

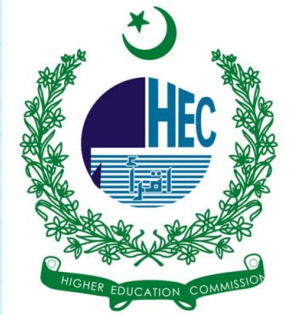
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Implicature Loss and Gain in Ghalib's Ghazals: A Cross-Linguistic Pragmatic Analysis of Urdu-English Translation



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Abstract

Abstract

The translation of Urdu ghazals into English is one of the most complex areas of literary translation because much of its meaning is dependent on implication, symbolic resonance, and culturally embedded expression. Mirza Ghalib's poetry is distinguished by philosophical ambiguity, emotional restraint, paradox, and interpretive depth that frequently resist direct linguistic transfer. The present cross-linguistic study investigates the phenomenon of pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain arising from Urdu-English linguistic and cultural differences. Using H. P. Grice's theory of conversational implicature and Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory, the study comparatively analyzes selected English translations produced by Yusuf Hussain (1977) and Sarvat Rahman (2003). Using a qualitative comparative approach, the study investigates how implicit meanings, emotional nuances, and inferential structures are reconstructed in translation through strategies such as explicitation, paraphrase, and omission. The findings show that while certain implicatures inevitably weaken during translation due to linguistic and cultural differences, translators frequently compensate for these losses through interpretive restructuring and stylistic changes. The study further demonstrates that translation strategies significantly influence the balance between semantic clarity and poetic ambiguity. Whereas Yusuf Hussain generally adopts a more explanatory and reader-oriented approach, Sarvat Rahman prefers to maintain greater metaphorical density and inferential openness. The study emphasizes the need for pragmatic sensitivity in poetic translation and argues that literary translation involves not only semantic transfer but also the reconstruction of intended meaning and interpretive effect.

1. Introduction

Literary poetry translation is an important topic of research in translation studies because it involves a complex combination of linguistic, cultural, and creative components. Translation is merely the process of substituting one language into another. (Juniardi et al., 2016) In poetry, these challenges

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

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become even more pronounced because poetic language often communicates indirectly through suggestion, ambiguity, symbolism, and figurative expression. Meaning in poetry frequently lies not in what is openly stated but in what is implied.

The Urdu ghazal is one of the richest poetry traditions in South Asian literature, and it is particularly reliant on indirect communication. Classical ghazal poetry makes extensive use of symbolic imagery, rhetorical compression, paradox, irony, and emotional restraint. Readers are supposed to deduce meanings from metaphorical and contextual signals rather than explicit explanations. As a result, translating Urdu ghazals into English involves significant pragmatic challenges because the inferential processes embedded in the original text may not simply transfer between languages and literary traditions. (Faruqi, 2001; Russell, 1992).

Among the major poets of the Urdu ghazal tradition, Mirza Ghalib occupies a particularly significant position. His poetry combines philosophical reflection with emotional complexity and linguistic sophistication. Ghalib's verses frequently contain multiple layers of meaning, and much of their literary power emerges through implicature. His ghazals often communicate existential uncertainty, emotional conflict, mystical longing, skepticism, irony, and self-consciousness through indirect expression rather than direct statement. The reader is therefore required to participate actively in constructing meaning.

Among the major poets of the Urdu ghazal tradition, Mirza Ghalib occupies a particularly significant position. His poetry combines philosophical reflection with emotional complexity and linguistic sophistication. Ghalib's verses frequently contain multiple layers of meaning, and much of their literary power emerges through implicature. His ghazals often communicate existential uncertainty, emotional conflict, mystical longing, skepticism, irony, and self-consciousness through indirect expression rather than direct statement. The reader is therefore required to participate actively in constructing meaning.

