

Glossed Text

See p. 118-121 in:

Smith, Ian R. 2013. Sri Lanka Portuguese. In: Michaelis, Susanne Maria & Maurer, Philippe & Haspelmath, Martin & Huber, Magnus (eds.) *The Survey of Pidgin and Creole Languages, Vol. II: Portuguese-based, Spanish-based and French-based Languages*, 111-121. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This spontaneous text was recorded and transcribed in 1974. An excerpt was published earlier in Smith 1998. The speaker is Ronald Rosairo (born 1906, now deceased), then president of the Batticaloa Burgher Union. The text is taken from an interview concerning marriage traditions of the Burgher community (field notes nos. 3241–3396). The author's interventions are included in {braces}. # indicates a false start. The use of the future tense as habitual is vague as to time reference. The translation has been rendered in the English present, but parts of the passage clearly refer to former times.

Beergar-s kezmeentu kera kunsaa see, nooyvu-pa aka
Burgher-PL wedding VOL begin COND groom-DAT that
If Burghers are going to begin a marriage, if the groom likes

nɔɔyva-ntu dizeey kam-falaa, eli paaymaay-su
bride-LOC desire COND-QUOT 3SG.M.NHON parents-GEN
the bride, he, with his parents

diziyaansa juuntu un solistar lo-mandaa,
liking with one solicitation.letter FUT-send
consent, will send a solicitation letter to the

nɔɔyva-pa. Solistar kam-falaa, aka uŋ kaarta
bride-DAT solicitation.letter COND-QUOT that one letter
bride. A solicitation letter means: That is a letter.

“Eev teem dizeey vosa fiya-pa pa-kazaa,
I PRS.be desire 2SG.GEN daughter-ACC INF-marry
They will write asking, “I want to marry your daughter.

botus-pa kilay?" falaa=tu lo-puntaa iskruuva¹.

2PL-DAT how QUOT=PFV FUT-ask write

How is that for you?"

{Aka nooyvu-su maaypaay lo-iskruuva voo senaa nooyvu

that groom-GEN parents FUT-write INDF or groom

Do the groom's mother and father write that or does the

mee lo-iskruuva voo?}

FOC FUT-write INDF

groom himself write it?

Nooyvu-su maaypaay mee ki-skruuva.

groom-GEN mother.father FOC NMLZ-write

It is the groom's parents who write it.

{Aka nooyvu nxyva-pa seem-oyaa etus lo-iskruuva

that groom bride-DAT NEG.PTCP-see 3PL.HON FUT-write

Would they write without the groom seeing the bride?

voo?} Naa, etus oyaa=tu mee lo-iskruuva. Avara

INDF no 3PL.HON see=PFV.PTCP FOC FUT-write now

No, they will only write after seeing

eli mes-fikaa dizeey naa? {seem, seem}

3SG.NHON OBLIG-become desire no

[her]. Now, he must like [her], no? yes yes

Aka viida mee, etus oyaa=tu mee

that because FOC 3PL.HON see=PFV.PTCP FOC

For that very reason they would write only after

¹ This is a rare example of a conjunctive participle in a coda. Normal word order would be *iskruuva(tu) lo-puntaa*.

lo-iskruuva. Avara aka iskruuva-pa dispoos, teem boom
FUT-write now that write-DAT after be good
seeing [her]. Now after writing that, they [the bride's
family] will say it's good

falaa=tu; avara etus dizeey see, "Seem, noos-pa
QUOT=PFV now 3PL.HON desire COND yes 1PL-DAT
and if they are willing, they will write "Yes, we

dizeey" falaa=tu aka-ntu viraa iskruuva=tu
desire QUOT=PFV that-LOC turn write=PFV.PTCP
are willing" on that [same letter]

lo-mandaa. Aka uy pesaam ki-levaa. {Keem lo-levaa?}
FUT-send that one person NMLZ-take who FUT-take
and send it back. Someone takes it. Who will take [it]?

Etus-su um pareenti uya levaa lo-daa,
3PL.HON-GEN one relative one take FUT-give
A relative of theirs will take [it] and give [it to the groom's
family].

{senaa uy kambraadu?}
or one friend
Or else a friend?

