

M

-ma

/-mə/ (Sinhala emphatic ending, also added to English words for emphasis and/or humorous effect) ° *sitting in the front-ma front seat* ° *You must-ma come!*

maaduru

/māduru/ sweet cumin (Sinhala) (> **suduru**)

maama

/māma/ uncle (mother's brother or father's sister's husband) (Sinhala/Tamil) ° *Mahinda maama*

- ◆ "Gnanamma," I whispered, mischievously, contracting Gnanam and *mama* (uncle) into a girl's name, as I used to when I was a boy. (WMD 208)
- ◆ "No, maama," ... (CG 122)
- ◆ How could a little girl play so much magic in the heart of her Maama, ... (KCS 42)

maami

/māmi/ (= **nenda**) aunt (father's sister or mother's brother's wife) (Tamil)

- ◆ "Yes, maamee." (CG 125)
- ◆ "Bala Maama, I came to see Sonia Maamee," ... (CG 333)
- ◆ "... and Niloufer Maami always asks after you." (Z 132)

machaan

/machān/ male cousin or brother-in-law (Tamil) (> **maini**)

- ◆ "Avoid Bullers Road Machaan. Too many check points and I don't have my ID." (Z 138)

machang

/machang/ (coll.) a familiar term of address between close male friends (Sinhala/Tamil; from **machaan**) ° *How machang?* ° *They're on machang terms.*

- ◆ You tell them *machang*, you tell them we must win. (MM 117)
- ◆ "Anil, machan, we will see you later." (FB 71)
- ◆ "*Machang**, Tony, your sister is looking nice these days." (* Sinhala 'brother-in-law' but universally used as a form of friendly address. A sort of acknowledgement that we are all brothers under the skin, perhaps.) (TT 195)
- ◆ "Why should we kill those innocent young fellows, machang, we are no different from them." (OD 11)
- ◆ Why does this fellow who greeted him and called him 'machang' a mere five years ago now behave like this? (OD 14)
- ◆ "Yes machang, ... You have my word." (REP 347)
- ◆ "I've been cutting back on my drinking, *machang*, can't put them back like in the old days." (WE 110)
- ◆ "Cool it machang," ... (FSD 3)
- ◆ "I'll take care of her, machang," ... (GC 307)
- ◆ "I say machang, give us a peep!" (CP 47)
- ◆ "I got very upset in the bus machang." (WCS 11)
- ◆ "Better strap in, *machang*," ... (CU 468)
- ◆ "Never mind *machang*," ... (M&P 296)

mad: are you mad?

(coll.) nonsense! rubbish! → Like 'lies', the word 'mad' is used in a more light-hearted way in SLE than in BSE.

madam

(term of respect, dated in BSE); also used (sometimes ironically) to refer to President Chandrika Kumaratunga (> *sir*) ° *Madam still hasn't turned up!* ° *Madam was very happy with the news.*

maddo

/mædɒ/ (coll.) a crazy person (usually female) ° *She's a real maddo.*

- ◆ "That old maddo will live more than all of us." (YY 19)

made-up saree

a **Kandyan saree** which is cut and tailored to make it easier to wear

madithi

/maditi/ a tree with small bright red seeds similar to **olinda** seeds (Sinhala)

- ◆ Claudia gathered up the crimson seedpods that had fallen from the *madhitchi* tree on the edge of the lawn and I threaded them onto cotton. (HC 83)

maduruwas

/maduruwas/ (coll.) mosquitoes (Sinhala 'maduruwa', plural 'maduruwo') ° *maduru coils*

maekaral

/mækaral/ a type of vegetable, a long green bean (Sinhala)

- ◆ ... slender green beans we called Maakaral, ... (REP 156)

magul bera

/magul bəɾə/ (= *geta bera*) a traditional drum held at the waist and played with both hands (Sinhala)



MAGUL BERA

maha

/maha/ one of the two annual paddy harvests (Sinhala) (> *yala*)

maha gedera

/maha gedərə/ (= *ancestral home*) (Sinhala) (> *walauwa*) ° *All the family had gathered at the maha gedera for the event.*

mahal; mahan

/mahəl, mahən/ daughter; son (Tamil) (> *merlay; mernay*)

- ◆ "Meena, ... I am soaking wet, *mahal*." (WMD 386)

mahanayake

/mahanāyəkə/ a senior Buddhist priest (Sinhala) ° *Malwatte Mahanayake's funeral today* ° *TNA delegation to meet Mahanayakes on Monday*

Mahapola

/mahapɒlə/ a scholarship scheme for university students (Sinhala)

mahappa

/mahappa/ (= *loku thaaththa*) father's elder brother (Sinhala)

mahar

/mahər/ a Muslim marriage payment made by the husband to the bride (Arabic)

Mahasangha

/mahasangə/ (= *Sangha*) the order of Buddhist monks (Sinhala, orig. Sanskrit)

- ◆ "The JVP and the Buddhist priests in the bloody *Mahasanga* are already screaming blue murder, accusing us of betraying the Sinhalese people." (CU 577)

Mahasivarathri

/mahasivərātri/ a Hindu festival (Tamil, also India)

mahatteya

/mahattəya/ master, boss, sir (Sinhala); (coll.) a self-important man (> **nona**) ° *He's acting like a real mahatteya.*

- ◆ I think they thought I was a real city *mahathaya* because when I got my money out, one of the men said he would clean the fish for me. (Reef 124)
- ◆ But then again, it's best that they think he is a pizza delivery boy, going to college at night and on his way to being a big mahattaya. (Z 61)
- ◆ Then she handed him the battered little cardboard rectangle the dhobi had returned with the *mahatheya's* shirts. (HC 158)
- ◆ The *mahattaya* walked slowly onto the verandah. (WE 41)
- ◆ Rani had always told him that the big *mahattayas* in companies were a funny lot. (WCS 22)

mahout

/mahūt/ a man whose job is to look after an elephant (also India, orig. Hindi)