When such poetry is translated into English, the implicit nature of Ghalib's expression creates considerable challenges for translators. Meanings that are culturally understood or inferentially accessible in Urdu may become

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

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difficult to reproduce in English without alteration or explanation. As a result, translation often produces what scholars describe as pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain. Pragmatic loss occurs when inferential meaning, emotional nuance, or stylistic suggestiveness weakens in translation. Pragmatic gain, on the other hand, emerges when translators introduce clarifying or interpretive elements that make meaning more accessible for target readers.

The present study conducts a comparative analysis of selected English translations of Ghalib's ghazals produced by Yusuf Hussain (1977) and Sarvat Rahman (2003). These translations were selected because they represent two noticeably different translational orientations. Yusuf Hussain generally adopts a relatively explanatory and reader-friendly style that prioritizes semantic clarity and accessibility, whereas Sarvat Rahman tends to preserve greater poetic compactness, metaphorical suggestiveness, and stylistic ambiguity. Examining these two translations comparatively provides valuable insight into the ways different translators negotiate implicature and reconstruct pragmatic meaning.

The comparative dimension of the study is particularly important because literary translation is deeply influenced by the translator's interpretive choices, linguistic preferences, and assumptions regarding readership. Different translators may preserve, transform, simplify, or expand implied meanings depending upon their translational priorities. By analyzing these differences through the frameworks of pragmatics and translation studies, the present research explores how translation strategies shape the preservation or loss of inferential meaning in Ghalib's poetry.

More specifically, the study investigates how implicatures embedded in selected ghazals are represented in English translation and how different translation strategies contribute to instances of pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain. In doing so, the research attempts to bridge literary translation studies and pragmatics by emphasizing the role of implied meaning in poetic discourse.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify implicatures in selected ghazals of Mirza Ghalib and interpret their intended meanings within the original Urdu context.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

2. To examine how these implicatures are represented in the English translations of the selected ghazals.
3. To analyze the role of translation strategies in producing pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain in poetic translation.

Research Questions

1. How are implicatures constructed in selected ghazals of Mirza Ghalib, and what meanings do they communicate in the original Urdu context?
2. In what ways do cross-linguistic differences between Urdu and English affect the transfer of implicature in translation?
3. How do translation strategies contribute to pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain in the selected translations?

2. Literature Review

Scholars in translation studies have consistently emphasized that translation involves more than lexical substitution or grammatical equivalence. Meaning is shaped not only through linguistic form but also through context, cultural assumptions, emotional associations, and inferential interpretation. This becomes especially important in literary texts where writers frequently depend upon ambiguity, symbolism, irony, and indirect communication. Poetry, in particular, often resists direct translation because poetic language derives much of its effect from what remains unstated.

Research in pragmatics has shown that communication regularly depends upon implication rather than explicit expression. Speakers and writers often communicate meanings indirectly, expecting listeners or readers to infer intended interpretations from context. In literary discourse, this inferential dimension becomes more significant because poetic texts deliberately create multiple interpretive possibilities. Consequently, implicature occupies a central position in the interpretation of poetry.

The concept of implicature was introduced by H. P. Grice (1975), who argued that speakers frequently communicate meanings beyond the literal content of their utterances. According to Grice, conversational participants generally follow cooperative principles, and listeners infer unstated meanings when speakers appear to violate conversational maxims such as quantity, quality, relation, or manner. Conversational implicature, therefore, depends upon inference rather than direct expression. This theoretical framework is

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

particularly useful for analysing poetry because poetic language often relies on exaggeration, metaphor, paradox, rhetorical questioning, and ambiguity.

In translation studies, the transfer of implicature has long been considered problematic because implied meanings are often shaped by specific cultural and linguistic contexts. Mona Baker (2018) notes that translators frequently rely on strategies such as explicitation, paraphrase, and omission when direct equivalence is unavailable. These strategies may improve readability for target audiences, yet they can also alter stylistic subtlety and reduce inferential openness. Baker further suggests that literary translation often requires negotiation between semantic fidelity and communicative effectiveness.

The issue becomes particularly complex in poetic translation because poetry depends heavily upon stylistic economy and interpretive ambiguity. Unlike ordinary discourse, poetry intentionally leaves certain meanings incomplete or indirect. Translators therefore face the challenge of reconstructing not only semantic meaning but also emotional resonance, symbolic association, and interpretive effect.

Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory also makes a significant contribution to understanding poetic communication and translation. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), communication depends upon the relationship between contextual effect and cognitive effort. Readers derive meaning by combining linguistic information with contextual assumptions and inferential reasoning. In poetic discourse, readers are often expected to invest greater interpretive effort in order to derive richer contextual effects. Literary translation, therefore, requires translators to recreate inferential conditions that enable target readers to access similar interpretive possibilities.

Recent scholarship has increasingly examined the relationship between pragmatics and literary translation. Francesch and Payrató (2023) argue that translators frequently reduce pragmatic ambiguity by selecting one interpretation among several possible meanings. While such choices may improve clarity, they can also narrow the interpretive openness of the source text. Similarly, Anolli (2021) observes that explicitation may facilitate reader comprehension while simultaneously weakening stylistic ambiguity and inferential subtlety.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

Studies focusing on poetic discourse further demonstrate the importance of indirect communication in literature. Sokolova and Feshchenko (2024) maintain that poetic language depends heavily upon deviation, symbolism, and inferential density. They argue that readers engage with poetry not merely at the semantic level but also through emotional and contextual interpretation. Likewise, Kykot (2021) emphasizes that poetic translation must preserve psychological and emotional implications in addition to lexical meaning.

Research specifically related to Ghalib's poetry also highlights the difficulties of translating Urdu ghazals into English. Akhter, Iqbal, Manzoor, and Sadia (2021) examined stylistic aspects of Ghalib's translated ghazals and concluded that translators often rely upon explanatory and interpretive techniques to communicate meaning to English readers. Although these strategies improve accessibility, they may also weaken metaphorical density, stylistic compactness, rhyme, and emotional suggestiveness. Their findings suggest that translation inevitably involves shifts in both aesthetic and pragmatic dimensions.

Despite growing scholarly attention to poetic translation, comparatively little research has focused specifically on implicature loss and gain in English translations of Ghalib's ghazals. Existing studies often examine stylistic or semantic equivalence without systematically analyzing how inferential meaning is reconstructed through translation strategies. The present study attempts to address this gap by applying Gricean pragmatics and Relevance Theory to a comparative analysis of two English translations of selected ghazals.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Implicature and Pragmatics

The present study is primarily grounded in Grice's theory of conversational implicature. Grice (1975) argues that communication involves meanings that extend beyond literal linguistic expression. Speakers frequently imply meanings indirectly, expecting listeners to derive additional interpretations through contextual reasoning and shared assumptions. Implicature arises when utterances appear to depart from ordinary conversational expectations, thereby prompting inferential interpretation.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

This theoretical framework is especially relevant to poetic discourse because poetry often communicates through indirectness, ambiguity, exaggeration, symbolism, and rhetorical deviation. Ghalib's poetry, in particular, relies heavily on meanings that are implied rather than explicitly stated. Emotional conflict, existential reflection, mystical longing, irony, and skepticism are often conveyed through compressed metaphorical structures that require interpretive participation from the reader.

3.2 Relevance Theory

The study also draws upon Relevance Theory, proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986). Relevance Theory suggests that communication depends upon achieving maximum contextual effect with minimum cognitive effort. Readers interpret meaning by combining linguistic input with contextual assumptions and inferential reasoning. In poetic discourse, however, interpretation often requires greater cognitive effort because literary texts intentionally encourage multiple layers of meaning. Poetry frequently rewards interpretive engagement through emotional, symbolic, and philosophical depth. In translation, therefore, the translator must attempt to recreate conditions that enable target readers to derive comparable contextual effects. This perspective is particularly useful for examining how translators negotiate ambiguity and reconstruct inferential meaning in English.

