



Designing Local CFL Textbooks for Sri Lanka: A Conceptual Framework towards Penetrating the Hegemony and Ideology in Global Competition

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Abstract

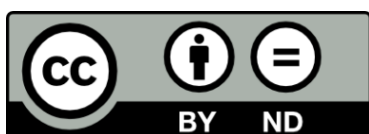
Despite the dramatic growth in demand for Chinese language in Sri Lanka, fewer efforts have been taken for catering the specific necessities of Sri Lankan CFL learners towards an optimal student friendly learning environment. The hegemonic and ideological approaches of global textbooks have least addressed the socio-linguistic attributes of Sri Lankan learners. The present study examines the shortcomings of global CFL textbooks used by Sri Lankan learners from a student perspective and develops a rudimentary conceptual framework with reference to existing literature. The key informants of the study were ($n=35$) Chinese language students of Sri Lanka who constitute for a non-probabilistic convenience sample. It was inferred from the analysis that there is a critical requirement of incorporating local languages, their specific vocabulary and local context into CFL textbooks in Sri Lanka. It was further concluded that textbooks best be optimized for supporting translanguaging or partial immersion rather than total immersion or monolingual instructional approaches that would accommodate the socio-linguistic, socio-cultural and meta-cognitive spaces of the learners.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Mishan & Chambers (2010, p.1), developing language teaching material relates to strengthening the language learning basis of teaching material from course books to materials designed by teachers themselves. The role of language teaching material does not limit to providing theoretical knowledge but more importantly, they act as a mediator between theory and practice in the language classroom. Tomlinson (2011, p.9) suggests that 'materials can help learners feel at ease in a number of ways' despite many material developers' hypothesis that 'it is the responsibility of the teachers to help the learners' and that 'the materials themselves can do very little to help'. As Nikoopour & Farsani (2011) suggest, language teaching material development incorporates both theoretical and practical undertakings which involve principles and procedures of material design as well as production, evaluation and adaptation of teaching material.

Teaching Chinese language in Sri Lanka has more than several decades of history but the development of pedagogical implications and teaching material has not seen much expansion in line with the growing demand for Chinese language in Sri Lanka. Especially, there is a critical requirement of rethinking CFL¹ textbooks in Sri Lanka. Most of the

teaching material used is common material prepared for teaching Chinese to international students in general. The contents, approaches and methods used in textbooks do not necessarily fit into the South Asian context and neither do they cater to the specific language requirements of Sri Lankan students. The present study is aimed towards a conceptual framework for developing localized Chinese language textbooks in Sri Lanka.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Teaching Material Development

Language teaching material development has been a key area of the second and foreign language teaching research arena and has seen much development in recent times. Brian Tomlinson is considered as a key figure in the field of language teaching material development research who has taken multidimensional approaches towards conceptualizing and theorizing principles of language teaching material design. Tomlinson (2011, p.8) claims that there are five basic principles of developing language teaching material that can achieve intended impact: novelty, variety, attractive presentation, appealing content and achievable challenge. Novelty refers to using 'unusual topics, illustrations and activities'. Variety refers to breaking away from the

¹ CFL : Chinese as a Foreign Language



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orthodox unit concept by using different text types from different sources. Attractive presentation signifies the 'use of attractive colors; lots of white space; use of photographs. The fourth principle, appealing content, is concerned with including innovative, localized, familiar and universal themes. Achievable challenge refers to developing tasks that can challenge the cognition of students.

Tomlinson (2003, p.2-4), identifies several key considerations of language teaching material design and development such as who and how should develop teaching material for languages, evaluation and authenticity of teaching material. Tomlinson challenges the notion that only limited number of teachers can become good material writers and claims that any teacher could become a material writer with 'little training, experience and support to become material writers who can produce imaginative materials of relevance and appeal to their learners'. He further claims that considering the lengthy time that material development consumes, it is best to take collective efforts in language material design.

The Chinese Language Learning in the Early Grades: A Handbook of Resources and Best Practices for Mandarin Immersion (2012) proposes that there should be a variety of material available in schools for Chinese ranging from books, graded reading materials, longer books, and independent reading materials. The

handbook also proposes some characteristics that Chinese language teaching material for immersion programmes should be embedded with including richness of content, appealing content, incorporation of native and other cultures and the specificity of learning objectives.