- ◆ The tip of the pole had a metal hook like a mahout's stick used for tickling and tugging an elephant's ear. (Reef 163)
- ◆ A couple of elephants in scarlet livery carried their mahouts and a passenger each. (YY 142)

- ◆ Occasionally, to add to the confusion, there are even a few elephants on their way to some temple ceremony, and sometimes one of them runs amok and destroys a few cars and a mahout or two. (July 7-8)

- ◆ Rajah earned his keep by working at the timber yard, carrying heavy logs about, loading and unloading trucks. His mahout was Piyal, a thin wiry man, who became my friend. (REP 140-1)

- ◆ It backs up to the pile of logs and the mahout unties the elephant. ... Under the guidance of the mahout it loads the heavy logs first ... (PMS 227)

- ◆ The mahout, a grey haired man with a fierce moustache, waves his ankus to the beat of the drums. (PMS 245)

maini

/maini/ female cousin or sister-in-law (Muslim Tamil) (> **machaan**)

make

/mæk/ repair ° *Did you get the car made?*

□ to make somebody to do something

to make somebody do something ° *That really made me to think.* ° *On the whole there was a feeling of cordiality between teachers and students, which did not make the students to hate or dislike them.*

□ to make a move

to go, leave, be off ° *Then I'll make a move.*

□ to make out

to understand; to recognise ° *I can't make out what you're saying.* → In BSE, to 'make something out' means to see something clearly.

- ◆ Did he make him out, wondered Somaweera. Why shouldn't he have recognised him? (OD 14)

- ◆ I heard them shouting behind us but couldn't make out the words. (REP 210)
- ◆ There was some mumbled conversation we couldn't make out, ... (REP 241)
- ◆ "Shalindra Premasiri was in the lineup. I pointed him out. I couldn't make out any of the others." (FSD 28)
- ◆ With a sinking heart I make out what he is carrying. (GC 334)
- ◆ It took a minute or two, but he finally made out what she was screaming. (CU 581)

Malay

a member of a distinct Muslim community of S.E. Asian descent (> **Moor, Muslim**)

- ◆ ... he invited a huge Malay sergeant named Bongso to join him one evening. (YY 141)
- ◆ ... a determined few from the other ethnic groups - Sinhalese, Moors, Malays, and the fast-disappearing Burghers ... (CU 56)

Malay pickle

a mixed pickle traditionally served with **buriyani** (> **achcharu**)

Maldivé fish, maldivé fish

(= **umbalakada**) a type of dry fish commonly used for flavouring dishes
° *Maldivé fish sambol*

- ◆ It was a small room, and it smelled of raw rice and Maldivé fish and other dry provisions. (FB 296)
- ◆ A man came from the Maldivé Islands carrying a series of cloth bags dangling from his shoulders. The bags contained maldivé fish, fish oil and various other preparations, all made from fish. Maldivé fish is sun dried fish used as a seasoning in cooking vegetable curries.

The very best maldivé fish still comes from the Maldivé Islands. (CM 56)

- ◆ The whiff of Maldivé fish depressed him every morning. (HC 206)
- ◆ The air was pungent with the odour of spices, curry powders, dried salty Maldivé fish, ... (SMS 137)
- ◆ ... and he smells the frying fragrance of Maldivé fish vadai. (KCS 137)
- ◆ Thati returned from the Maldivé islands with two suitcases. One full of dirty clothes and the other full of Maldivé fish. Siya came out of his slumber and invited all his ten brothers for dinner and they played cards and drank arrack the whole night, eating Maldivé fish. (M&P 194)
- ◆ Even Magi giggled like a young girl when she served the Maldivé fish sambol. (M&P 202)

malefic

(according to astrology) **inauspicious** ° *a malefic period* ° *with a malefic in the 7th house* ° *marriage delayed due to malefic horoscope*

- ◆ A woman born with Mars in the Seventh House was '*malefic*'. (AG 138)

Maligawa

/māligāvə/ the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy (Sinhala = palace)

malla

/mallə/ (coll.) a woven reed bag (Sinhala)
° *Don't forget your malla.*

mal lella

/mal lællə/ a traditional carved wooden ventilation panel above a door or window (Sinhala)



MAL LELLA

- ◆ ... large and rambling with that stone floor polished like marble and the ornate carved wood frieze - the *mal lella* - under the roof, the Dutch tiles. (MM 68)
- ◆ It might have been spartan but for carved verandah pillars whose design of lotus flowers and vines was picked up on the fretwork mal lallis above the doors and windows and on the carved valance boards that ran along the bottom edges of the roof. (CG 13)
- ◆ What was unique and whimsical about the house was that the doors, the lattice-work windows, the fretwork mal lallis were all painted a sky blue, which contrasted sharply with the whitewashed walls. (CG 293)
- ◆ A carver from Galle who specialised in *mal lella* was hired to restore the damaged fretwork above doors and windows. (HC 150)
- ◆ Amrith pointed out how, above each window, there was a rectangle of intricately carved wood latticework, known as a *mal lallie*, which let in cool air even when the window was closed. (SMS 113)

malli

/mali/ younger brother; can also refer to a male cousin or any younger boy (Sinhala)
 ° *Tell malli to come for lunch.*

- ◆ Malli cried loud and long because his mother and sister were both crying. (OM 29)

- ◆ "Malli has no idea about money." (OD 13)
- ◆ "Sunil Malli, come, come. Have a cup of tea, come ..." (WCS 70)
- ◆ "Malli, do you know the story of the Ravayana?" (M&P 369)

mallung

/mællung/ a dish made with shredded green leaves (e.g. *gotukola*, *kathurumurunga*, *mukunuwenna*) and grated coconut; also used like *achcharu* in the sense of a mess, a mixture (Sinhala) ° *We always ate a balanced meal, and mallung was an essential part of it.*

