

USAGE OF SLANG IN A RESIDENTIAL UNIVERSITY IN SRI LANKA

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According to Marples (1950), "slang is unconventional, non-standard, colloquial speech — anything which in given circumstances is regarded as illegitimate — though who is to lay down the law on the question of legitimacy is another matter."

A residential university, being a gathering of more or less self-contained undergraduate student community, has its own peculiar organisation and social structure. It has its own special activities requiring a special jargon.

This study records, as a matter of interest not without linguistic importance, how English and the two vernacular languages are handled (or mishandled?) by the student body of a residential university. Adopting the method of Tarzie Vittanchi (1960?), who had described the popular Ceylonisms, the real meanings of more than 50 slang words (and phrases), which is in prevalence among undergraduates are analysed.

References:

1. Morris Marples (1950) — *University Slang*. Williams & Norgate, London. 187pp.
2. Tarzie Vittachi (n.d.) — *Trials of Transition in the Island in the Sun*. Assoc. Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd., Colombo. pp.25-42.
3. Medicine Ball '71 Souvenir. "Guide to the Native Lingo".