Authenticity of teaching material has been the discussion of a number of language teaching material researchers. Gilmore (2007, p. 98) claim that the concept of authenticity can be located in the text itself, in the participants, in the social or cultural setup and purposes of the communicative act or in a combination of all these. According to Mishan (2005) in modern-day preoccupation of authenticity in language learning is born from three areas: second language acquisition research, language pedagogy and the third is sociological aspect. Maley & Tomlinson (2017, p. 1) claim that since the language of most textbooks is 'being deliberately contrived to help the learner learn the language' but 'not being primarily used for communication', the text of most language learning material cannot be considered as authentic.

Foreign Language Textbooks

The New generation foreign language textbooks have taken a number of paradigm shifts from the traditional perspectives on textbooks. While most new generation textbook developers tend to believe that the term new generation necessarily refers to

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digitalizing textbooks, Almazova et al. (2021, p. 40) claim that form matters less than the concepts of the textbooks. They further propose four major approaches that new generation textbook developers should take into consideration: interdisciplinary approach, interactive learning methods, digital technologies, and visualization. Almazova et al.'s notion that new generation textbooks do not necessarily be digital material is worth further consideration. A paperback book may have a special attribute to it which may impact the learning experience of the language learner which digital material may not offer, such as, making footnotes with a pen and feeling the texture of the paper material. The atmosphere of browsing and reading paper bound books in a library has its own specific attributes to it, far different from reading digital versions of the same books in front of a computer.

The emergence of the Chinese language as one of the most popular international languages has triggered the interest of researchers to investigate and evaluate issues related to teaching Chinese as a foreign language, including textbooks. Yu (2020) established that it is of paramount importance for Chinese language text and material to provide knowledge of the target language as accurately and objectively as possible since in most cases the Chinese language students' contact with the target language is limited to the classroom environment.

Adil et al. (2020, p.10) have examined the issues of CFL textbooks from a different perspective and based on empirical evidence they suggest textbook developers to consider the communicative language function as a measure to evaluate foreign language textbooks including CFL textbooks.

Moss et al. (2015, p. 69) suggest that the scope of language learning extends well beyond its borders from developing the language skills of students to enacting social relations and promoting certain practices and discourses since language and society are interdependent variables. Rugang, L. (2017) claim that in addition to the pedagogical value of foreign language material, they are also embedded with socio-cultural significance which influence the learner's identity formation. Badarna (2021) stresses the importance of incorporating sociolinguistic competencies into the textbooks. Therefore, language teaching material developers have to pay adequate attention on the socio-linguistic and socio-cultural spaces of the target group in designing material. Dziuba & Eremina (2020, p. 111) argue that the national cultures should be represented as part of the global cultures in order to incorporate linguo-cultural and country specific information into foreign language textbooks. Takal et al. (2021, p. 743) have also listed 'lack of



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cultural and social suitability' as a key issue in Malaysian EFL ²textbooks.

The development of EFL textbook research has seen new paradigm shifts and has expanded in large scale due to the ever-increasing popularity of English as a lingua franca. Therefore, implications of EFL textbook research cannot be neglected in developing textbooks for other foreign languages. Mohd Sidek (2012, p. 36) have experimented into the situation of EFL textbooks in Malaysia and their research have found out that longer expository passages have less impact on training students' comprehension processing competencies.

Textbook evaluation has been a topic of interest for many language teaching material researchers. Wen-Cheng et al. (2011, p. 95) propose that the introduction of a standardized checklist for EFL textbook evaluation would have critical impacts on pedagogical implications on teaching skills and classroom dynamics. Mukundan & Nimehchisalem (2012) have also discussed the evaluation of EFL textbooks using a qualitative and quantitative mixed method and claim that in developing checklists for evaluating textbooks two important matters stand out. Firstly, determining on evaluation criteria for developing a checklist is of paramount importance. Secondly, determining the 'weight' of each criterion is also an important

factor that has to be considered by textbook evaluators.