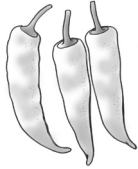
- ◆ Alice's date chutney, seeni sambol, mallung and brinjals and iced water. (RF 137)
- ◆ She also made shredded green leaf mixed with grated coconut, which is called a '*mellun*'. (CM 21)
- ◆ The food was inedible - rice, mostly uncooked, and a dry *mallung* or a coconut *sambol* that had gone off, ... (WMD 365)
- ◆ "... the boys in the commune who loved the *mallung* and the condensed-milk desserts he was partial to." (AG 47)
- ◆ My own family is a mallung of Muslim misfits. (Z 18)
- ◆ She ate jack *mallung* heaped on cracker biscuits. (HC 161)
- ◆ How can they survive on cabbage curry and mallung? (GC 10)
- ◆ "... as a reward, we will be serving a special mallung only for them." (GC 29)
- ◆ I bit in to my tissue paper thin *Mallung* sandwich. (M&P 50)

malu karaya

/mālu kārəya/ fish man, fish seller (Sinhala)
(> karaya)

malu miris

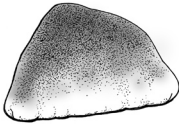
/mālu miris/ capsicum, a large variety of chilli used as a vegetable (Sinhala)



MALU MIRIS

malu pang

/mālu pāng/ fish bun (Sinhala: malu = fish, pang = bread)



MALU PANG

Mama

/mama/ Mummy, mother (> Dada)

mammoty

/mæməti/ an agricultural tool with a wooden handle and metal blade, used for digging and hoeing (also India, from Tamil: OED mamoty, mamootie) ° *The farmer will pull out a mammoty and symbolically begin work at the auspicious hour.*



MAMMOTY

- ◆ Often it was the signal for the farmers to shoulder their mammoties and walk to the other side to their fields. (OM 1)
- ◆ Elsewhere, farmers tied their loin cloths, hoisted mammoties on sunburned shoulders and made their way to the fields. (July 127)
- ◆ A few meters further, her Muslim brother in law was hacked to bits with a mamoty. (M&P 345)

manamalaya

/manəmāləya/ (coll.) flirt, ladies' man (Sinhala = bridegroom) ° *That one looks a real manamalaya.*

manavarai

/manəvərei/ the podium on which the couple stand during a Hindu wedding ceremony (Tamil) (> poruwa)

mangosteen

/mæŋgustēn/ a small fruit with a thick purple rind and juicy white flesh (orig. Malay)



MANGOSTEEN

- ◆ Only the mangosteen tree, which I practically lived in as a child during its season of fruit, was full and strong. (RF 59)
- ◆ They brought back mangosteens, brooms, mats and sunburn. (July 77)

maniokka

/mannyokka/ manioc, cassava, a kind of yam used as a vegetable (Sinhala)

mani pittu

/mani pittu/ a type of **pittu** made without grated coconut (Sinhala)

manna

/mannə/ a large curved knife (Sinhala)
 ° *Murder suspect hacked with manna knife*



MANNA

- ◆ The cut on his chest where the *manna* had hit him was red and raw. (WE 45)

mapila

/māpila/ (= **cat snake**) a mildly venomous snake which has an unjustified reputation of being highly venomous (Sinhala)

mara (1)

/māra/ (= **rain tree**) (n) a huge spreading tree, common on roadsides and at the edge of **tanks** (Sinhala)



MARA TREE

- ◆ The evening was closing in, the crows were cawing themselves noisily to bed on the lofty mara tree in the distance. (WMD 57)
- ◆ ... and ahead of me it was already dark under the giant Mara trees, .. (BTH 1)
- ◆ I hear the crows squabbling for perches on the mara trees surrounding the union office as I climb the stairs. (GC 205)

- ◆ He settled for the nearest Mara tree. (WCS 62)
- ◆ "Has he got planted like the Mara tree and cannot remove the roots?" (M&P 347)

mara (2)

/māra/ (= **fine**) (adj.) (coll.) fine, great, superb (often used ironically); strange, weird, unexpected (Sinhala) ° *A mara thing happened to me!* ° *He's a mara fellow!* ° *He hit a mara shot!* ° *Mara cool!* ° *It was a 'mara' problem when a huge tree on the Anuradhapura - Mihintale main road fell on a lorry loaded with gas cylinders.* → The last example is a play on the two meanings of 'mara'.

marketing

shopping (for food) ° *My husband does the marketing every Sunday.*

- ◆ This left Beryl time to wallop Carloboy, do all she had to do and also go marketing. (YY 3)
- ◆ "Must be going there quietly when going marketing." (TT 231)
- ◆ She goes to the newly bereaved stall, consoles and continues with her marketing. (Z 4)
- ◆ I fervently hoped the fat woman had planned to do her marketing today or maybe talk to the teacher about her children. (REP 307)
- ◆ "Anyway it's a good thing you came back because I want to do some marketing." (FSD 31)
- ◆ She had gone marketing and was returning with a heavy bag. (KCS 172)
- ◆ The last question was as innocuous as a wife asking her husband whether he'd finished the marketing. (CU 248)

□ **marketing bag**

shopping bag

- ◆ But he hadn't reckoned with the contents of the marketing bag. (YY 30)
- ◆ ... and with a marketing bag that was sorry to behold. (TT 38)

marriage broker

(= *kapuwa*) professional matchmaker

- ◆ But none of the marriage brokers ever came to the house on the hill after that marriage! (OM 18)
- ◆ ... the business would be done later, through a marriage-broker. (WMD 99)
- ◆ He received offers from twenty-seven marriage brokers. (HC 106)

marriage proposal

(= *proposal*) the offer by parents of their son or daughter in marriage (e.g. in a newspaper)

