

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATIONS OF *TIRUKKURAL*: THOMAS
HITOSHI PRUIKSMA AND JAYAPRAKASAM**

Chris Tina David

Research Scholar, Reg. No 20211274012012, Research Department of English, St. John's
College, Palayamkottai – 627007, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University,
Tirunelveli -627012, Tamil Nadu, India

Dr. K. Vijila

Research Supervisor, Associate Professor, Research Department of English, St. John's College,
Palayamkottai – 627007, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli -
627012, Tamil Nadu, India,

Abstract

Comparative literature in simple terms is an interdisciplinary and international thinking of a text when placed together. The traditional definition of comparative literature includes the comparison of two or more literary works and all of their diverse elements, including their historical, economic, cultural, philosophical, doctrinal, and linguistic contexts. A comparative study is inevitable in a multicultural nation like India. Likewise, under the arena of translation studies a well-known text called Tirukkural, a Tamil classical epic written in an ancient period plays a major role. This text is famously known as Kural, which is supposedly written by Tiruvalluvar. There are numerous versions of translation is being circulated in society. The first translation was published in 1593, whilst the current one has been published in 2022. Each translator has their own language style, format, and structure while undergoing translation. Thomas Hitoshi Pruiksma and R Jayaprakasam are the two translators employed by the researcher in this study for comparison. The following translations from Tamil to English are the most recent ones. Native translator Thomas titled his translation as 'The Kural: Tiruvalluvar's Tirukkural, A New Translation of the classical Tamil masterpiece on Ethics, Power and Love. He, is a translator, instructor, and author who lives in America on the other hand, Jayaprakasam is an advocate who lives in Chennai. He entitled his translation as Thirukkural: Text in English and Tamil. This paper aims to analyse the intricacies, similarities, and differences made by the non-native translator, Thomas, and a native translator Jayaprakasam.

Keywords: *Comparative, Translation, multicultural, Native, and Non-native.*

Introduction:

The translation is the act of moving or converting one set of symbols into another. But what is the background of translation? Although historians and academics have long argued about the history of translation, it is generally acknowledged that it predates the Bible. Translation has advanced continuously since the dawn of human communication, and it is now more than ever possible to engage in cross-cultural trade, economic globalization, and information sharing. The world has become more of a melting pot thanks to translation. As a result, the need for translation services across many philosophies, media, and civilizations increases. We'll walk you through a

fascinating timeline of translation history, from antiquity to the present. The Old Testament Bible's translation into Greek in the third century BC is one of the first recorded religious translations. The Greek translation of the Bible served as the model for all subsequent translations of the Bible into other languages. The early church designated Jerome as the patron saint of translation because religion was a significant factor in the growth of translation. The Latin version of the Bible gained popularity in the Roman Catholic Church with Saint Jerome's translation in the fourth century AD. With the advent of Protestantism, it became necessary to keep translating the Bible and other religious texts into various languages. In those days, most translators were anonymous figures, and a few persons helped lead the path of translation, which made some of the biggest contributions to the spread of ideas and information throughout history. Because translating was risky at the time, some translators went nameless. Some people lost their lives as a result of translation, like William Tyndale, who translated the Bible into English. In Holland, he was hanged in 1536. Other well-known translators include Constance Garnett, who in the 19th century translated into English several Russian classics including Tolstoy and Gogol. Another example is Xuanzang, a Chinese monk who is credited with translating Buddhist literature from India into Chinese.

Translation accuracy was not given much consideration in the early days of professional translation. Since there was still no accuracy in the translation of individual words, this was the time of translation "adaptation." For instance, when translating, a translator would completely skip words that they did not understand the meaning of. As a result, the translators had a lot of influence on the texts that the readers read, which gave them authority over their audiences. Around the 1950s, when institutions were established, the concept of studying translation as a discipline emerged. People from various linguistic backgrounds could communicate across cultures and share knowledge in institutions while learning how to translate. Today, machine translation (MT) is widely used to improve and facilitate translation, with computers assisting translators all around the world. It entails using computer technology and language science to generate translation. With or without human aid, translations are obtained through a computerized system. The internet and laptops are only two of the many technologies available to translators today to help with the translation process. As the world grows more connected through the economy, education, knowledge sharing, and trade, translation services have also taken on significance in society. We can appreciate the rigorous translation job performed by the early translators in history by observing how far translation has progressed through time. We are also grateful for the modern, more reliable, and accessible translations. We appreciate all the translators who put in so much effort to keep things moving ahead.

