CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION

India has a very rich tradition of classical dance. The Natyashastra, which is the oldest surviving text on stagecraft in the world, spends a considerable time discussing Natyashastra. During the olden days, the dancers would mime the story while the singers would sing the dialogue. The instrumentalists would accompany them all. The nature of the old theater was such that the dancers occupied a central position. For many centuries, the dancers were attached to the temples. This maintained a strong religious flavor to dance. Even today, many of the traditional themes are mythological in nature.

Classical dance in India has been termed as a form of yoga based on physical energy and spiritual power, Dance is believed to have originated with “Lord Shiva”. It is said that when Brahma created the fifth Veda, he took “padhya” or the art of recitation, Lyric from the Rig-Veda, Abhinaya or Visual representation from Yajur –Veda, Gita or Vocal music from Sama-Veda and Rasa or Aesthetics from the Atharva-Veda. In this way they were put together to create the fifth Veda Natya Veda.

The term "classical" (Sanskrit. "Shastriya") was introduced by Sangeet Natak Academy to denote the Natyashastra based on performing art styles. A very important feature of Indian classical dances is the use of the mudra or hand gestures by the artists as a shorthand sign language to narrate a story
and to demonstrate certain concepts such as objects, weather, nature and emotion\(^1\).

It is particularly problematic to talk about classical Indian dance. The first benchmark is age. The second is its ability to cross ethnic boundaries, and third is class associations. It is generally acknowledged that for something to be considered classical, it must have great age (i.e. ancient era). This seems simple at first, but the obvious question of how one determines age. Clearly every performance exists in the here-and-now, so the performance itself cannot be used. Although the performance may not be used to determine age, we might consider using the ancient literature found. This would be acceptable to many people. However if this is used, it is surprising how recently some literary or artistic works have developed. For instance BharataNatyam as it is thought of today, only goes back to the early 20th century since the ancient literary work also denote ages, which are not acceptable in traditional Indian worldviews, most Indians would use the tradition to define age.

Natya Veda was originally an oral body of knowledge that was later written in Natyashastra. It was written by Bharatha muni dated around 2\(^{nd}\) C A.D. Large part of Natyashastra deals directly with dance topics such as body position, where in the qualities are based on major minor body parts being used while performing dance. The Natyashastra has a whole chapter devoted to hand gestures, it is just like the language used by the hearing impaired, but more stylized form.

\(^1\) From Wikipedia, Article Natyashastra, Free Encyclopedia.(Internet service).
Another ancient text found on Bharathanatya is “AbhinayaDarpana” by Nandikeshwara dated around 1000 A.D. Most of the dance forms follow the 12th century text called “AbhinayaDarpana”, which means mirror of gestures.

Classical dance is classified into two major types –
Nritta
-Nritya

In classical dance, ideas and emotions are expressed through Abhinaya used as a medium.

This may be either “Lokadharmini” (realistic) or “Natyadharmini” (stylized). This mode of expression may be purely physical (Angika) and purely emotional (Satvika). Abhinaya makes unique use of language in the form of expression or gesture.

Nandikeshwara distinguishes two sources of pleasure which is first of all, a visual support and another auditory. The former is composed of dance, mimes, gestures, dramatic expressions of the eyes and the face. The second explores the innate and potential wealth of a language, phonic as well as semantic and transfigures everything in contact with music.

Rasa-expression is responsible to show bhava which means emotion while dancing. Abhinaya is the craft of expressing and conveying in words, art, music and movement by the artist.

‘Abhinaya’, the art of expression, is a very important feature in Bharathanatyam. Knowledge of music, stories, visual arts, culture, and language help the dancer to perform with total involvement and expression.

According to Natya Shastra, the ancient Indian treatise on dance, music and dramatic arts, Rasa is an emotion inspired in an audience by a performer. Rasas are created by Bhavas, the gestures and facial expressions of the actors.

A rasa or sentiment is a result of Sthayi-Bhava (Permanent state) producing a form of pleasure and sensation through its movements, here the help is taken from “hastas” or hand positions that facilitates the expression which is taken or selected by Sahitya or composition of dance theme.

Bharathanatyam is a sophisticated dance art form of Tamilnadu. It is very much visual in appearance and dynamic it has precise style of Indian classical dance form. Most of the time it is commonly believed that bharathanatya, a form of classical dance, represents our Indian culture through the form of audiovisual media.

According to Natyashastra, the dancer communicates the meaning of a dance through four varieties of Abhinaya. It is the performing art in which movement, gesture and intonation is used to realize a fictional character for the stage, also called fine arts modes of expression that use skill or imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments or experiences that can be shared with others through the help of dance.

1.1- Language – Linguistics and Sociolinguistics and their Relationship with BharataNatyam.

Language is a communication system consisting of formal units that are integrated through process of combination of components such as sound
gestures and meaning that are expressed through the aspects of non-verbal communication. People convey meaning not only through spoken language but also through gestures, facial expression and body postures. This non-verbal communication makes use of gestures particularly facial expression, eye contact. This non-verbal communication also consists of unique and common behavioral patterns.

When we speak about communication i.e. language, we can say language is everywhere, it sends our thoughts along with other language and even it creep into our dreams. Every language has its own system or structure. We keep adding and deleting old words from them, therefore language gives us power to act or react. We can say, language like sleep is not a substance but an ongoing process since language is a organism which grows or evolves through various stages. Some scholars say language is a system for representing things, actions, ideas and states or a set of utterances that could be understood by a linguistic community.

In the year 1886 B.C - “La society de linguistique de paris”, thought that language originated through :-

a. Imitation theory

b. Reciprocating theory

c. Gesture language theory
According to another scholar Whitney – "Language is the first thing we learn and the last thing we forget. It’s the most intimate nature in our habits”.

