Abstract

This study is an investigation of the problems in translating literary classics from Tamil into English. While in general the problems relating to the translation of the ancient Tamil literary classics are considered the focus is on the following translations of Kuruntokai.


Chapter I discusses the place of translations in world literature and surveys the translations between Tamil and other European Languages. This chapter analyses the place of translations and the studies on translations in the Indian context. It also provides an overall scheme of study.

Chapter II discusses the meaning and milieu of Cangkam poetry in general and the Cangkam love poems in particular. This
furnishes an overview of the various thematic situations which are taken up later for discussion. A comprehensive survey of the treatment of Nature and the literary techniques which will be discussed more fully in the forthcoming chapters is also presented.

Chapter III analyses the problems in translating the concepts of culture, as a culture and its society are the environments of a literary system. The problems relating to the translation of culture are classified and discussed following Nida's classification of similar problems under the subdivisions (i) ecology, (ii) material culture, (iii) social culture and (iv) linguistic culture.

Chapter IV examines the problems in translating the literary devices the translators are confronted with while translating the ancient Tamil literary classics. Since these literary devices are unique to the poems of the Cangkam period, further analysis of the literary devices is done within the framework provided by the verses of tolkappiyam.

Chapter V investigates the problems of translation relating to the style of the poets belonging to the Cangkam Age and to certain stylistic devices in particular. Other problems discussed in this chapter are those that require of the translators a greater awareness of the text and the context.
Chapter VI sums up the problems discussed earlier and presents an overall view of the problems so that a common base of approach could be evolved. An attempt to formulate a translation theory is made based on the problems discussed in the earlier chapters. Certain specific areas for further investigation in regard to translation studies are also indicated.