and non-specific pronouns. There are two types of non-specific indefinite pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala. The pronouns of the first type in Sinhala are phonetically similar to the interrogative pronouns. Their counterparts in Tamil are morphologically formed by adding the non-specific suffix -oo to the interrogative pronouns. The following are non-specific indefinite pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala.

Tamil

aaroo	[+Human]
evanoo	[+Human + Masculine]
evaloo	[+Human, _ Masculine]
eetoo	[-Human]
ennamoo	[-Human]

Sinhala

Kavudə	[+Human]
mokedə	[-Human, + Singular]
mokkudə	[-Human, -Singular]
mokakdə	[-Animate + Singular]
monəvaadə	[-Animate, -Singular]

Consider the following sentences:

(32.T) aaroo vantirukkiraanka

(32.S) Kavudə avilla innəva
someone came be
'Someone has come'

(33.T) avar ennamoo kuṭuttaar

(33.S) eyaa mokakdə dunna
he something gave
'He gave something'

Non specific indefinite pronouns of the second type are formed adding the suffix -aavatu in Tamil and -hari in Sinhala to the interrogatives as given below.

Tamil

aaraavatu	[+Human]
evanaavatu	[+Human, + Masculins]
evaḷaavatu	[+Human, -Masculins]
eetaavatu	[-Human]
ennavaavatu	[-Human]

Sinhala

Kavuruhari	[+Human]
Mokekhari	[-Human]
Mokakhari	[-Animate]
Kookəhari	[-Animate]
Monəvaahari	[-Animate]

They give the meaning 'some one or other' or 'something or other'. etc.
For example.

Consider the following sentences:

- (34.T) naaḷayku aaraavatu varuvaan
(34.S) heṭṭə kavuruhari eṇəva
tomorrow someone or other will come
'Someone or other will come tomorrow'
(35.T) enakku caappiṭa eetaavatu taanka
(35.S) maṭṭə kannə mokkahari dennə
I Dat to eat something or other give
'Give me something or other to eat'

The specific indefinite pronouns in Tamil are derived from the indefinite determiner oru and the nondefinite quantifier cila, pala etc. The Sinhala counterparts are also derived from the non definite quantifier. The following are some of the specific indefinite pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala.

Tamil

oruttar	[+Human, +Honorific]	'Someone', 'a person'
oruttan	[+Human, +Masculine]	'Someone'
orutti	[+Human, Masculine]	'Someone'
cilar	[+Human, -Singular]	'Some People'
cilatu	[-Human, -Singular]	'Somethings'
koncam	[-Human]	'a little/few'

Sinhala

ekkenaa	[+Human, +Singular]	'Someone, a person'
kiipədena	[+Human, -Singular]	'Some people'
kiipəyak	[-Animate, -Singular]	'something'
ṭikak	[-Anumate]	'a little/few'

For example, see the following sentences:

(36.T) naalayku oruttar varuvaar

(36.S) hetə ekkenek enəva
tomorrow someone will come
'Someone will come tomorrow'

(37.T) eeļaykaļukku cilar otavi ceyyiṛaanka

(37.S) duppətuṅṅə kiipədenek udəvu kəṛənəva
poor people-Dat some people help doing
'Some people help the poor'

(38.T) enakkum koncam taanka

(38.S) maṭat tiṅak dennə
I-Dat-too a little give
'Give me also a little'

All the indefinite pronouns whether specific or non specific also have the determiner function in both Tamil and Sinhala as they occur before or after the nominal head in the NP. For example see the following sentences.

(39.T) aaroo oru poṭiyan vantaan
some a boy came

(39.S) kavudə laməyek aava
some boy-a came
'Some boy came'

(40.T) aaraavatu oru poṭiyan varuvan
some a boy will come

(40.S) kavuruhari laməyek enəva
some boy-a will come
'Some boy or other will come'

(41.T) taṅṅi koncam taanka
water a little give

(41.S) vaturə tiṅak dennə
water a little give
'Give a little water'

2.6.4. Universal pronouns

The following are universal pronouns in Tamil:

Human

ovvoruttanum	[+Singular, + Masculine]	'everyone'
ovvoruttiyum	[+Singular, - Masculine]	'everyone'
ovvoruttarum	[+Singular, ± Masculine]	everyone'
ellaarum	[-Singular, ± Masculine]	'all'
cakalarum	[-Singular ± Masculine]	'all'

Non Human

ovvoṇṭum	[+Singular]	'everything'
ellaam	[-Singular]	'all'
muḷutum	[-Singular]	'all'

The following are universal pronouns in Sinhala:

kavurut	[+ Human]	'everyone/all'
hæmoomə	[+ Human]	'everyone/all'
okkomə	[± Animate, ± Human]	'all'
seerəmə	[± Animate, ± Human]	'all'

In Tamil, we find distinct forms of universal pronouns for singular and plural whereas in Sinhala there is no separate form for singular. Thus the Sinhala human pronouns kavurut and hæmoomə are equivalents of the human singular and plural pronouns in Tamil as given in the Table 10.

Table 10

	Singular	Plural
Tamil	ovvoruttanum ovvoruttiyum ovvoruttarum	ellaarum cakalarum
Sinhala	Kavurut, hæmoomə	

Consider the following sentences:

(42.T) ovvoruttarum veela ceeyyaṇum
 everyone work should do
 'Everyone should work'

(43.T) ellaarum veela ceeyyaṇum
 all work should do
 'All should work'

(42/43.S) kavurut වැද්දැරැන්නෑ ඔනෑ
 everyone/all work should do
 'Everyone/all should work'

In Tamil, the human singular pronouns ovvoruttanum and ovvruttiyum show gender distinction, masculine and feminine respectively . But in Sinhala there is no gender distinction in the universal pronouns.

In both Tamil and Sinhala, the universal pronouns also have determiner function as they occur with the nominal heads in the NP.

3. Conclusion

We find several similarities and some significant differences between the Tamil and Sinhala pronominal systems. The differences are as follows:

1. In Tamil the first person plural pronouns show inclusive and exclusive distinction. This is absent in Sinhala.
2. Only two second person pronominal forms are found in Tamil while in Sinhala there are twenty forms with varying degrees of honorificness and some of the second person pronominal forms in Sinhala show gender distinction too which is totally absent in Tamil.
3. The honorific and non-honorific distinctions in the pronominal system in Sinhala is comparatively more rigid and complex than in Tamil.
4. In Tamil the third person pronouns show two way deictic distinction except in Jaffna dialect. But in Sinhala we find a three way deictic distinction.

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5. The third person pronouns in Tamil show human and non-human distinction while the Sinhala counterparts show human, non-human animate and inanimate distinction. The category of non-human animate pronouns is totally absent in Tamil.
 6. The Sinhala native speaker has a tendency to avoid the second person pronouns in addressing elderly person, superiors and strangers due to some socio-linguistic reasons. However, the personal reference is grammatically unavoidable in Tamil at least in the verb.
 7. Tamil verbs obligatorily inflect for person and also for number and gender while the Sinhala verbs do not.
 8. The non-personal pronouns in Tamil and Sinhala show more similarities than differences.