On integrating culture into foreign language textbooks, Chappelle (2016, p. 32) claims that textbooks serve as the starting point for their exposure to cultural content and with specific reference to the situation in the USA, they further suggest that the ways that culture is incorporated into foreign language syllabuses need changes. With regard to the Bruneian context, Elgar (2011) argues that it is of paramount importance to adopt an intercultural approach towards language learning where neither the local culture nor the global culture is authoritative. According to Holme (2003, p.18), integrating culture into the language curriculum can be rationalized in five different perspectives: the communicative view, the classical curriculum view, the instrumental view, the deconstructionist view and the competence view. Culture plays a vital role in teaching Chinese as a foreign language since the Chinese language is rich with cultural connotations, figurative language and culture loaded terms. Therefore, in developing localized textbooks in the Sri Lankan context, one has to have a thorough understanding of the principles of integrating culture into teaching material.

² EFL: English as a Foreign Language



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Ideology and Hegemony of Global Textbooks

Every time when a global language emerged as a lingua franca or has become relatively popular than other languages of a region, teaching material of such languages also have taken a hegemonic and ideological outlook. Commenting on 'Language and Power', Reagan (2002, p.2) claims that just as some types of knowledge have greater impact than others, value of one language may also differ from one context to another. While some languages have higher values regionally, there are others which have higher values globally such as the case of English, Chinese or Spanish. Language ideology is often discussed in relation to globalization and the market economy. According to Zhou (2018, p. 27) language ideology originates from four fields of linguistics: politics of linguistics, anthropological linguistics, cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics. However, Mirhosseini (2018, p.3) argues that although there is considerable growth in the concerns of sociopolitical considerations of ideology in the field of language learning, the number of discussions on this topic are proportionately low in comparison to the number of publications done in the field.

Tomlinson & Musuhara (2017) propose that the presence of the views of both teachers and learners, target language, authors of the publication and the cultures related is an inevitable factor

in developing language teaching materials. This is perceived as a dangerous phenomenon considering the authoritative power that textbooks have in classrooms which may lead to users of such material to 'uncritically accepting' the world they portray. As claimed by Bori (2020, p.6), political and ideological conditions outside the classroom directly influence the form and content of textbooks which also include economic imperatives of the market. Bewley (2015, p.75) Propose that textbooks may not only reflect what authors believe worthy of learning but also may reflect national and institutional ideologies.

From the beginning of the emergence of English as a lingua franca, ELT material development has left a hegemonic trail behind until recently when this was approached critically by novel material researchers and theorists. According to Park (2009, p. 15) the global spread of English is often presumed to be a natural accompaniment of globalization. On the topic of local and global EFL textbooks, Ulum & Köksal (2019, p. 84) claim that there are ideological and hegemonic practices in both globally and locally produced textbooks and they further propose that 'textbooks are never neutral'. According to Liu (2020, p. 942) the development of EFL textbooks in modern China show a fusion of Western ideologies and traditional Chinese culture, the synthesis of Marxism and realities and integration of internationalization and localization.



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The same view is maintained by Zhou (2013, p. 99) who claims that in parallel to the introduction of the open economy policy and its market orientation, Western ideologies have been increasingly incorporated into EFL textbooks. However, Zhou has observed these new developments from a balanced perspective who further established that while the incorporation of Western ideologies have had its positive impacts on EFL learners, it also marginalizes some learners who come from underdeveloped areas.

Wang (2016) proposes that there are fundamental differences between foreign-language education of international learners and citizenship or moral education and therefore foreign-language teaching material has to diverge from patriotic, ideological and nationalistic approaches which may result in an identity crisis. As a solution to the limitations of the global textbooks and their hegemonic practices, Melliti (2012, p. 137) suggests the production of local textbooks, training teachers to adapt the textbooks, promoting teacher autonomy and recommending suitable localized textbooks from recognized publishers.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The key informants of this study were ($n=35$) Chinese language students in Sri

Lanka who are in HSK band level 4 and have partially or fully completed a BA Honors Degree in Chinese language. Considering the information requirements of the study, the non-probabilistic convenience sampling method was used in selecting key informants. The participants are in the age range 19-25 and the anonymity of the respondents was considered as in favour of ensuring the authenticity of information provided.

Instruments and Analysis Techniques

The present study has employed a mixed method research approach which has integrated both qualitative and quantitative data. A structured questionnaire was utilized as the primary data collection instrument and the questionnaire was designed and distributed and collected using Google forms. The questionnaire consists of two main sections of which primary concern of the first section is general information and students' preferences of the existing textbooks. The second part was mainly focused on deriving information on the students' preference of instruction language. Part I mainly consisted of multiple-choice questions and matrix table questions and Part II consisted of single select multiple-choice questions.