Brown says -1991– “Language is a small face of collection of words put in a combination of group used by people who interact to accomplish some purpose”.

Language is a term most commonly used to refer to so called "natural languages", the forms of communication considered peculiar to humankind. In linguistics, the term is extended to refer to the type of human thought process which creates and uses language.3

Statement quoted by Noam Chomsky – “Language is not an inborn quality, it is creative and acquired”.

Linguistics is the scientific study of language, encompassing a number of sub-fields. Human languages are usually referred to as natural languages and the science of studying them falls under the purview of linguistics. A common progression for natural languages is that they are considered to be first spoken, then written, and then an understanding and explanation of their grammar is attempted. Languages live, die, move from place to place and change with time.4

Sign language includes all of those forms of codification in which words, signs have been taken as gesture. Dance can be taken as action

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3. Language -From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.
4. The study of language- Linguistics, Main article: Linguistics, From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.
language which embraces all movements that are not commonly used while verbal communication encompasses those events in which words are not spoken or written. Body movements typically includes gestures body movements like movements of limbs, head, hands and feet, facial expression (smile, blinking, way of gaze and body postures are included in them).

"Para Language Studies - How something is said in non-verbal speech behavior. e.g. – vocalization such as vocal characterization. The term non-verbal is commonly used to describe all human communication other then spoken or written forms. The silent language and the hidden dimensions in nonverbal communication which provide us excellent basis from which such work of Abhinaya can be worked out here."\(^5\)

"Sociolinguistics is a scientific discipline developed from the cooperation of linguistics and sociology that investigates the social meaning of the language system and of language use and the common set of conditions of linguistics and social structure. Sociolinguistics is a general study of the relationship between language and the society. Sociolinguistics is the study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used. It also studies how sociolects differ between groups separated by certain social variables, e.g., ethnicity, religion, economic status, gender, level of education".\(^6\)

It is an interdisciplinary field studying the co-variation of language and society within a community language is endowed with social values

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\(^5\) Para Language - From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.
\(^6\) Article on web google.com- Sociolinguistics.
such as prestige, status marking, stability, group assignment and social
distinctions. These attributes correlate with characteristics of speech registers
dialects and varieties and in many cases the various languages used in the
community".7

Sociolinguistics, which deals with the role of language in society, is
some way or the other directly or indirectly related to expression of emotions
or abhinaya related to language in the mode of communication of thought
put in the form of dance as a form of entertainment in the society.

Therefore, we can say that sociolinguistics also plays a major role in
the communication part used in the society to express all our emotions
thoughts and ideas in the form of dance.

Sociolinguistics then tends to embrace the sociology of language
which is used for an “Ethno Methodologically” —&quot;Ethno methodology is a
method for understanding the social orders people use to make sense of the
world through analyzing their accounts and descriptions of their day-to-day
experiences”.8

Sociolinguistics deals with the exploration and relation between
language and society. It is because language is not a single homogeneous
entity but has different forms in different situations, the changes in social
conditions example — social class, gender, religion and cultural groups. One
may speak a different variety of language from the rest of the community.

7. Sociolinguistics -From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.
8. Sociolinguistics - word etymology.com Google.
This is due to geographical region, social class and social situation, occupation etc.

Here sociolinguistics also includes the study of attitudes of language held by social group, which is tied to a social context in each community. Language varies depending not only on the individual speaker but also on the specific situation in which speakers find themselves.

This means that the language used in a given social environment may be perfectly translatable into a different language, but the society to which this other language belongs may not recognize the situation described by the first language. Therefore, even in classical dance forms some aspects of regional language is used during performance so that it is easier for the audience to understand the concept with the help of folk dance forms.

1.2– Language of Abhinaya in Bharathanatyam – A Sociolinguistic Analysis

Bharatanatyam is an Indian classical dance from Tamilnadu. It is a blend of expressions, melody and rhythm. Like many other Indian dance forms, Bharatanatyam too has different postures and poses. Bharatanatyam is associated with facial expressions and non-verbal communication. In this dance form hand gestures and facial expressions used to communicate and express feelings.
The technique of communicating a message in a dance performance is Abhinaya. Here the emphasis is more on facial expressions and gestures. Bharathanatyam is essentially ekaharya performance - a single dancer presenting various characters, regardless of their gender.

The research described in this thesis helps dancers and common people to understand Nava Rasa Abhinaya in particular. This research is grounded in an exploratory study of understanding abhinaya during any dance performances, which is differentiated from previous studies, which was purely based on presentation to limited audience, but here it is studied under the branch of Linguistics i.e. “Sociolinguistics” using certain variables. These variables include – age, gender, place, education and occupation.

This thesis examines how bharathanatya practitioners make participatory visual representations through facial expression. The thesis is organized into five chapters plus a list of references, which contains Data Collected for Analysis – using Questionnaire. The thesis includes a review of the literature.

The first part of the text is dedicated to basic introduction i.e. Language – Linguistics and its Relationship with Bharathanatya and Sociolinguistics.

The second part is devoted to Relationship between Language and Abhinaya that further deals with verbal and non-verbal communication.

Sociolinguistics Study of Nava Rasa Abhinaya Varieties is studied in detail in the third part. Here each rasa is explained using photographs.
The fourth part deals with Analysis of Different Modes of Abhinaya using Graphs.

Fifth chapter is conclusion got after the analysis conducted using questionnaire.

1.3 Themes Used In Bharathanaty

Dancing is an art that involves expressions, flexibility and movement of the body to the rhythmic sounds or music. Dancing has evolved many styles based on the culture. There are different varieties of dances all over the world. India, the land of great mix of different cultures has a number of classical Indian dance forms that mark the uniqueness of different states in the country. There are also several special folk dances that are performed during regional festivals. Every type of dance has a distinct style, costume, story and steps used in the dance.

