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LITERARY AESTHETICS AND EMOTIONAL RESONANCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HUMAN VS. MACHINE TRANSLATION OF LITERARY TEXTS

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Abstract
This research provides a comparative analysis of human and machine translation of Urdu poetry by Parveen Shakir. The primary focus is to analyse the capability of preserving literary devices, cultural richness, and emotional appeal of the work in both machine and human translations. The qualitative comparative analysis of the four chosen poems by Parveen Shakir has been compared to human translation by Naima Rashid and AI-generated translations by Rekhta dictionary, U-dictionary, and Google Translate. The findings emphasis that human translations contain an expressive understanding, aesthetic responsiveness and can retain the symbolism of the poem, richness of the metaphor and simile and even the cultural closeness. The tone and rhythm may be altered slightly with a little stylistic variations. Conversely, machine translations are more accurate as far as literal accuracy is concerned, yet they lack emotional subtlety, symbolism, and rhythmic flow. Altogether, this research explains cognitive and creative limitations of machine translation, especially with regard to poetry translation. It strengthens the role of human intuition, the ability to interpret and cultural knowledge in literary translations.

Keywords
Parveen Shakir, Machine Translation, Human Translation, Emotional Appeal, Culture, Google Translate

1. Introduction

Parveen Shakir is the best-known figure of modern Urdu poetry, whose highly-descriptive poetry covered emotions of people and social facts profoundly and vividly. Lyrical beauty, the sheer intellectuality and cross-linguistics approach which defines her poetry finds an echo on both sides of the cultural and linguistic boundaries. Her poetry is delicately balanced between the language, the culture and the poem structure, which makes it very difficult to translate without taking away the originality. Almost, all her poems are well-crafted combinations of metaphor, rhythm, and subtle emotion, and each enriched with the themes like love, femininity, identity, social critique, with incredible sensitivity and accuracy.

The most important aspect of translation is the preservation of the original style of Urdu poems by Parveen Shakir. Translators have the dual task of word to word translation and, at the same time, maintain the charm that defines her poetry. The introduction of artificial intelligence introduces a different challenge to human translators as they employ their expertise and intuition to translate languages and cultural elements in order to offer a translation that captures the original meaning of the verses by Shakir. Even though machines are very effective literal meaning processors, yet their ability to process poetic figures, literary devices, cultural references, and affective meanings is very doubtful. The research will fill the gap between the creativity and effectiveness of the machine since through it will be understood better if the machine translation can retain the beauty and integrity of a poem or not and to what extent.

The study aims to address following research questions:

1. How do human and machine translations differ in translating the literary devices in Parveen Shakir's poetry?
2. To what extent do machine translations modify the emotional intensity of Parveen Shakir's poetry compared to human translations?

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2. Literature Review

Translation Studies is a field focused on the theory, description, and application of translation (Baker, 2010). The Oxford English Dictionary (2011) defined translation as "the process of converting words or text from one language into another. Translation studies require a more comprehensive understanding of the context and cultural shift. When translating a text into a new language and culture, dynamic equivalency must be taken into account in addition to faithful translation modes and techniques. The source signs of a culture could accomplish the equivalency (Bassnett, 2007).

Equivalent translations are those where the meaning of a piece of writing (along with its style and tone) are accurately translated into the target language so that a positive cross-cultural communication can be made successful. It retains meaning, a crucial aspect of academic, technical, and legal texts, and considers cultural differences to be sensitive and not offending (Yinhua, 2011).

A translation of a text enables it to obtain a global resonance, and when a text does not succeed in doing so it is usually due to the limitations set by the language itself. Justifying this point, Uzair and Asghar (2017) observed that Urdu literature has been an obscure subject because of the lack of translation and exposure, forcing the world to be deprived of the influence of Urdu poetry. Prose and poetry have also been translated into English in an effort to bring attention of international attention to Urdu poetry. One such example is the Urdu poetry of Parveen Shakir in which she captures and reflects on the cultural themes and local subjects in her work. There are numerous critics who insist that her poems cannot be translated. Because when translated into a foreign language, it become deprived of the cultural references of semiotics and therefore, the text become meaningless.

The translation of the Urdu poetry of Noshi Gillani into English using the concept of dynamic equivalence has its strengths and limitations. