

The Sri Lankan Nature of Grimm's Fairy Tales: A Critical Analysis

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Fairy tales and folk-tales are most important cultural and social components in a society. The lifestyle of the people of ancient times, their traditional beliefs, the cultural background and dialects peculiar to different regions are among a few aspects that can be understood by analysing the folklore of a speech community.

A large number of stories from "*Kinder und Hausmarchen*" (The Children's and Household Tales") compiled by the Grimm brothers have been translated into many languages in the world including Sinhala. The translators of these stories have taken care to adapt these to Sri Lankan culture, life style and ways of thinking. There are also some parallel folk tales in Sri Lanka. This paper attempts to analyse how selected the fairy tales of Grimm brothers have been translated into Sinhala and how they have been integrated into Sri Lankan culture. As a student of German language for over 6 years, it is interesting to note how the original German fairy tales have been a part and parcel of Sri Lankan children in their growing years. Thus it is also attempted in this study to find out how significant the European fairy tales are in Sri lankan folklore and to what extent the stories have become an integrated part of life of Sri Lankan children. The analysis of data shows that both Grimm's Fairy tales and Sinhala folktales have some similarities.

The data of this study was obtained from secondary sources and through a survey that was conducted with sample of 100 schoolchildren in Sri Lanka to determine their reading habits and knowledge of folktales and fairy tales. A study of this nature involving Grimms' fairy tales and Sinhala folktales has not been conducted so far. Thus it is expected that this study will pave way for future studies in this area.

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