Folk dances are more famous than classical dance in India because they are easier to understand and perform. With the progress of the civilization all art forms had acquired some distinctive features. Thus dance became an accurate mean of expression. In due course of time several branches of folk dance were born on the basis of regional, geographical differences and variety of form and culture.

Every state in India has its own language, custom, tradition, and festivals. The folk dances of each state act as the mirror of that particular state’s culture and tradition.
“Folk Dances - Though several classical dances are performed in unique ways, India is also famous for a variety of folk dances. All these are performed with great enthusiasm and energy that brings out the joyous mood during the festivals. Dance is accompanied by great rhythmic music, variety of musical instruments, props, colorful costume, extensive jewellery etc. The popular folk dances of India are Bhangra, Dhandiya, Garbha, Kolattam, Kummi, Mayilattam and many more. All these are great form of expression that is out burst to its fullness”.9

Semi-classical – This type of dance breaks the stylized structures and forms of the classical dance, features extensive body movement, brace and expressions, this dance gives mixture of folk and contemporary feel. (See the Photograph).

The aspects of pure dance forms of bharathanatya according to “Abhinaya Darpana” are as follows:

Ganapati Vandana (pushpanjali), Alarippu, Jatiswaram, Shabdam, Varnam, Padam, Javali Thillana and Mangalam

Typically a performance includes:

- **Ganapati Vandana** - A traditional opening prayer to the Hindu god Ganesh, who removes obstacles.

- **Alarippu** - A presentation of the Tala punctuated by simple syllables spoken by the dancer. This really is sort of an invocation to the gods to bless the performance.

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- **Jatiswaram** - An abstract dance where the drums set the beat. Here the dancer displays her versatility in elaborate footwork and graceful movements of the body.

- **Shabdam** - The dancing is accompanied by a poem or song with a devotional or amorous theme.

- **Varnam** - The center piece of the performance. It is the longest section of the dance punctuated with the most complex and difficult movements. Positions of the hands and body tell a story, usually of love and the longing for the lover.

- **Padam** - Probably the most lyrical section where the dancer "speaks" of some aspect of love: devotion to the Supreme Being; or of love of mother for child or the love of lovers separated and reunited.

- **Javali** - Javalis are relatively new, pure abhinaya types of compositions of light and pleasing nature. Like Padams the underlying theme of Javalis is Sringara Rasa depicting the Nayaka-Nayaki bhava.

- **Thillana** - The final section is a pure dance (*nritta*) when the virtuosity of the music is reflected in the complex footwork and captivating poses of the dancer.

- **Mangalam** The performance of classical dance ends with a small sloka known as Mangalam.¹⁰

Folk dances of Karnataka "Suggi Kunitha" “Koravanji Nritya”, “Betagara Kunitha”, “Meenugara Kunitha” etc., along with unique features have a specific song in each regional language.

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¹⁰. According to Natyashastra Items Varities of Dance - Nrityakarma.
Just like languages differ from place to place in the same way Natyashaili differs according to different “Guru Parampara”.

The dancer enriches her presentation, not by telling the events or the story but by interpreting a small portion of the story in several projections. These inventive and imaginative skills of the dancer come in to sharp focus while performing the theme of the nayaka and nayaki or the hero heroin role. Thus dance themes are basically tools that lend themselves to gestures and language and are capable of arousing fundamental emotions, their varied themes of love, heavenly battles and jealousy. Varied environments are the manifestation of “expression with and without words” in motion in the performance.

The dancers express themselves with earthly passion in the performances. Their stories are of human aspiration, expressed through the language of abhinaya to the audiences in the form of dance.

1.4 Dance is a form of Worship

Dance is an exquisite art portrayed through music and movement. It is a very involved form of expression which uses the heart, mind, body and senses. In India dance is a way of worshipping God. Dance was treated like an offering to God and the movements are like prayers to please the Lord. There are other dances that are more like dance-dramas, where the actors or dancers re-enact the past times and stories of the various gods.

There are several types of traditional dance offerings that come from different parts of India as follows - Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Manipuri, Sattriya, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Mohiniattam, and Kathakali.
As a basic element of human expression, dance is found within many of the world's religions, and is frequently associated with worship. Dance, just like anything else done gives joy and happiness to our mind in the form of entertainment.

From a Hindu point of view, the whole Universe is being brought into existence as the manifestation of the dance of the Supreme Dancer, Nataraja. In the Hindu scriptures every god has his or her own style (lasya and tandava respectively represent two aspects of dance). We read about 23 celestial beings called Apsaras who dance to please the gods and express the supreme truths in the magic of movement.
The dance in Hinduism used to be a part of a sacred temple ritual, especially in South and Eastern India, where the female priestesses and devadasis worshipped different aspects of the Divine through the elaborate language of mime and gestures. Natyashastra is the most ancient and the most elaborate scripture describing every element and aspect of this sacred art-worship.

Images used as a form of worship shown in these two snaps above.


Nartana Ganapati is the dancing form of Lord Ganesha. Indian sculpture and dance are fundamentally related. A medieval sculptor most likely learned dance in order to successfully capture movement and facial expression in stone.14 The temple dance gradually evolved into what is known today as the South Indian Classical Dance that still preserves many ritualistic elements of Hinduism. Some of the classical Indian dancers are believed to be incarnations of apsaras.14

Dance is present in mythology and religion globally. Dance has certainly been an important part of ceremony, rituals, celebrations and entertainment since the birth of the earliest human civilizations. Archeology reveals traces of dance from prehistoric times such as the 9,000 year old Bhimbetka rock shelters paintings in India and Egyptian tomb paintings depicting dancing figures from circa 3300 BC.

One of the earliest structured uses of dances may have been in the performance and in the telling of myths. It was also sometimes used to show feelings to the performance of opposite gender. Before the invention of written languages, dance was one of the methods of passing these stories down from generation to generation.