3.3 Translation Strategies

To explain shifts in pragmatic meaning, the study also refers to commonly recognized translation strategies discussed by Mona Baker (2018). The primary strategies considered in this research include:

- Explicitation (making implicit meaning more explicit)
- Omission (excluding elements that are difficult to reproduce)
- Paraphrase (restructuring or rewording meaning for clarity)

These strategies are used analytically to explain how translators reconstruct poetic implicature and how different choices contribute to pragmatic loss or pragmatic gain.

4. Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative cross-linguistic comparative research design to examine implicature loss and gain in the English translation of selected ghazals by Mirza Ghalib. Since the research focuses upon interpretive meaning,

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

emotional nuance, and inferential structure, a qualitative approach is considered more appropriate than a quantitative method.

The data for the study consist of selected couplets from Ghalib's Urdu ghazals, alongside two English translations by Yusuf Hussain (1977) and Sarvat Rahman (2003). These translations were selected because they represent different translational tendencies and interpretive orientations. Yusuf Hussain generally adopts a more explanatory and semantically transparent approach, whereas Sarvat Rahman tends to preserve greater poetic compactness and metaphorical suggestiveness.

The analysis focuses specifically on the reconstruction of implicature and pragmatic meaning in translation. Particular attention is given to:

- the preservation or weakening of inferential meaning,
- the treatment of metaphorical and symbolic expression,
- the use of translation strategies such as explicitation and paraphrasing,
- and the impact of translator choices upon emotional and philosophical interpretation.

The procedure of analysis involves several stages:

1. Identification of selected couplets containing significant implicature.
2. Interpretation of contextual and cultural meanings within the original Urdu text.
3. Comparative examination of the English translations.
4. Analysis of translation strategies employed by the translators.
5. Identification of instances of pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain.

Through this comparative framework, the study investigates how different translational choices influence the reconstruction of poetic meaning and interpretive effect.

5. Analysis and Discussion

Example 1

بزاروں خواہشیں ایسی کہ ہر خواہش پہ دم نکلے
بہت نکلے میرے ارمان لیکن پھر بھی کم نکلے

Translation 1: Yusuf Hussain

There are thousands of desires
and upon each one I would die;
many of my longings have been fulfilled

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

yet still a few remain.

Translation 2: Sarvat Rahman

A myriad desires were ours, for each, we'd life forego.

Many longings were fulfilled, but too few, even so.

Analysis

This well-known couplet reflects Ghalib's philosophical understanding of human desire and existential dissatisfaction. The verse suggests that desire is limitless and self-consuming; fulfillment never truly resolves longing because each fulfilled desire gives rise to further yearning. Yusuf Saleem Chishti (1992) interprets the couplet as an expression of the endless and contradictory nature of human aspiration. The emotional force of the verse lies not in direct statement but in implication and exaggeration.

From a pragmatic perspective, the couplet relies heavily upon conversational implicature. Ghalib does not explicitly claim that human desire is infinite or destructive. Instead, this meaning is inferred through hyperbolic expression and paradoxical emotional intensity. The phrase "بر خواہش پہ دم نکلے" indirectly communicates emotional exhaustion and existential struggle. Yusuf Hussain renders the couplet in a relatively explanatory manner. His translation, "upon each one I would die," makes the emotional exaggeration explicit and immediately accessible to English readers. This strategy clearly reflects explicitation. By clarifying emotional intensity, Hussain reduces interpretive difficulty for the reader and therefore achieves pragmatic gain in readability and semantic clarity. However, the translation also narrows some of the ambiguity and philosophical openness present in the original Urdu text. The emotional compression characteristic of Ghalib's diction becomes comparatively direct.

Sarvat Rahman's translation, by contrast, preserves greater poetic compactness and inferential subtlety. Expressions such as "we'd life forego" retain the metaphorical density of the original without fully explaining its emotional implications. As a result, the reader remains more actively involved in interpreting the verse. Rahman's version therefore sustains stronger implicature and preserves more of the philosophical suggestiveness associated with Ghalib's poetic style. The two translations reveal different approaches toward reconstructing meaning. Hussain privileges accessibility

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

and semantic transparency, whereas Rahman attempts to maintain ambiguity and stylistic resonance. In Newmark's (1988) terms, the contrast reflects the tension between communicative translation and semantic translation. The analysis demonstrates that gains in clarity may simultaneously produce losses in inferential richness.