- ◆ ... I gazed at Radha Aunty and Rajan Nagendra and thought of the first time I had heard about the marriage proposal, ... (FB 99)
- ◆ After dinner, Maha filled in the details of the marriage proposal, stressing what a good family the boy was from. (WMD 98)
- ◆ In fact, he had been very attracted to the slight, fair girl whom he had gone to visit on a marriage proposal. (WCS 14)
- ◆ ... because sometime back due to a marriage proposal, Anthoni had visited Princy with his mother and some friends. (KCS 74)
- ◆ The marriage proposal was an unattainable dream anyway, and this is the final blow to her hopes. (PMS 270)

married from

married to a person from (a particular place, e.g. a country) ° *Did you get married from Sri Lanka?*

maru (1)

/maru/ (coll.) great, superb (Sinhala)

- ◆ "*Maru* (expressive Sinhala word that could hazily mean 'tophole' or 'super') devils, these fellows." (JFT 181)

maru (2)

/māru/ (coll.) escape, getaway (Sinhala = change)

- ◆ "*Ado*, Sumith, our bugger's done a *maru*." (CU 207)
- ◆ "... and a car parked somewhere nearby for a quick *maru*." (CU 220)

mason baas

/mēsən bās/ builder, mason, bricklayer (> *baas*)

Masoor dhal

(= *Mysore dhal*) red split lentils, the most common variety of *dhal* (also India)

- ◆ *Dhal*: the variety referred to as 'Mysoor parippu', fine-grained and pink and mistakenly believed to be coming from Mysore in India and boycotted under the orders of the JVP when the Indian Peace Keeping Force was alleged to be raping girls in Jaffna in the late eighties until someone enlightened us that the *dhal* had nothing to do with India and was really 'Masoor Dhal' which came from Turkey, ... (BTH 10)
- ◆ The others know what is Masoor *dhal*, which is yellow like a Buddhist monk's robe, ... (KCS 18)

mas pang

/mas pāng/ meat bun (Sinhala: *mas* = meat, *pang* = bread)

- ◆ ... where a fellow with his head swathed in a gunny sack against the cold was doing a roaring trade in piping hot *mas paans*. (HC 81)

massas

/mæssas/ (coll.) flies (Sinhala 'massa', plural 'masso') ° *From where have all these massas come?*

master

male teacher (> *miss, tuition master*)
° *English master*

- ◆ Sumanasiri's best pupil, Kapila was embarrassed to see his Sinhala master. (WCS 28)

mat: on the mat

(in newspaper headlines) in trouble ° *Death of jumbo: Wildlife officials on the mat*

mati

/mæti/ clay; (coll.) stupid (Sinhala) ° *mati pots* ° *They're all made out of mati.* ° *Real mati case she is.*

mat slide

(children's) slide

mature

(adj.) ripe; (v) ripen ° *Are the mangoes mature?* → In BSE, 'mature' refers to people, but not to fruits.

matured

(adj.) mature ° *He's not matured enough to go alone.* → In BSE, 'matured' is used as the past participle of the verb 'to mature', but not as an adjective.

- ◆ "How come you are matured like this?" And Saroja is looking at the kapok tree and smiling like a matured kapok pod. (KCS 39)
- ◆ "It surprises me, ... A matured girl like you are ignorant of these matters." (KCS 40)

mawatha

/māvətə/ (in addresses) road, street, avenue (Sinhala) ° *Bauddhaloka Mawatha*

may

(tenses) (> *might, must*) ° *You may be knowing her.*

MC

(coll.) Majestic City (a popular Colombo shopping centre)

meaning?

(coll.) what do you mean? what does that mean?

measure

2 pounds (of rice) (> *chundu*) ° *a quarter measure of rice*

- ◆ "It is impossible to get a decent measure of rice these days," ... (MM 92)
- ◆ As Tippy was coming, I made two extra measures of rice to make sure the dish was not cleaned out. (Reef 150)

meat

beef → While 'meat' can of course refer to any type of meat, it tends to refer specifically to beef in SLE.

meda midula

/mædə midulə/ an internal courtyard or small garden (Sinhala)

- ◆ A corridor led to a meda midula, open to the sky, and beyond it there was another corridor that stretched far into the distance. (CG 293)
- ◆ ... and Amrith told him about the courtyards and *mada midulas*, which were interior gardens around which the houses were sometimes built. (SMS 81)

medium

language (as a medium of education) ° *She's studying in Sinhala medium.*

- ◆ ... he went to an English medium school; ... (BTH 28)
- ◆ This school had two mediums. The Sinhala medium and the Tamil medium. (M&P 43)

meet: to meet with an accident

to have an accident (less common and more formal in BSE) ° *Pradeep has met with an accident.*

- ◆ "If go loafing all over or meet with accident or something you'll come and scold." (TT 102)

meeya: to wait like a meeya

/mīya/ (coll.) to stay quiet, to keep a low profile (e.g. feeling guilty about something) (Sinhala: meeya = rat) ° *Look at him, waiting like a meeya as if nothing happened!*

melodica

/melobika/ a musical instrument, consisting of a keyboard like an accordion, with a tube for blowing air like a bagpipe



MELODICA

member

person (e.g. in a family) (> family member) ° *There are five members in my family.* → In BSE, 'member' is normally used to refer to a person who belongs to a club or other organization.

Memon

/memən/ a member of a small Muslim community of Indian origin ° *The first Memons arrived on the island as merchants and traders in 1870.*

men!

(a colloquial term of address generally used between close friends) ° *What men!* ° *Aiyo, sorry men!* ° *Sin men!* → Like the rather outdated 'man!' in BSE, 'men!' is a very common term of address, used irrespective of the number or gender of the person(s) being spoken to: i.e. it is just as common between female speakers as between male speakers.