This paper focuses on one of the non-religious books that have been translated the most widely in the globe the Tirukkural, commonly known as the Kural, an ancient Indian treatise on the ethics, morality, and, love of the commoner. It was written by the legendary Tamil poet-philosopher Tiruvalluvar and has been translated into at least 42 other languages, with the English language alone receiving roughly 57 different versions. The first two parts were translated into prose by William Henry Drew in 1840 and 1852, respectively. It included the original Tamil text, Parimelalagar's Tamil commentary, and RamanujaKavirayar's amplification of the commentary

in addition to Drew's English prose translation. Drew only interpreted 630 couplets, though. John Lazarus, a native missionary, translated the remaining passages, creating the first total English translation. The two most current translations of kural published have been selected by the researcher. The first translation, by native speaker R Jayaprakasam, was released in 2019; the second, by non-native speaker Thomas Hitoshi Pruiksma, was released in 2022. Jayaprakasam is an advocate, who lives in Chennai and undertook the process of translating Tirukkural in a prose format. Thomas works as a teacher, actor, author, and translator. Beacon Press recently released his translation of Tiruvalluvar's Tirukkural, a great Tamil work on ethics, power, and love.

Theory and method:

The study of literature and cultural expression across linguistic, national, geographic, and disciplinary borders is the focus of the academic discipline known as comparative literature. In order to comprehend civilizations "from the inside," comparative literature "plays a role similar to that of the study of international relations but works with languages and aesthetic traditions. Comparative literature is most usually used with works in different languages, although it can also be used with works in the same language if they come from various countries or civilizations where that language is spoken. The basic methodological tools of comparative literature are the study of genres or genology, the study of formal structure or morphology, the research of themes or thematology, the study of literary relationships or internationality, and the study of historical configuration or histology.

Gaps and motivation

The field of translation studies and comparative literature has seen a huge amount of publications and research papers produced, but because academics have neglected to consider the perspectives of these two recent translators, therefore, the researcher has gone through this particular notion for analysis. The ten couplets listed below were handpicked for comparison and analysis.

Comparison:

Thomas: Like senses without sense – the head that won't bow
To those embodying all virtue (9)

Jayaprakasam: He who does not pay his obeisance to the foot of the Almighty, whose propensities remembered forever, though he possesses sensory organs, such would be inane.

Analysis: We don't use words like obeisance and inane, which Jeyaprakasam uses, on a regular basis. He intentionally chose these words for this context. In contrast, Thomas's translation captures the complexity of the original text while using simple language.

Thomas: That which ruins and raises up
That ruined – rain (15)

Jayaprakasam: The rain fails and spoils and also the rain could invigorate the spoiled.

Analysis: This couplet is significant because the original text features two words that start with the same letter. Thomas has retained this pattern. This is a literary technique known as alliteration in English. When reading Jayaprakasam's translation, the words have a rhythm. This couplet

demonstrates how both native and non-native translators made an effort to incorporate a few components while translating.

Thomas: The world is theirs who fathoms all five –
Sight sound touch taste smell (27)

Jayaprakasam: The world is for him who has analysed and abstemious to the taste, sight, touch, hear and smell.

Analysis: When compared to the original text, Thomas' translation has the sequence of the five senses reversed, although Jayaprakasam has kept it the same. The word "theirs" in Thomas' translation is gender-neutral, whereas the source text and Jayaprakasam's translation use the male-gendered word 'he'. This issue of keeping to or deviating from the source text varies between the two translators.

Thomas: Envy desire anger bitter words – right action
Is freedom from all four (35)

Jayaprakasam: Righteousness is conducting oneself without giving place for the four, namely, jealousy, avidity, anger and malignant words, as filthy.

Analysis: Thomas, a non-native translator, has preserved the structure of the original text in this translation. In Thomas's translation, envy is used in place of jealousy in Jayaprakasam's translation. Desire in Thomas' translation takes the place of avidity in Jayaprakasam's. Both languages use the same word to describe anger. Both translations distinguish between bitter words and malignant terms. The language each translator uses varies depending on their background and language experience.

Thomas: One at home stands in goodness – foundation
Of the three other stations (41)

Jayaprakasam: The paterfamilias is he who protects the three folds viz., descendants, ascendants and relatives to conduct themselves in a righteous way.

Analysis: In the source text the writer has mentioned a reference that is preconceived to the audience, and the same has been maintained by the non-native translator, Thomas. However, in Jayaprakasam's translation, the three folds have been explained in detail.

Thomas: What's lacking if a wife is great – what's not
If a wife is not (53)

Jayaprakasam: What's not in the household, if a wife is embodied with all dignities of a household and it not embodied, what's in the household?

Analysis: Although Jayaprakasam's translation contains some repetitions of phrases and is similar to the original text, Thomas's version has a more poetic feel and reading rhythm. The question structure from the original text has been preserved in both translations.

Thomas: Sweeter than ambrosia by far –the food the tiny hands
Of one's children have scattered (64)

Jayaprakasam: The gruel which is stirred by the tender hands of children is tastier than the panacea of their parents.

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