

Tackling Metalinguistic Lacunas and the Choice of Loans: A Study Based on the Compilation of a Sinhalese Treatise on Indian Folk Dance

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In order to fill a metalinguistic lacuna, i.e., the non-existence of a term to describe some new object or practice, the necessity to adopt a word from a different language with little or no modification arises. Known as borrowing, this phenomenon occurs with a need filling motive, with new words, along with new concepts being transferred from one language known as the donor to another known as the borrowing language. The aim of the present study has been to examine the choice of loans under this need-filing motive, with regard to the compilation of a Sinhalese treatise on Indian folk dance, by the researchers themselves. In compiling the treatise, a geographical classification of Indian folk dance was considered. Accordingly, expositions on folk dance based on central, northern, eastern, northeastern, southern, western, and south western regions were presented in Sinhalese. The measures taken in transferring new concepts related to them into Sinhalese were differentiated based on their forms. Accordingly, Loanwords, Loans with Annotations, Loanblends, and Loanshifts were identified as types of loans followed in the said task. The findings of the study reveal that in filling metalinguistic lacunas, a number of types of loans need to be followed in order to make the output efficacious for the receptors. The practical requirements raise the use of several types of loans in addition to most conspicuous strategy of loanword and their choice in this regard is a delicate matter which needs to be made taking factors such as knowledge of receptors and cultural differences between the related backgrounds into consideration.

Keywords: Culture, Indian Folk Dances, Loans, Metalinguistic Lacunas

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