- ◆ "You're a bloody fool, men." (JFT 18)
- ◆ "My God, men, what is that?" (JFT 79)
- ◆ "Why, men, I am Ivy's third cousin, no? Kelaniya Mullers, men." (JFT 119)
- ◆ "You owe it to the country, what *men?*" (Reef 58)
- ◆ "Come on, men!" (FB 27)
- ◆ "*Anney* just keep quiet men." (TT 94)
- ◆ "How about some golf, *men?*" (SG 171)
- ◆ "The way he was doing his hands, men ..." (WE 107)
- ◆ "What is this, men, embarrassing me." (SMS 108)
- ◆ "Mala, Mala, hurry, men, we're going to be late." ... "I'm coming, men," ... (SMS 110)

menu card

menu

mercantile holiday

a public holiday for private sector companies

merit

(in Buddhism) moral credit gained through **meritorious** acts such as charitable deeds, **alms-givings**, pilgrimages, etc. (> **demerit**)
 ° *a pooja to confer merit on the President*

- ◆ I thought we might get some merit from doing that. (Reef 171)
- ◆ In the Buddhist philosophy of sin and merit, sin had to be counterbalanced by acts of merit if one did not wish to be reincarnated as a cockroach or a dung beetle or something equally miserable. Therefore, the *dansala* was an act of merit by its owner. (CU 86)
- ◆ In order to gain additional merit, devout pilgrims bathe in the icy water of the stream before ascending the mountain. (PMS 113)

meritorious

bestowing **merit** ° *This period is set aside for meritorious deeds.*

- ◆ "You have done a meritorious act, ... by feeding a pregnant woman." (KCS 33)

merlay; mernay

/mə'lei, mə'nei/ daughter; son (affectionate term of address) (Tamil) (> **mahal; mahan**)

- ◆ "Merlay, ... are you all right?" (CG 15)
- ◆ "What do you think, merlay?" (CG 88)

metal

small stones used for building roads etc. (less common in BSE)

might

(tenses) (> **may, must**) ° *They might be not wanting to come.*

migrate; migration

emigrate; emigration ° *They're hoping to migrate to Australia.* ° *migration to the US* → In BSE, 'migration' is used in the

context of animals (birds, fish, etc.), or large numbers of people moving from one area to another (e.g. from the country to the city); individual people, when they move from one country to another, 'emigrate' and 'immigrate'.

- ◆ When they found the Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism beginning to get on their nerves they quit and migrated. (YY 114)
- ◆ The previous burgher owners had migrated to Australia ... (July 10)

miko

/miko/ (coll., dated) a derogatory term for a low-class **Burgher**

- ◆ What she needed, he told himself, was a 'good Burgher', not those *mikos* (a nondescript half-breed) who go about on bicycles and don't know to knot a tie. (JFT 100)

milchard

/milchāb/ a cheap variety of rice

- ◆ ... because I was carrying a bag full of smelly onions and milchard rice. (BTH 9)
- ◆ ... the smelly yellowy big grained milchard; ... (BTH 10)

milk hopper

(= **paal appam**) a **hopper** made with **coconut milk**

milk rice

(= **kiribath**) rice prepared with **coconut milk** and cut into diamond shapes, served on festive occasions (> **pongal**)

- ◆ Magi announced that the milk rice was ready. (M&P 334)
- ◆ He opens Saro's lunch box but is disappointed to find it filled with milk-rice; ... (PMS 75)

milk tea

white tea, tea with milk and sugar (> tea)

- ◆ She was beautiful, with almond-shaped eyes, long, glossy black hair, skin the colour of milk tea, and a shapely figure. (CG 233)
- ◆ He had already learnt from his mother that her friend was half-Dutch Burgher, half-Sinhalese, and so he was not surprised by her light complexion, like milk-tea. (SMS 16)
- ◆ She was more interested in Achi's milk toffee and the milk tea with King Parakramabahu the sixth's condensed milk. (M&P 152)

milk toffee

a type of sweet made with condensed milk

- ◆ Achi continued to make milk toffee ... Milk toffees without cashew nuts were not the same as milk toffee with cashew nuts. (M&P 102)

miris

/miris/ chilli (Sinhala) (> amu miris)

° *Don't put too much miris.*

□ **miris gala**

/miris gala/ grinding stone, a flat stone used for grinding chillies, spices, etc. (Sinhala)



MIRIS GALA

□ **miris kaeli**

/miris kæli/ (= chilli pieces) dried chilli flakes (Sinhala)

□ **miris kudu**

/miris kudu/ (= chilli powder) (Sinhala)

□ **miris malu**

/miris mālu/ a hot fish curry made without coconut milk (Sinhala)

- ◆ "Everyday buying slice of seer and making nice *mirismalu* (fish cooked in condiments and water without a coconut milk base) ..." (JFT 64)

Mirror Wall

a wall with a glazed surface at Sigiriya, famous for the ancient graffiti written on it

miss (1)

female teacher (> **master, sir**) ° *Miss didn't come to class today.*

miss (2)

(coll.) (of an engine) misfire ° *The engine is missing.*

miss: to miss not having/doing something

(coll.) to miss having/doing something ° *I really missed not seeing you.* (BSE: I really missed seeing you.)

missing

not here, not there, absent → In BSE, if someone is 'missing' it means no-one knows where they are and it is a cause of concern; in SLE, it can simply mean they are not around at the moment.