Example 2

دل ہی تو ہے نہ سنگ و خشت، درد سے بھر نہ آئے کیوں
روئیں گے ہم ہزار بار، کوئی ہمیں رلائے کیوں

Translation 1: Yusuf Hussain

It is after all a heart, and not a brick or stone,
So why should it not be affected by pain?
We may weep a thousand times
But why should anyone tease us?

Translation 2: Sarvat Rahman

Its only heart, not brick nor stone, with pain why shouldnt it overflow?
My tears will be shed a thousand times, why do you make me suffer so?

Analysis

In this couplet, Ghalib presents emotional suffering as a natural consequence of human sensitivity. The comparison between the heart and a lifeless stone indirectly emphasizes emotional vulnerability and psychological fragility. According to Chishti's interpretation, the verse suggests that sorrow and tears should not be seen as weakness, as emotional responsiveness is an essential part of human existence. The couplet relies strongly upon rhetorical questioning and indirect emotional expression. Rather than openly declaring emotional helplessness, Ghalib frames his experience through questions that invite interpretive inference. The reader derives the implied meaning through emotional and contextual understanding rather than direct explanation.

Yusuf Hussain's translation adopts a comparatively explanatory tone. The phrase "affected by pain" communicates the semantic meaning clearly but somewhat reduces the metaphorical intensity of the original expression "درد سے بھر نہ آئے". Similarly, the expression "why should anyone tease us?" simplifies the emotional complexity of the Urdu verse and shifts the tone toward ordinary complaint. Hussain's translation, therefore, produces pragmatic gain

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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Online ISSN: 3006-5895

in comprehension but also weakens certain dimensions of emotional ambiguity and poetic resonance. Sarvat Rahman's version retains stronger metaphorical and emotional force. The word "overflow" effectively conveys emotional excess while preserving the figurative richness of the original imagery. Her translation also maintains greater emotional immediacy in the second line through the phrase "why do you make me suffer so?" Compared with Hussain's rendering, Rahman's translation allows readers to infer emotional vulnerability rather than explaining it explicitly. The contrast between the two translations again demonstrates how translator's strategy shapes the pragmatic effect. Hussain's approach minimizes interpretive difficulty, whereas Rahman preserves greater inferential openness and emotional suggestiveness. The latter, therefore, remains closer to the rhetorical and emotional texture of Ghalib's original discourse.

Example 3

عشق پر زور نہیں ہے یہ وہ آتش غالب
کہ لگائے نہ لگے اور بجھائے نہ بنے

Translation 1: Yusuf Hussain

O Ghalib, nobody can love
To order; it is a fire
which one cannot light,
Nor can anyone extinguish.

Translation 2: Sarvat Rahman

GHALIB, Love's a fire, over which there's no control,
It can't be lit at will nor put out, by trying to do so.

Analysis

This couplet presents love as a force beyond rational control or human authority. Through the metaphor of fire, Ghalib conveys the uncontrollable, paradoxical nature of passion. Chishti interprets the verse as a philosophical reflection on emotional helplessness: love cannot be deliberately initiated, nor can it be deliberately extinguished. The implicature of the couplet emerges through paradox rather than explicit explanation. Ghalib never directly states that human beings are powerless before love; instead, this meaning is inferred through the contradictory image of a fire that cannot be intentionally lit or extinguished.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

Yusuf Hussain translates the verse in a relatively interpretive and explanatory style. The expression "nobody can love to order" clarifies the involuntary nature of love and makes the intended meaning immediately understandable for English readers. This strategy enhances accessibility and therefore produces pragmatic gain in comprehension. At the same time, however, the compact paradoxical quality of the original expression becomes less subtle. Sarvat Rahman's version preserves the metaphorical structure more effectively. Phrases such as "there's no control" and "lit at will" retain the philosophical ambiguity and emotional suggestiveness of the original text. Her translation allows readers to infer the irrational nature of love through metaphorical implication rather than direct explanation. Although both translations convey the central meaning of the couplet, they differ considerably in their stylistic effects. Hussain emphasizes semantic transparency, while Rahman prioritizes poetic suggestiveness and inferential density. The comparison illustrates how explicitation may improve reader comprehension while simultaneously reducing interpretive openness.