Tɔna aka "seem" kam-falaa, tɔna "palaavra" falaa=tu
then that yes COND-QUOT then betrothal QUOT
Then, if it [the answer] is "yes", then there is

uy kaavs teem. Seem, nooyvu kum nɔyva andaa nosa
one thing is Yes, groom CNJ bride go 1PL.GEN
a thing called "betrothal". Yes, the groom and bride go to

paadri-ntaa “*eev teen dizey taal pesaam-pa pa-kazaa*”
priest-LOC 1SG have desire such person-ACC INF-marry
our priest and say "I want to marry so-and-so."

*falaa=tu lo-falaa. Avara osiir taan [nɔɔyva-ntaa]*²
QUOT=PFV FUT-say. now 3SG.HON also bride-LOC
Now he [the priest] also asks the bride

lo-puntaa “*Boos-pa teen dizey voo eli-pa pa-kazaa?*”
FUT-ask 2SG-DAT have desire INDF 3SG-ACC INF-marry
“Do you want to marry him?”

Falaa=tu. Asii doos pesaam taam falaa see, paadri
QUOT=PFV. Thus two people CNJ say COND priest
So if both people say [“yes”], the priest

aka buku-ntu lo-iskruuva. “Taal taal mɔɔstar taal
that book-LOC FUT-write such such way such
writes it in that book. After writing “such and such and

mɔɔstar falaa iskruuva=tu, eneela taam lo-trukaa unga-pa
way QUOT write=PFV ring CNJ FUT-exchange
so and so they will also exchange rings,

unga. Nɔɔyva ung eneela triiya nooyvu-su
one-DAT one bride one ring bring groom-GEN
one with the other. The bride brings a ring and puts it

maan-ntu lo-botaa. Nooyvu ung eneela triiya
hand-LOC FUT-put groom one ring bring
on the groom's hand and the groom will bring

² Inserted by the speaker during transcription.

nɔɔyva-su maan-ntu lo-botaa. Aka mee enɛɛla
bride-GEN hand-LOC FUT-put that FOC ring
a ring and put it on the bride's hand. THAT is what is known

ki-trukaa. Aka mee palaavra ki-falaa. Aka
NMLZ-exchange that FOC betrothal NMLZ-QUOT that
as the exchanging of rings. THAT is what is known as
betrothal. That

diiya um prazeer lo-teem, nɔɔyva-su kaaza. Palaavra
day one party FUT-be bride-GEN house betrothal
day there will be a party, [at] the bride's house. After the
betrothal

kavaa-pa dispoos, nɔɔyva-su jeentis nooyvu-su
finish-DAT after bride-GEN people groom-GEN
is finished, the bride's people invite the groom's

jeentis-pa partay-pa lo-komindaa, "nɔɔyva-su kaaza
people-ACC party-DAT FUT-invite bride-GEN house
people to a party [saying] "Come to the bride's house."

vii=tu andaa" falaa. Aka palaavra kavaa, tɔɔna
come- PFV go QUOT that betrothal finish, then
When the betrothal is finished, next,

aka-pa dispoos prumeer sumaana nosa greeya-ntu
that-DAT after before week 1PL.GEN church-LOC
the first week after that in our church

"pregaam" falaa=tu um palaavra teem. Pregaam
banns QUOT=PFV one word PRS.be banns
there is a thing called "banns".[They] will read the banns.

lo-lees. Nosa mordaana viitu portugees vɔnda
FUT-read 1PL.GEN president TOP Portuguese by
Our president – he will read them in Portuguese.

lo-lees. Portugees vɔnda etus tudu-s lo-lees,
FUT-read Portuguese by 3PL.HON all-PL FUT-read
In Portuguese he will read them all:

taal pesaan-su fiya, taal pesaan-su fiya,
such person-GEN daughter such person-GEN daughter
“so-and-so’s daughter, so-and-so’s daughter,

taal pesaan-su fiyu taal pesaan-su fiyu falaa=tu
such person-GEN son such person-GEN son QUOT=PFV
so-and-so’s son, so-and-so’s son.”