Bharathanatya a form of Indian classical dance is also called as a “form of worship”. We can put forth this statement because, there are beautiful metaphors and similes in the Vedas based on the art of dance. In the epics and puranas both “Lord Rama and Arjuna” were well versed in the

art form according to the records found “Lord Krishna” is known as a supreme dancer. This form of art has been recognized as a monumental work in “Natyashastra”. Therefore his work was known as principle of “gesture – language“. Later came the concept of “AbhinayaDarpana”. This brought out some new concepts of style known as “Paddhati” and this was further classified into two parts such as – Suddha – pure and desastha – regional varieties of dance forms.

According to Bloch and Trager - “Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates”. In the same way we can say that even in classical dance they follow a combination of rhythm using “Tala (counts) and Laya (speed) and has a proper system to be followed. Even this combination used in dance is arbitrary in nature, which uses both body language and vocal symbols to convey the message across in the form of “Mukabhinya” and “Angikabhinya” which is represented in the society through the form of dance as a medium of expression shown.

Each classical dance performance takes the most popularly recognized deities of the Hindu mythology and devotes one dance to the unique characteristics and aura of each God and goddess. The audience will experience the playful nature of the elephant-faced God Ganesha, the wrath of dancing Shiva, the strength of the warring goddess Durga, and the flirtatious effect of the youthful Krishna, by witnessing a specialized combination of music, movement and facial expression corresponding to them in each performance.
Rasa Leela depicts Navarasa. It is a dance, which was originally performed by Krishna and the beautiful gopis of Vraja about 3000 years ago. This is the most famous dance in all of India and different variations of it are performed by the different schools of dance. Folk dancers generally perform the Rasa Leela using wooden sticks and tapping them together. This is a very sweet and simple dance.\textsuperscript{15}

The Rasa lila – (रास-लीला) (Hindi: रास लीला) or Rasa dance is part of the traditional story of Krishna described in Hindu scriptures such as the Bhagavata Purana and literature such as the Gita Govinda, where he dances with Radha and her sakhis. The term, rasa means 'emotion' or 'performance' and lila is a concept from Hinduism, which roughly translates to "play (lila) of the dance (rasa)," or more broadly as "Dance of Divine Love". The name comes from the Sanskrit words rasa and lila, with rasa meaning “juice”, “nectar”, "emotion" or "sweet taste" and lila meaning "pastime". By taking this etymologic breakdown of the word literally, "Rasa lila" means the “sweet pastime” (of Krishna).\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{16} Images taken from Google internet.

1.5 A Brief Historical Evidence of Bharathanatya

Brief historical evidence of Bharathanatya, its origin and development change during its evolution. Indian classical dance form Bharathanatya is considered as a form of yoga which involves entire body movements in a very elegant manner. This form of art is most widely practiced in India since ancient time. This art form represents our Indian culture, it is considered to be the most beautiful sophisticated and graceful dance form.

A quote more frequently used in the recital of every dance performance which is considered as a salute to Lord Nataraja.

“Angikam Bhuvaman Yasya
Vachicam Sarva Vanbmayam
Aharyam Chandra Taradi
Tam Vande Satvikam Shivam”

Meaning of the quote

"we bow to him the benevolent one
(generous in providing aid to others)
Whose limbs are the world
Whose song and poetry are the essence of all languages
Whose costume is the moon and the stars”

The origin and antiquity of Bharathanatya can be traced back from our ancient puranas and Vedas and in the sculptures, which are found in the temples all over India. The sculptural evidence are found around fifth

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18. Radhika Bianchi’s - an article in google- art and soul Friday, 13 February 2009.
century onwards which even reveals various changes and development since the time of its creation. This dance form “Bharathanatya” is based on the principles of Natyashastra text on classical dance written by Bharata Muni, the author of Natyashastra (treatise on dance) written between 2nd century B.C and 2nd century A.D.

Bharathanatya art form consists of music, drama, rhythm and poetry. In this art form the expression is shown through the movements made by limbs, gestures of feet and hastas, but most important of all is abhinaya, bhava or facial expression made during the performance.

The History of Dance Can Be Classified under Three periods:

a) Prehistoric  b) Medieval  c) Modern

a. **Prehistoric** – The heritage of dance in India can be dated atleast around 5000 years old, as evidence from cave painting, engraving, Vedic references in puranas as “Mahabharata” where arjuna has played a role of dancer. Sculptures from the MohenjoDaro civilization and other literary works show the beginnings of a very ancient dance form.
Two women dance, in a painting from central India's Mahadeo Hills state of Madhya Pradesh Narmada River.  

Since prehistoric times dance has been a mode of expression. It has been used as a form of worship. Dance is an indispensable element of our society. The rock, cave painting found in Madhya Pradesh gives us the evidence of ancient times along with the information of dancing sculptures found in the temple of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh etc. 

Hoysala dynasty of Karnataka provides us the evidence of popularity of Indian classical dance in ancient times.

b. **Medieval period** - During the medieval period, Bharatnatyam prospered in the Hindu temples of South India. People called the dancers devadasis, or servants of god. Temple dancers became an integral part of South Indian temple ritual. This art form received great value during the golden rule of the Maratha and Chola rulers. The dance was then called "sadir".

During the Medieval period the local kings often invited devadasis to dance in their courts. These dancers were named as a new category of dancers known as Rajanarthakis and modified the technique and themes of the recitals. A devadasi dancer was offered, to satisfy and offer herself (surrendered) to the Lord, but the Rajanartha dance was meant to be a part of entertainment in the kings court (darbar).