Example 4

عشرتِ قطرہ ہے دریا میں فنا ہو جانا

درد کا حد سے گزرنا ہے دوا ہو جانا

Translation 1: Yusuf Hussain

To be annihilated in the sea
Is the delight of every drop;
When pain exceeds the limit
it becomes its own remedy.

Translation 2: Sarvat Rahman

The drop of water yearns to lose itself in the sea,
Pain beyond limits becomes its own remedy.

Analysis

The selected couplet combines mystical symbolism with philosophical paradox. The image of the drop dissolving into the sea evokes the idea of self-annihilation within a larger spiritual reality, a concept strongly associated with Sufi thought. Chishti interprets the verse as an expression of spiritual fulfillment through dissolution of the individual self. The couplet also contains a second paradoxical statement suggesting that excessive pain eventually

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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Online ISSN: 3006-5895

transforms into healing. These ideas are communicated indirectly through symbolic imagery rather than through philosophical exposition. Readers must therefore infer broader existential and mystical meanings from the verse's metaphorical structure.

Yusuf Hussain's translation remains relatively faithful to the original's semantic content. The phrase "to be annihilated in the sea" communicates the idea of dissolution clearly and directly. His rendering, therefore, improves accessibility for readers unfamiliar with Sufi symbolism. Nevertheless, the word "annihilated" lacks some of the spiritual resonance associated with the Urdu concept of "فنا," which carries deeper mystical associations in classical Urdu poetry. Sarvat Rahman's translation introduces greater emotional and spiritual suggestiveness through the phrase "yearns to lose itself in the sea." The addition of "yearns" strengthens the emotional dimension of the metaphor and allows readers to perceive spiritual longing rather than mere disappearance. As a result, Rahman preserves more of the inferential and symbolic richness associated with the original imagery.

The second line also reveals differences in stylistic orientation. Hussain's "when pain exceeds the limit" sounds comparatively explanatory and formal, while Rahman's "pain beyond limits" preserves the brevity and rhythmic fluidity characteristic of the Urdu text. Rahman's version, therefore, sustains greater poetic compactness and emotional subtlety. The comparison demonstrates once again that translator choices significantly influence the reconstruction of implicature. Semantic clarity may facilitate comprehension, yet poetic suggestiveness often depends upon preserving ambiguity and metaphorical openness.

Example 5

پوچھتے ہیں وہ کہ غالب کون ہے
کوئی بتلاؤ کہ ہم بتلائیں کیا

Translation 1: Yusuf Hussain

She is asking "who is Ghalib?"
Someone please tell me
What reply should I give
To such a query.

Translation 2: Sarvat Rahman

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

She's asking people round her "Who's that Ghalib?"

Someone please tell me what's there, that I could tell her now?

Analysis

This couplet reflects irony, emotional humiliation, and wounded self-consciousness through apparently simple conversational language. According to Chishti's interpretation, the beloved's question "Who is Ghalib?" does not express genuine ignorance. Rather, it indirectly communicates indifference and emotional dismissal. The beloved's feigned unfamiliarity humiliates the poet while simultaneously exposing his emotional vulnerability. The pragmatic force of the couplet, therefore, depends heavily upon irony and conversational implicature. The emotional conflict emerges not through direct statement but through what remains implied beneath the dialogue.