isti-s-pa kisee paranteeza kam-teem, muytu
this-PL-DAT any relationship COND-be much
“If they have any relationship,

paranteeza lo-tem kam-falaa, noos-pa aka daa saba
relationship FUT-be COND-QUOT 1PL-DAT that give know
if there is a close relationship, let us know

preesta falaa=tu portugees vɔnda lo-lees
quickly QUOT=PFV Portuguese by FUT-read
immediately.” [He] will read in Portuguese in church.

greeya-ntu. Portugees vɔnda. Avara niinga nun-teem
church-LOC Portuguese by now nobody NEG-be
In Portuguese. Now there is no one to

pa-lees. Parim nuku-aaa aka buku. senaa, ee
INF-read 1SG.DAT NEG-get that book or 1SG
read it - I didn’t get that book. Or else I

lodi-ka-lees kii-pa kam-falaa, aka portugees
IRR-PFV-read. what-DAT COND-QUOT that Portuguese
would have read [them]. The reason is [why] the reading in

vɔnda ki-ta-lees: aka tɛmpu-ntu bastaantu
by NMLZ-PRS-read that time-LOC many
Portuguese: at that time there used to be many

portugees jeentis greeya-ntu lo-teem. ɔkɔɔra aka
Portuguese people church-LOC FUT-be then that
Portuguese people in the church.³ At that time too, it was in
Latin that the

miisa pregasaam taam letin vɔnda mee ki-falaa.
mass sermon CNJ Latin by FOC NMLZ-say
mass and sermon were said.

Pregasaam taam aluj ɔra-s-untu paadri-s portugees
sermon CNJ some time-PL-LOC priest-PL Portuguese
The sermon too sometimes the fathers would preach in
Portuguese,

vɔnda lo-falaa, aka tɛmpu-su paadri-s. Asii tina
by FUT-say that time-GEN priest-PL thus be.PST
the priests of those days. Thus it may have been⁴, [but]

see, tɔna avara ingrees kum malvaar vɔnda mee
COND next now English and Tamil by FOC
now they are preaching in English and Tamil only.

³ The speaker translated as follows: 'On that day most of the Portuguese people will be in the church.'

⁴ Lit. 'If it was thus'.

ta-falaa. Isti pregaam ki-lees taam avara malvaar
PRS-say this banns NMLZ-read CNJ now Tamil
It is in Tamil too that they read the reading of

vɔnda mee ta-lees. Kii-pa kam-falaa, niinga
by FOC PRS-read what-DAT COND-QUOT nobody
the banns. The reason is, there is no one

nun-teem pa-lees.
NEG-be INF-read
to read [them].

{*siṅoor pooy lees naa? oo, aka paadris mesa-lees?*}
sir HABILread no oh that priest-PL OBLIG-read
You could read [it], couldn't you? Oh, the priests must
read [it]?

naa, buku naa? Murdaan mee ki-lees aka buku
no book no president FOC NMLZ-read that book
No, the book eh? It is the president himself who reads [it].

nun-tem miṅa-ntaa. Buku oyaa see naa, poy lees.
NEG-be 1SG.GEN-LOC book see COND no HABIL read
[But] I don't have that book If I see the book, eh, I can
read [it].

Aka=ley tudu teem. Isti, tɔma, trees vees
that=like all PRS.be this afterwards three time
Like that, everything is there. This afterwards,

greeya-ntu jaa-kaa-lees see, aka kezmeentu pooy
church-LOC PST-PFV-read COND that wedding HABIL
if it is read three times in the church, [they] can proceed
with the wedding.

faya kavaa tɔna. Etus pooy kaza. Etus
make finish next. 3PL.HON HABIL marry 3PL.HON
They can get married. They

un diiya nimitaa=tu kezmeentu lo-gardaa
one day appoint=PFV.PTCP wedding FUT-keep
set a day and have the wedding.

kezmeentu-pa prumeer eneela lo-trukaa eneela
wedding-DAT before ring FUT-exchange ring
Before the wedding, they exchange rings.

lo-kaa-trukaa. Avara kii ta-faya kam-falaa,
FUT-PFV-exchange now what PRS-do COND-QUOT
they would exchange rings. Now what they do is on the

kezmeentu diiya mee eneela taam ta-trukaa. Prumeer
wedding day FOC ring CNJ PRS-exchange formerly
wedding day itself they also exchange rings. Formerly it was

asii nuva.
thus NEG.be
not like that.