- ◆ My father was missing in the Veddha region, and my mother was about to go missing in the commonwealth. (M&P 204)

misunderstand

(vi) get upset with somebody ° *Don't misunderstand!* (BSE: Don't misunderstand me!)

mixture

a savoury mixture of nuts, pulses, **omapodi**, etc. (BSE: Bombay mix)

- ◆ ... then they went around the corner to Bombay Sweet Mart to buy bags of mixture filled with fried sticks of dough and cashews and chickpeas mixed with salt and chilli powder. (SMS 138)

MMV

(in the names of schools) Madya Maha Vidyalaya (Sinhala) (> **vidyalaya**) ° *Tissa MMV*

mobike

/mōbaik/ motorbike ° *The gunmen escaped on a mobike.*

mod

(coll.) trendy, fashionable ° *looking very mod*

modaya

/mōḃaya/ (coll.) fool, idiot (Sinhala) ° *We are a nation of modayas.*

moju

/mōju/ a preserved fish or meat dish (> **batu moju**) ° *prawn moju* ° *dry fish moju*

molgaha

/mōlgaha/ a large wooden pestle used with a **vangediya** for pounding rice to make **rice flour** (Sinhala) (> **vangediya**)

- ◆ "... I'll put a clout with the *molgaha* ..." (JFT 144)
- ◆ Inside the kitchen, Janaki was pounding something with the mol gaha.... I stayed like that for a long time, as the mol gaha pounded away monotonously in the kitchen. (FB 100)

moneys, monies

sums of money (formal in BSE) ° *The company has agreed to terminate the project and claim monies amounting to Rs 270 million for the work done.*

- ◆ Monies donated and allocated for deviation and development of the Mahaveli river basin stagnated in the minister's bank account, abroad. (M&P 267)

monitor lizard

a large lizard (also India, Africa, etc.) (> **land monitor**, **water monitor**) → There are two varieties of **monitor lizard**: the **land monitor** (Sinhala: **thalagoya**), which is smaller, and the **water monitor** (Sinhala: **kabaragoya**) which is larger. The **land monitor** is commonly referred to as an **iguana**.

- ◆ ... and the occasional mad scramble in the thicket which signalled the hurried departure of a monitor lizard. (YY 192)
- ◆ I spotted the monitor lizard when it moved again. (REP 204)

Montessori

any pre-school or nursery school → In BSE, a 'Montessori school' would be one specifically following the Montessori method of pre-school teaching.

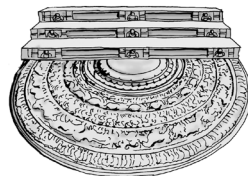
moonamal

/mūnəmal/ a type of tree (Sinhala)

- ◆ She was in the garden alongside the moonamal tree and the kohomba tree. The flowers of the moonamal when shed always turned face up to the moon. (AG 202)

moonstone (1)

a semi-circular carved stone on the ground at the entrance to a temple



MOONSTONE

moonstone (2)

a semi-precious stone with a cloudy white colour

Moor

a Sri Lankan Muslim of Arab descent (from Portuguese) (> Malay, Muslim)

- ◆ "... Moors, Malays, Christian Tamils, Hindu Tamils, Buddhists, and so on and so on." (CG 68)
- ◆ When the Moor next appeared she asked to see the flat bales of cotton and muslin he kept in the bottom of his dented trunk. (HC 204)

moosala

/mūsələ/ (coll.) miserable, wretched, desolate, unfortunate, **inauspicious**; noun: **moosalaya** (Sinhala) (> **muspenthū**) ° *a moosalaya house* ° *a moosalaya face* ° *moosalaya weather* ° *a moosalaya beggar* ° *Don't say such moosalaya things!* ° *The husband is such a moosalaya!*

morala

/mōrələ/ (of vegetables) old, over-ripe, not fresh; (of **thambili** and **kurumba**) old and beginning to ferment (Sinhala)

more (1)

(word order) ° *10 days more* (BSE: 10 more days)

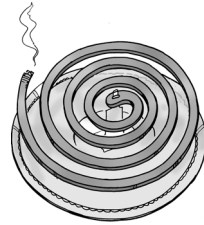
- ◆ Seven days more. ... Six days more. ... (M&P 92)

more (2)

(coll.) ° *It's much more healthier not to eat meat.* ° *Nothing could be more further from the truth.* ° *hoping to reach a more wider audience* → In colloquial SLE, 'more' is sometimes included with comparative adjectives where it would be superfluous (and incorrect) in BSE.

mosquito coil

(= **coil**) a coil-shaped device burnt to repel mosquitoes



MOSQUITO COIL

- ◆ Was there a mosquito net above them or a fan, or just a Lion brand mosquito coil? (AG 229)
- ◆ It was getting dark outside and the roomboy cum steward placed a mosquito coil under their table. (FSD 119)
- ◆ Once Jane-Nona had lit mosquito coils under the chairs and brought out a metal candelabra, ... (SMS 37)

mosquito mat

an electric device used to repel mosquitoes

motor bus halting place

(= **bus halt**) (dated, on signs) bus stop

Mount

(coll.) Mount Lavinia; can also refer to the Mount Lavinia Hotel, or to St Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia

- ◆ "Well, I did book us a room at the Mount." (CU 231)

move: to move with somebody

to mix with somebody, associate with somebody, socialise with somebody
° *They're not used to moving with boys.*

- ◆ "You must move with people who have lost their homes, lost their families." (REP 329)

- ◆ He had moved easily with friends who came from genuinely wealthy families ... (FSD 5)

mudalali

/mudālali/ businessman, merchant, trader, shopkeeper; also used colloquially to refer to someone who is good with money, or to someone who is rather fat! (Sinhala/Tamil; also India, from Marathi/Malayalam)