BharatNatyam ballets are popularly viewed as a form of entertainment even now in almost all places. But from past some centuries this art form has been permitted by the society to be used by common people that is common men can now learn this art form, which was once restricted to temple dancers only and was considered as a taboo in the society if learnt by the common men.

c) Modern period - Today there are innumerable male and female dancers all over India and more and more are taking up performing arts as a profession. The styles of today are the recreations of these

\[20\text{. Image taken from Google.}\]
discoveries. So they are both ancient and at the same time being contemporary.

Here we can see the modern way of costume being used hair style the ornaments all in a contemporary form being used during the performance.\textsuperscript{21}

Bharathanatyam has been undergoing lot of changes over the centuries. It has always been mostly performed by female dancers. These days most of them learn Bharatnatyam as a hobby, often from a very young age. Very few make it their career, and still fewer a lifestyle. BharatNatyam is extremely demanding and needs complete dedication as any other form of performing arts. Bharathanatyam is considered as a sacred ritual that is supposed to bring the rasanubhava a spiritual upliftment to the rasika (audience) and the dancer.

\textsuperscript{21} Image taken from Google Images.
Some quotes about bharathanatya taken from some scholars.

1. According to Nandikeshwara, Abhinaya Darpana-
   "Where the hand goes, the glance follows
   Where the glance s lead, the mind follows
   Where the mind goes, there the mood follows
   Where the mood goes, there is Rasa born".

2. According to Vempatti China Satyam 22
   "Dance like music knows no geographical boundaries, no linguistic
   barriers and no racial divisions, all walls crumble where art is
   concerned, it is a great unifying and integrating force”.

3. According to Ann Daly 23
   "A dance legacy must be performed in order to be preserved”.

4. A quote –
   "The dance is a poem of which each movement is a word
   and dancing is the poetry of foot”.

5. According to Ted Shawn 24
   "Dance communicates man’s deepest, highest and most truly spiritual
   thoughts and emotions far better than words, spoken or written”

6. Passion towards this art form. Dance is not merely a physical activity,
   it involves strong mental focus and discipline.25

The classical dance form Bharathanatya traces its origin to the
Natyashastra written by – Bharatha Muni, a hindu sage. This written
document on natya is considered to be the fifth Veda in reference to the

22. Above: A detail of the dance sculptures covering the walls and columns of the Natya
Mandir(Sun Temple Konark).
23. According to Ann Daly.
25. Article on Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Indian Classical Dance By: Archana Ganapathi.
Hindu philosophy. Many of the Hindu temples are based on the dance postures “Karanas”, in fact they are the Apsaras who are depicted in those sculptures. Bharathanatyam, as a dance form is deeply rooted in bhakti, it’s said to be the embodiment of visual form of expression with the help of classical music. It is considered as a ceremony and an act of devotion since dance and music are inseparable forms bound together and can be conceptualized only with each other.

Natyashastra of Bharatha is a principal work of dramatic theory, along with dance and music included together. This Bharatha Natyashastra like any other art form is written in Sanskrit. It is said that Natyashastra was created by lord Brahma, as the fifth Veda compiling of Geetham(song), Vadhyam (instrument), Abhinaya(Dance), Rasa (feelings) found in our four Vedas. Brahma did so at the request of the gods, who wanted an activity that was physically, mentally and spiritually stimulating and at the same time entertaining. It’s been mentioned in the first chapter that why the Natyashastra has been named as “BharathaNatyashastra”. The letters of the word Bharatha are split in this form (Bha+Ra+Tha) which means the combination of Bhava, Raga, Tala are put together in the form of dance and hence was called as Bharathanatyam.

It is believed that Saint Bharatha learnt Natyashastra from Lord Brahma. There are various stories associated with this wonderful dance art form coming to existence in this mortal world. Lord Shiva is considered as the supreme lord of Dance.

Classical dance based on Natyashastra has been taken as social activity in our society, and its qualities are being proved using some specific
movements associated with theoretical and monumental themes. Despite
their themes based on traditional concepts its represented through sculptural
and Vedic tradition as topics taken from historical, mythological stories. The
different classical dance styles were practiced and perfected in the different
parts of the country. Family traditions grew within styles.

**According to Bharatha’s, Natyashastra —**

The entire nature of human beings as connected with the expression of
happiness and misery, joy and sorrow, when expressed through the process
of his histrionic representation (Abhinaya) is called as “Natya”.

a) The Natya in this world will be an imitation (Anukarna)

b) Natya is representational statement (Anukritana) of the emotional state
of this entire triple world.

The concept of rasaswadhana was used during the performance of
“Abhinaya” using the Nava Rasa mainly based on facial expression.

According to ancient classification followed in all styles is of Tandava
and Lasya. Tandava the masculine, is heroic bold and vigorous. Lasya the
feminine is soft, lyrical and graceful. Abhinaya broadly means expression.
This is achieved through angika, the body and limbs, vachika song and
speech and aharya, costume and adornment and satvika, moods and
emotions.

Indian classical dance trace their origin back to the Indian history,
classical dance like any other culture has developed and has made a stand
over the thousands of years. Its one among dignified art form in India,
Bharathanatya the classical dance form trace their roots to Natyashastra
which forms the basis of all performing arts today.
Bharathanaty has always been growing; its basic principle and ideas have remained the same practically unchanged although their forms of presentation have been changing from time to time, according to the convenience of concept and the artist. Dance is a form of communication that brings out the innermost feelings and at the same time tells the cultural aspects of our civilization.

Dance has a special status among performing arts since it has a visual aspect in it. Bharathanaty has a place of honor among the other forms of dance since its purely classical in its concept and tradition.

On the basic model, various dance teachers incorporate their own imaginative innovations, leading to various schools within a particular dance form based on their “Guru Paramparas”. The various dance forms have also developed a particular form of make-up for the performance. These days contemporary costumes are also being used during the performances.