SPSS Statistics was used as the primary data analysis tool for quantitative data. The narrative analysis method was used for analyzing qualitative data.



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RESULTS

Survey Results

To the question on the suitability of existing CFL textbooks in Sri Lanka,

74.3% of the students have responded that they are 'suitable' and only 22.9% have responded that they are 'very suitable' while 2.9% have responded that the textbooks are 'somewhat suitable'.

Table 1. Difficulty Areas of CFL Textbooks

Difficulty Area	%	frequency	n	\bar{x}	Std. div
Grammar	65.7	23	35	.6571	.4815
New Words	11.4	4	35	.1143	.3228
Lesson Text	11.4	4	35	.1143	.3228
Exercises	11.4	4	35	.1143	.3228

According to Table 1, most students (65.7%) perceive grammar as the most troublesome area in existing CFL textbooks in Sri Lanka while the percentages of students who feel new words, lesson text and exercises each account for a same percentage value of 11.4%. To the question whether students find it difficult to understand grammar, notes and translations of new words in the textbook, 48.6%

($n=17$) students have responded that they find it difficult to some extent. 34.3% ($n=12$) students have responded that they find it difficult and only 17.1% ($n=6$) students have responded that they do not find it difficult to understand the content of textbooks. Therefore, the number of students who believe that there are at least some difficulties in understanding textbook content overall, account for 82.9% (29).

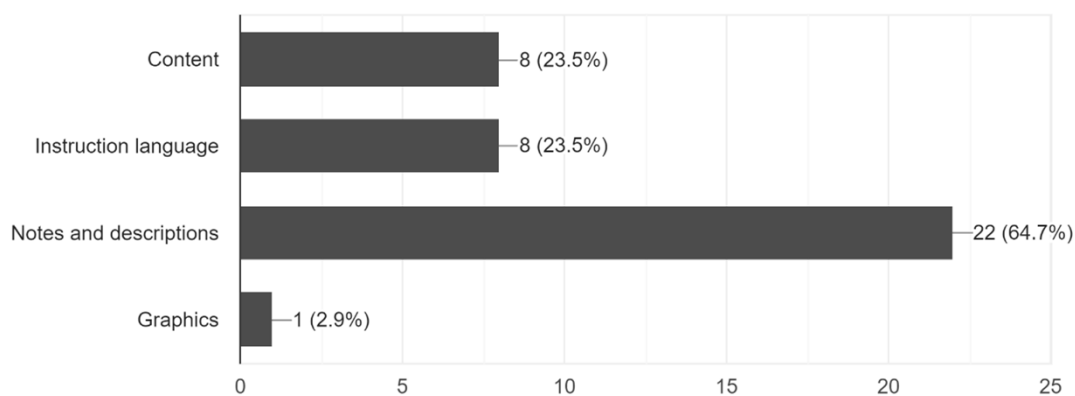


Figure 1 The Areas That Need Improvement in CFL Textbooks



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From figure 1 we can derive that most students believe notes and descriptions to be the area that needs modifications. Similar numbers of students believe instruction language and content as

areas that need development, but the percentage is relatively low. Only one student has responded that the outlook of the textbook needs improvement.

Table 2. Student Opinion on Improving Each Aspect of CFL Textbooks

Area	Variable	1 ^a	2 ^b	3 ^c	4 ^d	5 ^e	n	\bar{x}	Std. dev
Lessons	Lessons should include native Sri Lankan proper names	22.9	51.4	14.3	11.4	0	35	2.142	.9121
	Lesson context should be nativized	11.4	48.6	34.3	0	0	33	2.575	1.090
Grammar	Grammar should be compared with English	25.7	42.9	22.9	2.9	0	33	2.030	.8095
	Grammar should be compared with Sinhala	17.1	41.2	32.4	8.8	0	34	2.323	.8780
New words	Should include more local words	40	34.3	22.9	2.9	0	35	1.885	.8667
a – strongly agree		b- agree		c-agree to some extent		d-disagree		e-strongly disagree	