° *kasippu mudalalis* ° *He looks like a real mudalali!*

- ◆ "He was a *mudalali* - a businessman." (MM 22)
- ◆ The only rich person in the town was the Banduratne Mudalali, who owned most of the hotels. (FB 170)
- ◆ First the old Mudalali, clearing his throat and walking to the junction to get his copy of the morning paper. (OM 49)
- ◆ ... to Jinasena *mudalali*, merchandising his loyalties on the political stock market. (WMD 274)
- ◆ "It's all right for you shop-keepers, *mudalali*," ... (WMD 372)
- ◆ "Gave those Colombo *mudalalis* and the police and the newspapers absolute hell - ..." (SG 213)
- ◆ Fish *mudalalis*, shop owners, restaurateurs and others swarmed down the beach to attend the early-morning fish auctions, ... (July 9)
- ◆ Hemantha wandered off and struck up a conversation with the *mudalali*, ... (July 90)
- ◆ By that time he had gone to Kurunegala and was engaged to be married to the daughter of a *Mudalali* dealing in coconuts. (OD 88)

- ◆ The *mudalali* only glanced at his driving license before returning it to him. (FSD 236)
- ◆ "Or maybe Miss Decima has found a *mudalali*'s son for our gamey kella?" (GC 217)
- ◆ In the midst of all this chaos, the *mudalali*, who owned the store, sat cross-legged on a bench, ... The *mudalali* gestured for them to be seated ... (SMS 137)
- ◆ Kapila was not quite clear who he meant, and the *Mudalali* never brought up the subject again. (CP 190)

mudaliyar

/mubliya/ (dated) **headman**, chief (a traditional title); also a court official (from Tamil; OED *modeliar*)



MUDALIYAR

- ◆ Perhaps one of the grandest houses of Cinnamon Gardens was that of the *Mudaliyar Navaratnam*. (CG 12)
- ◆ In the days before European domination, a *mudaliyar*, in the domain in which he held sway, had served as a representative of the king. The British had continued the *mudaliyarships*, but now it was an appointment by the governor based on loyalty to the Empire. The *mudaliyars* served as interpreters to the British

government agents in the different provinces of Ceylon, and they helped the agents execute colonial policy. They were also Legislative Council members. (CG 25)

- ◆ The Mudliyar realizing that something was amiss shushed the court sternly. (Z 8)
- ◆ My grandfather, Sir Stanley Obeysekere, was a *mudaliyar*, an office that placed a man at the pinnacle of our island's social system. A *mudaliyar* was a leader of men, with considerable influence in his ancestral district. By tradition he was a gifted soldier and a skilled diplomat, abilities he placed at the service of his sovereign. With the advent of the Europeans, however, the role of the *mudaliyar* evolved. ... The Europeans rewarded loyalty with land: whole villages were given in gift to the *mudaliyars*, vast tracts of jungle, tax-free estates. (HC 6)
- ◆ Upali's, the chocolate people, had recently been running an ad featuring a man in a *mudliyar* coat, a black coat with gold froggings that native officials used to wear in colonial times. (CP 115)

mudukku

/mudʊkku/ (coll.) low, seedy, sleazy (Sinhala)
° *mudukku joints*

muffler

scarf (rare and dated in BSE)

- ◆ Harry produced a frightful checked muffler that he wound about his throat. (HC 250)

muhandiram

/muhəndirəm/ (dated) a senior official of the Kandyan kingdom

mukkuthi

/mūkkutti/ (= nose ring, nose stud) a stud worn on the nose (esp. worn by Tamil women) (Tamil)

- ◆ She smelled of stale coconut oil, and the diamond mukkuthi in her nose always pressed painfully against my cheek. (FB 2)
- ◆ The heavy gold mukkuthi in her nose enhanced the darkness of her skin. (CG 181)
- ◆ ... maybe she was the girl wearing a pink sari and a gold mukuthu on her nose, ... (Z 34)

mukulufy

/mukulufai/ (= komalafy) (coll.) get embarrassed, get the giggles, flirt (from Sinhala) (> -fy)

mukunuwenna

/mukunuwənnə/ a green leaf used to make **mallung** (Sinhala)

- ◆ And other greens, like mukunuwenna - those leaves are long and look like spikes. (KCS 85)
- ◆ I bit into my transparent *Mukunuwenna* sandwich. Two tissue paper thin slices of bread held together with a Mukunuwenna and green chilli mass, no butter, no margarine. (M&P 72)
- ◆ I got bread and Mukunuwenna mallung for dinner while the rest of the family ate hoppers. (M&P 147)
- ◆ She abstained from spinach, kankun, mukunuwenna and all iron rich foods, ... (M&P 230)

multiplug

(electrical) adaptor

mung ata

/mung ætə/ (= green gram) mung beans (Sinhala)

mung kavum, mung guli

/mung kævum, mung guli/ a type of Sinhala sweet made with rice flour and honey and a little mung flour, and fried in batter; the kavum are diamond shaped, the guli are smaller and ball-shaped (Sinhala) (> kavum)

murder the King/Queen

(dated) speak incorrect English → The concept of 'murdering the King', which is completely outdated in BSE, survives in SLE, though it is probably restricted to the older generation.

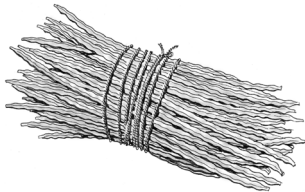
murukku

/murukku/ a snack made with rice flour and spices fried into crispy spiral pieces (Sinhala) (> omapodi) ° *murukku mould*

- ◆ ... when they had sat down to the tea and *murukku* that Devi had set before them. (WMD 333)
- ◆ "Aney darling, can't you bring a bit more cake after you finish with the Murukku, ..." (M&P 238)

murunga

/murunga/ (= drumsticks) a type of vegetable, the long green pods of the 'horseradish tree' (Sinhala; OED *moringa*) ° *murunga leaves*



MURUNGA

- ◆ ... leaning his bicycle against the *murunga* tree. (WMD 338)