Contemporary dance is the name given to a group of concert dance forms. It is a collection of systems and methods developed from modern style of dancing. Contemporary style here we can see the change in the dance too.
1.6 Forms Of Abhinaya Used In Bharathnatya

Bharata says that abhinaya is the art of "exhibiting the meaning of what one depicts." Bharata has explained the literal meaning of the word Abhinaya thus:

"Abhi-purvas tu nin-dhatur abhimukhyartha isyate
Yasmat Padarthan nayati tasmad abhinayah smrtah"

"‘Abhi’ is the prefix meaning ‘towards’ and ‘ni (naya)’ is the root meaning “to carry”. So, Abhinaya means to carry towards, i.e. to carry the spectator towards the meaning. Thus, Abhinaya can be called a vehicle of Natya through which the spectator experiences the particular emotions of the dramatic character that is to lead him towards Rasananda - the ultimate bliss which is the aim of Natya".  

Abhinaya is one of the specialized aspects of dance and is considered the soul of the performances. Abhinaya is common to all classical dances. It is the expression in dance or Nritya. It is the art of telling a story through
hastas or gestures, movement and facial expressions. Beauty and art are inter-related concepts which are born out of human thought (mind) in the form of facial expression.

Classical dance can communicate as powerfully, as simply, as dramatically as any other article form, be it drama or dance, Abhinaya is an inseparable component of Natya, the ancient Indian system followed in classical dance.

The second major literary work on dance was 'Abhinaya Darpana' by 'NANDIKESHWARA' which was later translated as 'Mirror of Gestures' by many scholars. According to Nandikeshwara, the dancer should sing with the mouth, express the meaning of the song with hand gestures, her eyes should express the emotions or bhava, the tala, the beat or rhythm should be done with her feet, by means of expression, gesture and movement — the dancer has to perform. This is why each dancer must study and master each movement of the head, eyes, mouth, neck, hands, and the whole body.

Abhinaya does not mean only acting, miming or facial expressions. The term applies to all the related aspects of histrionics, which contribute in conveying the poetic content of drama to the spectators. Abhinaya is like an extension of the spiritual as well as physical self. It has an audio-visual experience which has moral as well as entertainment value.

According to Indian aesthetics, 'Rasa' is the taste or the flavour of an art, object or work. The 'Nava Rasa's are universally felt and experienced by

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everyone alike. 'Rasa' has no exact meaning; it can be described, however, as an aesthetic experience felt by the spectator, which results from the artist's soulful performance filled with 'Bhava'. 'Bhava' is the emotional feeling or (an) expression felt and expressed by the performer.

The language of dance is conveyed through the gestures. It is the art of telling a story using “hasta mudra” or gestures along with facial expressions. The abhinaya varieties are divided into four groups as follows.

**Angika abhinaya** - In the abhinaya items, which mostly consists of lyrics, poetry or a narrative set to music and rhythm, the sāhitya (lyrics) is interpreted by the dancer through a series of angika abhinaya. That is, through hand gestures and movements of eyes, eyebrows, eyeballs, etc and through the expression on the face. Through the feet, the tempo (laya) is followed. Thus we see that the whole body acts as a vehicle to express and reach out to the audience. Body parts are categorised as Anga, Upaanga and Pratyanga. The hand gestures are the focal point of language. Angika or physical where every part of the body is used to convey a meaning.

**Vachika abhinaya** or verbal expression such as dialogue in drama and has its origin from Rig Veda or Book of Hymns and it is based on the audible. Or it is the vocal/verbal aspect as used today by members of the orchestra or the supporting non-dancing cast.

29. Gayathri Srinivasan - language of gestures : an article on Google.
30. Taken from an article posted on Google.com.
Aharya Abhinaya or external expression, mood and background as conveyed by costume, make-up, accessories and sets. It is the decoration by garlands, ornaments and costumes on different parts of the body according to custom and tradition.

Costumes should be made suitable to sentiments and coloured accordingly. Make-up should reflect the character of dancer even though it can add more beauty to dancer by using ornaments. Aharya includes stage, stage-setting, scenery, auditorium and ornaments.31

Ornaments are of 4 types—pierced, to be tied, removed, Ear rings are the 1st type, girdles arm bands are the 2nd type, anklets the 3rd and necklaces are the 4th type finger rings.

Satvika Abhinaya - is a fascinating aspect of classical dance.

Satvika Abhinaya or psychological expression as shown by the eyes in particular and as a whole by the entire being of the performer, who feels the mood, the character and the emotion as emanating from the self, not as an act or practical presentation. Satvika Abhinaya or the interpretation of moods, which is originated from Atharva Veda and is based on astral.32

In the literal sense, the word “satvika” means that which is wholesome Satva is the inherent wisdom. In relation to dance, Satvika abhinaya is the physical manifestation of the inherent spirituality and grace that an artist possesses that enables the dancer to express the depth of the theme.

31. Taken from an article posted on weblibrary.thinkquest.org/04oct.
32. Article Curator by – Dr Alka Pande.
Satvika abhinaya is evident when the dancer, who has developed an innate awareness of the personality, the mood, and the emotions of the thematic character, subtly reveals these, particularly by the eyes, and in entirety, by her absolute being.

Sattvika Abhinaya expression of a peculiar emotional states producing the particular physical reactions such as Romanca (horripilation), Asru (tears), Sveda (perspiration), Vaivarnya (change of complexion) etc.\textsuperscript{33}

A dance with satvika abhinaya has a positive effect on the dancer and the perceiver's mind. It is the proof of the occurrence of the dancer's deep involvement with the dance. Such involvement, that having learnt the technicalities, the dancer seems to dance just spontaneously, driven by the strength of an inner radiance.

Satvika abhinaya is portrayed through facial expressions and body language as a result of the dancer developing an intrinsic understanding of the emotional aspect of expressive dance.