From Table 2 it can be observed that most students are in favour of localizing the CFL textbooks. None of the students have responded that they are strongly against any aspect of localizing strategies stated in the questionnaire. While 51.4% of the informants ($n=18$) have responded that they agree to have proper names of Sri Lanka included in CFL textbooks another 22.9% of the informants ($n=8$) have responded that they strongly agree with it. Only 11.4% ($n=4$) have responded that they are not in favour of having translations of local proper names in Chinese in CFL textbooks 14.3% ($n=5$) have responded that they agree to some extent. From Table 2 it can be observed that there is strong support for localizing lesson context. While 11.4% of the informants ($n=4$)

have responded that they strongly agree to? the concept, 48.6% of the informants ($n=17$) have responded that they want lesson contexts to be nativized and 34.3% ($n=17$) have responded that they agree to this to some extent.

The next two questions were concerned with the comparison of grammar with Sinhala or English in textbooks which have also received strong support from the students. Most students ($n=15$) believe that grammar in CFL textbooks should be compared with English which accounts for 42.9% while another 25.7% ($n=9$) strongly support it. Only one student (2.9%) responded against comparing grammar with English and 22.9% ($n=8$) have responded that they agree to some extent. 17.1% of the



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informants ($n=6$) strongly support comparing Chinese grammar with Sinhala while 41.2% have responded that they are in favor of it. Another 32.4% of the informants ($n=11$) have responded that they agree to some extent on comparing grammar with Sinhala whereas only 8.8% ($n=3$) have responded that they disagree to this.

Including local words into the new words section of CFL textbooks have also received strong support from students. 40% of the informants ($n=14$) have responded that they strongly support this while another 34.3% of the informants ($n=12$) have stated that they agree to the suggestion. 22.9% of the informants ($n=8$) have responded that they agree to some extent and only

2.9% ($n=1$) have responded that they are not in agreement of incorporating local words into the vocabulary section of textbooks.

Part II of the questionnaire was dedicated for obtaining students' opinion on their preferred instruction language of CFL textbooks. From Table 3 it could be inferred that the instruction language of the textbooks that most students used is English, which accounts for 68.6% ($n=24$). While 17.1% of the students ($n=6$) have responded that they have used CFL textbooks with Sinhala and English instructions, those who have used textbooks with Sinhala or Chinese only instructions are relatively low.

Table 3. Preferred Instruction Language of CFL Textbooks

Instruction Language (IL)	English %	Sinhala %	English & Sinhala %	Chinese Only %	n	\bar{x}	Std. deviation
IL of existing textbooks	68.6	2.9	17.1	11.4	35	1.7143	1.12646
Preferred IL of textbooks (general)	57.1	5.7	34.3	2.9	35	1.8286	1.01419
Preferred IL for Vocabulary Section	42.9	17.1	40.0	0	35	1.9714	.92309

Most of the informants (57.1%, $n=20$) have responded that they prefer English to be the instruction language of CFL textbooks while 34.3% ($n=12$) students have responded that they prefer a Sinhala and English bilingual instruction approach. The preference for Sinhala and Chinese only instruction is very low which accounts for 5.7% ($n=2$) and 2.9% ($n=1$) respectively. A much similar result could be observed in the students'

preference for the vocabulary section. While 42.9% of the respondents ($n=15$) have concluded that they prefer English to be the translation language for vocabulary, another 40.0% have claimed that they prefer a bilingual approach which includes both Sinhala and English. While 17.1% of the respondents ($n=6$) have concluded that they prefer Sinhala translations for the vocabulary section, none of the



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students have preferred Chinese only instruction.

Table 4. Student's Opinion on Preferred Language of Translation of Selected Words

Word	English Meaning	English %	Sinhala %	<i>n</i>
四合院[sìhéyuàn]	Traditional Chinese Courtyard House	57.1	42.9	35
名胜古迹 [míngshènggǔjī]	Places of Interest	74.3	25.7	35
炒锅[chǎoguō]	Wok	60	40	35
筷子[kuàizi]	Chopsticks	100	0	35
补语[bǔyǔ]	Complement	100	0	35
量词[liàngcí]	Classifier	77.1	22.9	35

