**INTRODUCTION**

*Sri Ramayana Darśanam* is a unique literary work of the great poet Dr. K.V. Puttappa (Kuvempu). In the melody of expression, charm of ideas and depth of feeling it stands unparalleled in the epics of Kannada literature. Kuvempu is the first modern Kannada poet to attempt the Ramayana story in its entirety. He has reinterpreted the Ramayana of Valmiki in his own style. Consequently some of the characters and incidents have undergone a drastic alteration. The poet took nine years to complete this monumental work i.e. from 1936 to 1945 and has awarded Sahitya Akademi award and Jnanapitha award – one of the highest literary distinctions in the country. The magnitude of this modern epic running into 22,296 lines and 385 pages in print (Institute of Kannada studies publication: 1978). It is in four volumes titled—Ayodhya Samputam (11 cantos), Kishkindha Samputam (12 Cantos), Lanka Samputam (14 cantos) and Sri Samputam (13 cantos). The epic is written in the metre called Mahachandas (literary Great metre).

Kuvempu has designed the poem to serve an epic convention. Its newness consists in its new metric, new harmonies and the strange unifying principle. The
distinguishing qualities of Puttappa’s style are sweetness, purity and grace. Being informed by his glowing imagination it has all the colour, rhythm and vivacity and shows a union of pictorial power with musical expression that is not found in any other Kannada poet. So, Kuvempu occupies a unique place not only in Kannada literature but also in the field of Indian literature. His immense imagination, his highly creative powers, his marvellous poetical fluency and massive intellect place him in the very front rank of the great poets of all ages.

Sri.Ramayana Darsanam is an interesting one, and it must be acknowledged as a major work. It explores modern problems and themes using an epic convention. Technically it is a successful effort at using the Blank Verse (Makahandasa) in a modern form.

So far some good studies have appeared on the sociological, psychological and universal aspects of Sri.Ramayana Darsanam, but none on the linguistic aspect. The epic contains sufficient material to invite the attention of scholars to its linguistic aspect too. Sri.Puttappa’s language is more learned and consciously poetic in this great work. The language
of this work is in old kannada rather than medieval and modern kannada with having heavy sanskritised dictions. Viewed in this light, a linguistic study of this modern great epic is selected for my research work. The main aim of my work is to describe and classify the linguistic aspects of the language of Sri Ramayana Daseanam based on the light of the modern linguistic principles and the present study is confined to phonology and morphology of words in the text.

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