Satvika abhinaya is evident when dance goes beyond the technicalities of dance steps and facial expressions. Then the dance is not a perfunctory role portrayal or a practical presentation.\textsuperscript{34}

Satvika Abhinaya emerges from the involvement of feelings and emotions. If the three abhinaya – Angika, Vachika and Aharya were to represent the body, Satvika abhinaya represents the Soul. It is Satvika abhinaya that makes the rendering pulsate with life. The other abhinayas

\textsuperscript{33} Lopa shah 2009- an article On Indian Classical Dance
\textsuperscript{34} Article The Genius of India - Classical Dance by Usha. R.K.

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contribute to make at best a craft; it is the addition of Satvika abhinaya that elevates the craft into an art.\textsuperscript{35}

Satvika abhinaya explores the internalization of emotions that is crucial for the portrayal of "Abhinaya" – loosely translated as the art of communication. When such emotions displayed by the dancer evoke a sympathetic response from the audience, the aesthetic flavor or "Rasa" is subconsciously created and the objective of Indian dance is achieved.\textsuperscript{36}

Satvika Abhinaya deals with the emotional aspect that anybody can easily relate to and understand. Satvika Abhinaya is comprised of the Nava Rasas or the nine aesthetic flavors or sentiments which give rise to Bhava or human emotions.

As quoted in a journal - India has had a rich tradition of cultural dissemination especially through the performing arts music, dance etc. Ramayana and Mahabharata have provided innumerable opportunities for religious and cultural communication\textsuperscript{37}.

Performing arts involve performers, a performing area and spectators, this three fold structure of art form makes a performing art complex embodying.

\textsuperscript{35} Satvika abhinaya “Dance Article” – The Emotions within Abhinaya Dance Company of San Jose July 1, 2006.

\textsuperscript{36} Satvika Abhinaya dance article taken from internet.

Second chapter deals with the relationship between language and abhinaya.

1.7 Review Of Literature

Problem statement

The need to communicate, for most of us, is definitely an essential need. In today's society, communication seems to be more essential than ever. Whatever our preference in movement, dance has the capacity to thrill and delight us.

1. Today every city has more than ten dance schools, which may teach “Classical or contemporary forms”.

2. Do students and their teachers in their presentation of Nava Rasa abhinay feel satisfied?

3. How pleasing has dance been to audience?
   a) Do they really enjoy watching?
   b) Students are on stage even before they start to know, how to express each emotion. i.e. how important is the role of Nava Rasa in any performance.

4. Does age or gender play any specific role in identification of these Nava Rasa?

   I myself being a classical dancer have been noticing these problems almost after every performance and always wanted to find reasons, why people do not get expression correctly. Even though we spend most of our
life using non-verbal communication. As a quote says, "actions speak louder than words." A research conducted on human communication system has got this result shown in the diagram below.

![Diagram showing non-verbal communication](image)

Emotional expression is observable verbal and nonverbal behaviour that communicates emotion; Facial expressions are a form of nonverbal communication. Each emotion is a primary means of conveying social information among humans.

"Charles Darwin was convinced that facial expressions don't vary from culture to culture."\(^{38}\)

According to Me. Graw - "emotion is a state of feeling that arises when a person evaluates an event a particular way."\(^{39}\)

"First Humaine Workshop in Geneva – "Possible solutions from models of emotional expression" by Ekman & Friesen's studied the complexity of

\(^{38}\) Mary Duenwald, "The Physiology of . . . Facial Expressions", January 2005 issue; published online.

\(^{39}\) Me. Graw, "Child Development-its nature and course", P. No. 201, IV edition 2000, Hill Companies, INC.
Verbal communication includes written and oral communication where as the non-verbal communication includes body language, facial expressions and visuals diagrams or pictures used for communication.

According to Hauser and Chomsky – “For most of the human history it has seen obvious that the basic requirements of a acquiring language is that of a learner by a human being. Many other species make variety of communicative sounds and gestures. But more has evolved a system of communication as powerful and flexible as human language”

According to Craig and Grace J. – “Language is based on the use of symbol for communicating information”

Therefore, it is clear to us that non-verbal communication has a stronger side in passing message through expression when compared to verbal communication.

We are reminded of the contributions of sociology, anthropology, and psychology as allied field of linguistics, which has helped me to conduct the research.

The next criteria which matters is gender difference in the society, is it true that both the genders cannot express all emotion in same form or is it been preconceived and is still been carried on. Some statements mentioned below may throw some light on this matter.

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“Gender differences exist they are a fundamental reality of our biology and influence our psychology. Our maleness and femaleness is a key aspect to our personhood”43.

According to Charles Darwin - How do people use their hands, faces, eyes, legs, and gestures? Scientific research on nonverbal communication and behavior began44.

People think gender plays a major role in expressing emotions. However, it is a stereotyped thought process since now-a-days equality is prominent in all lifestyles keeping aside gender identity.

According to Sharon S. Brehm, Saul M. K., Steven Fein, - Typical description of Male and Female – “Males are said to be more adventures, assertive, aggressive, independent and task oriented, females are more sensitive, gentle, dependent, emotional and people oriented”45.

According to John Money – “Gender role became equated with cultural prescriptions and stereotypes of masculinity and femininity imposed by society and learned in childhood”46.

So we can say even though gender oriented behaviour is imposed by society, it does not matter when it comes to performance which has been provide in this thesis.

Anthropology plays great role on the culture in shaping human behavior. Culture defines what we consider family, food, music, dance,

43. Shirley Baskett and Dr Kevin Donnelly, “21 reasons why gender matter”, Foundational Principles 2007, Published and printed by Fatherhood Foundation
44. Charles Darwin’s The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animal1872 publication s.
46. John Money, “Gender Maps” P. No. 24, 1995, Published by The Continuum, company Newyork.
sports, science, religion, etc. Language is a central part of cultural expression and cultural acquisition.