- ◆ "Superbly cooked, I must say," observed Vijay, working through his fourth crab-belly. "The *murunga* leaves make all the difference." (WMD 347)
- ◆ There were no onions or aubergines or *murunga* to give life to the land ... (WMD 390)
- ◆ It was legendary that every Tamil home on the Jaffna peninsula had three trees in the garden. A mango, a murunga, and the pomegranate. Murunga leaves were cooked in crab curries to neutralize poisons, ... (AG 240)
- ◆ She trained their lone domestic in the culinary art of making asparagus soup with murunga ... (Z 82)
- ◆ Jane-Nona made her famous crab curry in honour of Nires'h's visit, with her own combination of roasted spices ground into a paste, coconut milk, murunga leaves, and tamarind to give it a nice tang. (SMS 113-4)
- ◆ Murunga flowers in scrambled egg, ... (CP 113)

muscat

/maskæt/ a jelly-like Indian sweet

- ◆ ... get her some real *muscat*, she'd like that, and some English marshmallows. (WMD 376)
- ◆ "Try a piece," urged Vijay trying to put a piece of *muscat* in her mouth. (WMD 378)

musical show

(= beat show) a live concert (> show)

Muslim

a member of one of several Muslim communities in Sri Lanka; refers to their ethnic group as well as to their religion (> Moor, Malay, Borah, Memon)

- ° *Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers*
- ° *Muslim law* ° *Muslim food*

- ◆ ... the Muslim's turn would come again, or the Burgher, or the Malay. (M&P 358)
- ◆ The young Muslim boy dressed in a faded sarong and torn Metallica T-shirt ... (Z 137)

□ **Muslim hotel**

a **hotel** run by Muslims and serving halal food

- ◆ Just to please her, Ravi thought to try another Moslem hotel on the main road. (FSD 265)

muspenthū

/muspēntu/ (coll.) miserable, morose;
 noun: **muspenthūwa** (Sinhala) (> **moosala**)
 ° *He has a muspenthū look.* ° *He's such a muspenthūwa.*

- ◆ The phenomenon was surely *moospainthu*, a bad omen. (HC 50-1)
- ◆ She knew the place was *moospainthu*. It blighted her cooking. (HC 164)
- ◆ Their presence in the house was *moospainthu*. (HC 169)

must, musth

/mast/ (n) an annual condition affecting male elephants, making them dangerous and unpredictable (also India, from Urdu)
 ° *When a tusker is in must, it has its legs tied with chains.* ° *Two young bull elephants in musth approached the camp.*

must

/mast/ (tenses) (> **know, have**) ° *You must be knowing them.* ° *You must be thinking I'm mad.* ° *She must be not liking to play.* ° *They must be not understanding you.*
 → In BSE, there are a number of verbs (know, think, understand, have, like, want, etc.) which are not normally used in the continuous ('-ing') form. In SLE, they are often used in this form, especially after 'must', 'may' or 'might' as in the examples.

- ◆ "He must be not knowing that my brother is about to sit for his Engineering finals ..." (OD 15)
- ◆ "They must be thinking we are all cattle!" (OD 37)
- ◆ He must be having the same feeling even about my reading the diaries. (OD 89)
- ◆ "So you must be having a lot of friends now?" (M&P 63)

muthusamba

/mutusamba/ a high quality variety of **samba rice** (Sinhala: *muthu* = pearl)

muttal

/muttal/ (coll.) idiot, fool, mutt (Tamil)

- ◆ Muttiyah as her husband. How preposterous. Muttal Muttiyah. For he was a "muttal" chap, an oaf, an idiot. (CG 172)

mutti

/mutti/ an earthenware pot (Sinhala)

- ◆ She thudded an earthenware mutti on the counter and grabbed at two plastic cups on the side. (Z 123)

mutton

goat's meat (also India) → In BSE, 'mutton' is always sheep's meat.

my!

(coll.) my God! my goodness! ° *My! How nice!*

- ◆ "My! He's absolutely charming," ... (FB 98)
- ◆ "My, child, that Beryl, real martyr, no?" (YY 72)
- ◆ "My, but what a commotion with that Mohan, no?" (SG 120)
- ◆ ... "myee, what a lovely dress" ... (July 54)

my dear

(a dated term of address used between males) → In modern BSE, 'my dear' is a more intimate term of address usually used with children or close acquaintances.

Mysore dhal

(= **Masoor dhal**) red split lentils, the most common variety of **dhal** (also India)

- ◆ "Only that vile stuff they call dhal. None of the red mysore." (July 63)
- ◆ Now rice, sugar, flour, onions and imported Mysore dhal sat outside shops in reassuringly huge gunny bags. (July 186)

N

na

/nā/ (= **ironwood**) a type of tree (the Sri Lankan national tree) (Sinhala) ° *the scent of a na tree in bloom*

- ◆ The old *na* tree that had shaded the shop front was scorched; ... (MM 21)

nab

catch, arrest ° *The police are hoping to nab the leader of the gang.* → In BSE, 'nab' is a colloquial word; in SLE it is also used in more formal contexts.

nadagam

/nāḍəgəŋg/ a traditional musical drama (Sinhala/Tamil)

- ◆ Waving a silken scarf from one hand he sang a popular ditty, usually a nadagam melody. 'Nadagam' is a traditional ballad. (CM 58)
- ◆ "They are putting on a *nadagam*, with puppets. Let's go and see." (WMD 62)

nadun

/nadun/ a type of dark wood (Sinhala)

- ◆ ... and after great deliberation Sebastian had chosen to make the pews not of teak, as was customary, but of *nadoon*. Teak was easier to work on and light enough to be moved about, but *nadoon* had a grain and an incandescence which called to the light that broke in through the stained glass windows, ... (WMD 76)

naki visey

/nāki viṣē/ (coll.) an expression used to refer to an old man flirting with younger women (Sinhala)