Apart from the questions on instruction language, students were given four culture loaded words and inquired on their opinion on the most suitable translation out of English and Sinhala. It could be observed from Table 4 that in general, most students are inclined towards using English translations for Chinese words. While 57.1% ($n=20$) of the informants have preferred the English translation for the word 四合院 [sìhéyuàn], 42.9% ($n=15$) of the informants have chosen the Sinhala translation. For the word 名胜古迹 [míngshènggǔjī] which refers to 'places of interest', 74.3% ($n=26$) of the respondents have preferred the English translation and the rest 25.7% ($n=9$) have voted for the Sinhala translation. 60% ($n=21$) of the students have preferred the English translation 'wok' for the Chinese word 炒锅 [chǎoguō] while the rest 40% ($n=14$) have voted for the Sinhala translation. 100% of the students have preferred the English translation 'chopsticks' for 筷子

[kuàizi], none have preferred its Sinhala translation.

Two grammatical terms, namely 补语 [bǔyǔ] and 量词 [liàngcí] which respectively refer to 'Complement' and 'Classifier' were also included in the questionnaire to obtain students' opinion on their preferred translation. 100% of the students have preferred the English translation for the word 补语 [bǔyǔ]. 77.1% of the informants have preferred the English translation for the word 量词 [liàngcí] while 22.9% have preferred the Sinhala translation.

DISCUSSION

Wray & Hajar (2017) suggest that it is of paramount importance for local textbook designers to get involved in the language textbook designing process and incorporate an explicit strategy instruction into them to make sure that language learning strategies integrated into the textbooks are relevant to learners' preferences of



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learning styles. This is further justified by the responses on localizing textbooks in the present study. Four significant inferences could be drawn from the above data analysis which will be of paramount importance to the discussion.

1. In general, there is considerable demand for localizing the textbooks although most students have responded that the existing CFL textbooks are suitable.
2. A majority of students have preferred a Sinhala-English bilingual instructional approach in textbooks.
3. Most students believe that more local words should be incorporated into CFL textbooks.
4. A majority of students have favoured English translations for culture loaded words and grammatical terms of Chinese language to be incorporated into CFL textbooks.

While these inferences could be instrumental in ensuring the student friendliness of localized CFL textbooks, it is unlikely that they provide a complete and comprehensive outlook into the issues considering the space for standard error and consistency of the information provided by the students. For example, despite 40% of the informants have favoured the Sinhala translation $\text{කෘමික}/\theta a:tʃijə/$, it is doubtful to which extent does the Sinhala concept match with the Chinese word 炒锅[chǎoguō]. The same observation could be made

regarding the Sinhala translation of 合院[sìhéyuàn] which does not convey the meaning of the concept as strong as the English translation.

In order to cope with the above issue CFL textbook designers should have a fair understanding of the language patterns and socio-linguistic aspects of the Chinese language and at least some knowledge of translation methods from and into Chinese. According to Pellatt et al. (2014, p. 2) there are recognized, conventional ways of approaching discrepancies and creative ways of dealing with the patterns of Chinese language since they inevitably differ from those of other languages. The textbook designers have to pay meticulous attention to translating culture-loaded words since they could easily lead to confusions or misinterpretations if not dealt with extra attention. Yanjian (2009) claims that there are two types of sources in translation, the first being the generic sources that are 'conceptually shared' by both target and source languages and the second being the sources that are specific to the source language. The former poses fewer barriers in translation while the latter often generates issues of harmony with the target language.

The second most important concern in localizing CFL textbooks for the Sri Lankan context is including local words into textbooks. A considerable number of neologisms have been coined in the Chinese language for popular proper names in Sinhala (*i.e.*, 科



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伦坡[kēlúnpō] Colombo, 康提[kāngtí] Kandy, 阿努拉德普勒 [ānūlādépūlè] Anuradhapura) and some other cultural terms (*i.e.*, 卫塞节 [wèisāijié] *Vesak* 布萨日[bùsàrì] *Poson*, 埃萨拉 [āisàlājié] *Esala*) have also been added into the Chinese lexicon. The knowledge of these words is of paramount importance to Sri Lankan Chinese learners and the most appropriate way of incorporating these into teaching Chinese in Sri Lanka is by localizing textbooks.