Even anthropology has an interdisciplinary field known as linguistic anthropology it is dedicated to the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice. It assumes that the human language faculty is a cognitive and a social achievement that provides the intellectual tools for thinking and acting in the world.

Linguistic anthropology is the study of language in the context of human social and cultural diversity, past and present is central to the discipline of anthropology as a whole47.

Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942) - wrote about the importance of linguistic research for an anthropological understanding of human societies, which dealt with the theoretical and methodological influence48.

Edward Sapir according to him - "Language is an anonymous, collective and unconscious art; the result of the creativity of thousands of generations.49"

Dance is the human body in motion. In one form or another, dance is a part of our history. It was thought that early societies used dance to celebrate

47. John Phillips –Structural Linguistics and Anthropology, article uploaded online.
the planting and harvesting of crops but as the time passed, dance just changed its notion.

Today, along with numerous concert dance performance dancing is used under social activities too in the form of advertising, music video releases and feature film industries continue to keep dance a part of our everyday lives.

According to John Noble Wilford – In his article mentioned, “Dancing was a means of social communication in prestate societies and dance was part of the ritual for coordinating a community's activities”50.

Dr. Yosef Garfinkel states - Dance is thus an activity through which society instills collective discipline in its members51.

Marina Ismini Ioannatou – In her PhD Thesis speaks about, “Dance and Technology their Methods and synthesis for choreography”. On research grounds, she has worked on how dancers and choreographers can interact and use new technologies in their works in progress in order to explore movement, space and sound relations and how this procedure can head on creating interesting dancing material for chorographical synthesis for dance performances. Through practice, she is also researching the interactive potentialities of technologies towards the audience that is involved in a

dance performance, and how that can influence the final dance piece in different ways.

Drid Williams - In her book “Anthropology and the dance: ten lectures”, speaks about Dance is a lively, controversial examination and discussion of theories of dance, Anthropology and the Dance brings the study of human movement to readers in fields such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, ethnomusicology, library science, physical education, history, music, linguistics, dance, and dance education.

Paul Spencer - In his book Society and the dance: Speaks about the social anthropology of process and performance since dancing has its place in all societies, This volume is intended to further anthropological awareness of its critical relevance. It is claimed that, in a very important sense, society creates the dance, and it is to society and not just to the dancer's experience that we must turn to understand its significance. Performance has meaning within social process. The anthropological analysis of dance can be approached in a variety of ways.

Jane Desmond book - “Meaning in motion”: Its new cultural studies of dance, investigated certain areas these include: how does dance signals enact or rework social categories of identity? How does the meaning arising from the performance of various dance styles change as those styles change?

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migrate across nations, racial or class boundaries? How codified movement systems such as dance are similar or different from other forms of language or visual representation etc\textsuperscript{55}. 

Roger Copeland, Marshall Cohen - What is dance? Readings in theory and criticism, a book on 60 collected essay, which provides definition of dance, the ways in which dance conveys meaning, the relationship of dance to the other arts\textsuperscript{56}.

Ann Daly - In her book “Critical gestures”: writings on dance and culture, Daly examines performance art and visual art as they relate to and influence dance, with a look at the intersection of dance and history. Gender is the subject of the final section of the book\textsuperscript{57}.

According to Shyamhari Chakra - “It’s possible. However, dance requires a lot of hard work, dedication and talent. The spiritual satisfaction outweighs the monetary gains as a dancer. Discipline, dedication and hard work”\textsuperscript{58}.

\textsuperscript{55} Jane Desmond - Meaning in motion ,3\textsuperscript{rd} edition ,2003,Duke University press.

\textsuperscript{56} Roger Copeland, Marshall Cohen - 1983 - 582 pages , published online at Amazon .com.

\textsuperscript{57} Ann Daly - Critical gestures: writings on dance and culture, published by Wesleyan University Press, 2002.

\textsuperscript{58} THE HINDU - by Shyamhari Chakra'Discipline makes a good dancer' Friday, Aug 01, 2008.edition.
Tulsi Badrinath’s article - Refreshing approach to abhinaya speaks about a performance that was refreshingly different in its approach to abhinaya.\(^{59}\)

According to Bharat Sharma - Taking Dance to Its Audience article speaks about -The relationship between and its audience is fundamental to the survival of the performing art. By taking dance to its audience in varied cultural settings, this project seeks to develop the public sphere of dancers, choreographers, groups and teachers.\(^{60}\)

Members of the society these days are more interested in contemporary when compared to classical dance since they feel it is an updated form and is more excited.

Contemporary dance is a style of expressive dance that combines elements of several dance genres including modern, jazz, lyrical and classical ballet.\(^{61}\)

Though Contemporary dance except for some singing in order to create an atmosphere, there is hardly any vocal imperative to classical dance, it is accompaniment in these compositions. Where-as Pure Classical form has movement that is set to a composition in a particular tala with a particular poetic line.

“Adam Bull’s Thesis on Dance and Technology - Linguistics and aerobic dance exercise, has attempted to formally record and analyze the

\(^{59}\) Tulsi Badrinath - THE HINDU Refreshing approach to abhinaya Friday, Jan 13, 2006.


\(^{61}\) Treva Bedinghaus - Article, What is contemporary dance?
choreography itself or to involve the use of computers used to study formal model for the language of Aerobic dance exercise using computational linguistics techniques and explore some of its potential uses.

Here how well can computer been used to adapt aerobic dance form has been studied, but my thesis purely studies dancers and audience views in interpretation of Nava Rasa abhinaya as a language.

There are hundreds of articles related to different forms of dance that present different aspects of dance, too numerous to list here, therefore I have restricted myself to only some of them.

The contribution of this thesis is to provide solutions to the above mentioned problems and to show how important is the role of Navarasa in any performance. This is been studied in this work with the help of sociolinguistic variables, which is a branch of Applied Linguistics.