

Constructing a Thesaurus to the *Mahāvamsa*: A Facet Analytical Approach

S. Arulanantham¹ S. Navaneethakrishnan²

One of the effective mechanisms in the process of interactive retrieval is vocabulary control. The controlled vocabulary exists to facilitate communication in the information retrieval process. The complete set of index terms used in retrieval systems may be referred to as the vocabulary of index language of the systems. The establishment of thesaurus is one way of attaining a common indexing and searching tool suitable for the use of an ancient classical text. There are thesauri for popular sacred literature like the *Rigveda*, *Quran* and the Bible. Likewise, indexing tool too should be constructed for each classical literature for the in-depth understanding and optimum level of usage for the readers.

The main objective of this paper is to construct an English thesaurus to the *Mahāvamsa* using facet analytical approach – as a suitable technique to act as a vocabulary guide to the *Mahāvamsa*.

This paper attempts to design a thesaurus to the *Mahāvamsa* which could act as a working tool for the indexing and retrieval. Based on the descriptive method, the meaning of each term and its semantic relationship with other terms were analyzed. Data analysis was based on Facet analytical approach devised by S.R. Ranganathan. This thesaurus was constructed in English language using as input, facet analyzed subject headings derived from a collection of terms selected from standard English translation of the *Mahāvamsa*.

This thesaurus adopts two methods of display. The main part of the thesaurus consisted of complete information of each descriptor arranged alphabetically. It includes Descriptors, scope notes, non preferred terms, Top Terms, broader, narrower and related terms. In the second part, each descriptor is arranged according to the subject classification order.

Keywords: Thesaurus Information retrieval, Mahavamsa; Vocabulary control device

1 Librarian, the Library, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka. sriarul91@gmail.com

2 Assistant Librarian, the Library, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka ksnavan@yahoo.com