Yusuf Hussain translates the verse clearly and semantically transparently. The phrase "what reply should I give" effectively communicates uncertainty and emotional discomfort. However, the comparatively formal expression "to such a query" weakens the conversational naturalness and emotional immediacy of the original text. The ironic undertone of the beloved's indifference becomes somewhat restrained in translation. Sarvat Rahman's version preserves stronger conversational fluidity and emotional tension. The addition of "people round her" intensifies the sense of public humiliation and social distance. Likewise, the hesitant phrasing "what's there, that I could tell her now?" conveys emotional confusion and wounded pride more effectively.

Compared with Hussain's rendering, Rahman's translation retains greater inferential depth and preserves the ironic structure of the original dialogue more successfully. Nevertheless, both translations exhibit some degree of pragmatic shift, as the cultural nuances of classical Urdu expressions of love, pride, and emotional restraint cannot be fully transferred into English. Overall, the comparative analysis reveals that pragmatic loss and gain are closely connected with translator's strategy. Hussain's translation foregrounds readability and semantic accessibility, whereas Rahman's version more consistently preserves emotional ambiguity, stylistic suggestiveness, and conversational implicature.

Conclusion

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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The present study comparatively examined implicature loss and gain in selected English translations of Mirza Ghalib's ghazals produced by Yusuf Hussain and Sarvat Rahman. Through the analysis of five selected couplets, the research explored how emotional nuance, philosophical implication, metaphorical suggestiveness, and inferential meaning are reconstructed in translation.

The findings demonstrate that implicature occupies a central position in Ghalib's poetic discourse. Much of the literary and emotional power of his poetry emerges through indirect communication rather than explicit statement. Irony, paradox, symbolic imagery, rhetorical questioning, emotional restraint, and philosophical ambiguity all contribute to the inferential richness of his ghazals. Translating such features into English remains highly challenging because many of the cultural and stylistic associations embedded within classical Urdu poetry cannot be reproduced directly.

The study further reveals that the two translators adopt noticeably different translational priorities. Yusuf Hussain generally favors semantic transparency and reader accessibility. His translations frequently employ explicitation in order to clarify meanings that remain indirect in the original Urdu text. As a result, his versions often achieve pragmatic gains in readability and immediate comprehension. However, this tendency to explain occasionally reduces poetic ambiguity, emotional subtlety, and inferential openness.

Sarvat Rahman, by contrast, tends to preserve greater stylistic compactness and metaphorical density. Her translations more consistently maintain ambiguity, emotional suggestiveness, and conversational naturalness. Consequently, they retain stronger inferential effects and remain stylistically closer to the original poetic discourse. At the same time, Rahman's translations sometimes require greater interpretive effort from readers unfamiliar with Urdu poetic conventions.

The analysis, therefore, suggests that pragmatic loss and pragmatic gain should not be understood as fixed or absolute categories. Rather, they emerge through translator decisions regarding clarity, ambiguity, readability, and stylistic fidelity. A gain in semantic accessibility may produce a corresponding loss in poetic suggestiveness, while the preservation of ambiguity may increase interpretive difficulty for target readers.

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

Print ISSN: 3006-5887

Online ISSN: 3006-5895

The study also highlights the usefulness of pragmatics in the analysis of literary translation. Grice's theory of implicature and Relevance Theory provide valuable frameworks for examining how poetic meaning operates beyond literal language and how translators reconstruct inferential effects across linguistic boundaries. The research demonstrates that successful poetic translation depends not only upon semantic equivalence but also upon sensitivity to implication, context, emotional resonance, and reader interpretation.

Overall, the study contributes to the fields of pragmatics, translation studies, and Urdu literary criticism by emphasizing the importance of inferential meaning in poetic translation. It further suggests that literary translation should be evaluated not merely on lexical accuracy but also on its ability to preserve emotional complexity, stylistic subtlety, and interpretive depth. Future research may extend this inquiry by examining a larger corpus of Ghalib's poetry, comparing additional English translations, or exploring the relationship between cultural symbolism and pragmatic reconstruction in South Asian literary translation.

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