Apart from these words there is a large amount of Indic loanwords in the Chinese language which share phonological and semantic features with many South Asian languages including Sinhala. According to Wang (2008, p. 68-69), the translation of Indic Buddhist *sutras* led to the forming of *Buddhist Hybrid Chinese*. A large number of Indic words including “塔[tǎ]” Sanskrit (*Sk*) *Stupa*, “僧[sēng]” *Sk: Samgha*, “禅[chán]” *Sk: Dhyana*, “佛[fó]” *Sk: Buddha*, “刹那[chànà]” *Sk: Ksana* etc. transliterations, “色[sè]” *Sk: Rupa*, “欲[yù]” *Sk: Kāma*, “觉[jué]” *Sk: Sathi* etc. free-translations and a number of phono-semantic matchings have been borrowed by Chinese. These words are of much significance in intercultural communication with China owing to the cultural ties that have been long established owing to Buddhist relations between China and South Asia. In nativizing CFL textbooks, Indic loanwords in Chinese would preferably be an essential component of local vocabulary.

Most existing CFL global textbooks, except for those which have been prepared for specific regions (*i.e.*, East Asia) have used English as the instruction language. However, owing to the complex situation of English as a Second Language in Sri Lanka, the use of English as the sole instruction language in foreign language textbooks is an issue of controversy. According to Coperehewa (2011) Colonial education policies have resulted in the forming of a social elite educated solely in the English language and in spite of the increase in number of schools, those who had benefits of the English language are relatively less. However, the use of English language in CFL textbooks remains inevitable due to the scarcity of appropriate terms in Sinhala for culture-loaded words and technical terms of Chinese language, most of which, even if available, are much less familiar to students than their English counterparts. For example, the word 补语[bǔyǔ] in Table 4 is translated into English as ‘complement’ and in Chinese language complements of direction, complement of result and complement of time etc. constitute for major grammatical components. Most students are much less familiar with its Sinhala counterpart compared to the English term.

However, from the responses of the students in the present research, it could be inferred that there is a considerable number of students who have demanded Sinhala to be included as an instruction language, preferably



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due to their lower proficiency of English. Recent studies on multilingualism in language learning have revealed that language learners could be more benefitted by multilingual or partial immersion approaches than a monolingual instructional approach. As claimed by Cenoz & Gorter (2015, p.7), the multilingual turn is an implication that languages are no longer isolated entities and their boundaries are getting 'softer'. The fields of Second Language acquisition and sociolinguistics are also becoming more permeable and 'becoming multilingual' and 'being multilingual' are dynamic processes due to their interactive nature. In a context where linguistic variables have complex correlations like in Sri Lanka, a multilingual approach would preferably bring better outcomes than total immersion.

Recent studies have also concentrated on the potentials of using translanguaging as a substitution for total immersion. Translanguaging allows the learners to utilize the full language repertoire of them to support understanding language content, develop their language competency and while accommodating their socio-emotional characters which also accredit an equitable society (García & Kleyn, 2016, p.14). Considering the complexity of the language situation and the particular requirements of Chinese language students in Sri Lanka, CFL would have to be

optimized to support a partial immersion or translanguaging approach by incorporating both Sinhala and English instructions into them.

According to the Annual Performance Report (2019, p.6) of the Ministry of Tourism in Sri Lanka, Chinese tourists are categorized as the third highest number of tourist arrivals recorded in the Year 2019 with the highest growth rate in the year of 36.89%. With the ever-growing Chinese tourism industry in Sri Lanka, the demand for Chinese for Tourism became one of the most prominent forms of Chinese for Special Purposes (CSP) during the final decade of the pre-covid19 pandemic era. The contextualization of lesson topics and localizing textbook content was one of the key requirements under this situation which, however, has been least addressed up to now. Adapting lesson text to fit into the Sri Lankan context would have a multifaceted influence on developing Chinese language education in Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study is an effort towards establishing a fundamental framework for developing localized CFL textbooks for Sri Lankan students. Global textbooks are perceived as weakening the socio-linguistic spirit of foreign language learners and offering less opportunity to incorporate the linguistic repertoire of their L1 and L2. Through rigorous study of literature



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coupled with systematic analysis of student responses, the present study has brought forth several implications on deviating from global textbooks and taking a turn towards developing CFL textbooks that may best fit into the Sri Lankan context. The findings of the present study have triggered a dialogue on the topic which necessarily demands further discussion and argument towards localizing CFL textbooks for optimal outcomes.

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