

BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: *DICTIONARY OF LOANWORDS*

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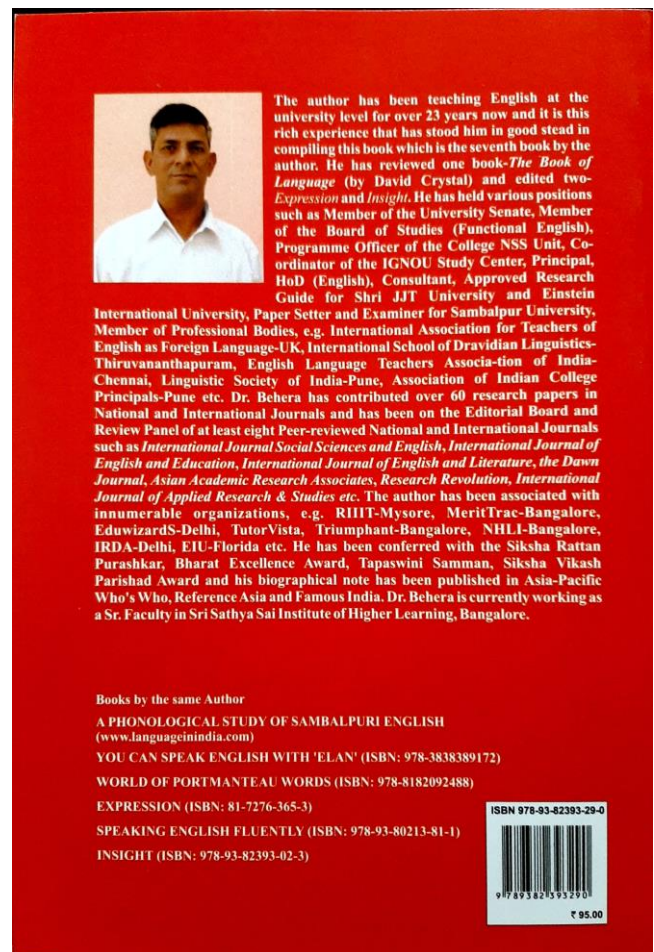
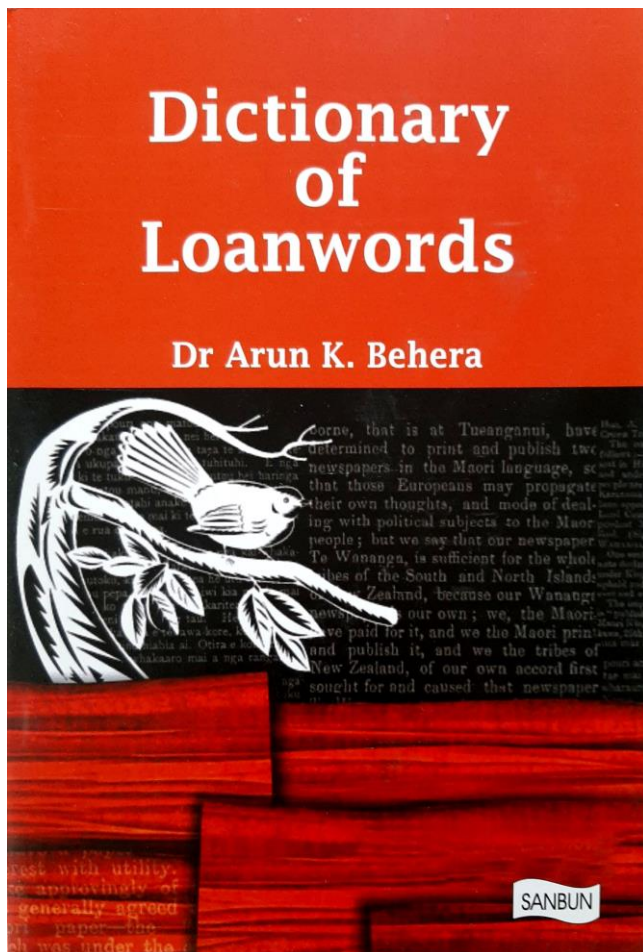
Author: Dr Arun Behera

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Here is a book written by Dr. Arun Behera titled *Dictionary of Loanwords* wherein he has delved deep in to how the British borrowed a large number of words from different cultures and nations: about

three-fifths of the roughly 60,000 active English vocabularies, to be precise. The author has argued that perhaps because of its openness to borrow and assimilate words from other peoples, English has stood the test of time: it is, in effect, the second largest spoken language in the world (there are, by the way over 6000 living languages!). Language as such is a product of what a large number of people use but everyone has their own linguistic story to tell, and *Dictionary of Loanwords* is part of such a story.

With his rich experience and expertise in language, the author has made such a daunting task so simple by listing the words, supplying meaning of each, give appropriate examples and add images wherever possible. He has shown how words find their way in to the English lexicon not only from other languages or cultures but also from other fields. Some of the most common examples are: ‘banana’ (Afrikaans), ‘admiral’ (Arabic), ‘typhoon’ (Chinese), ‘luck’ (Dutch), ‘seminar’ (German), ‘phone’ (Greek), ‘loot’ (Hindi), ‘stanza’ (Italian), ‘monk’ (Latin), ‘police’ (French), ‘cinema’ (media), ‘clinic’(medicine), ‘coach’ (automobiles), ‘inhibition’ (psychology), ‘launch’ (space science), ‘camouflage’ (war) etc!

This small yet useful book shows the other side of him: a lexicographer and a linguist. This book, as it were, breaks the linguistic barrier, exhibits the confluence of cultures, opens up the realm of borrowings, and establishes the fact that a language is not a monopoly of a few. The author has left no stone unturned to make the book as authentic and relevant. And the result is in front of all of us to see and relish. I really trust his endeavour will be quite fruitful not only for the laymen who normally possess inquisitiveness for words in general but also for those who have special interests in the etymology, loan words and such other facets. It will certainly make a good read.

I would like to conclude that this book in itself is complete with citation of best possible examples and what is more: it is reasonably priced. One suggestion I would offer: it’s high time to come up with a new edition or version of the book, accommodating all the new words, because in the intervening period of over seven years since the book was published, a lot of new developments with regard to loanwords would have taken place.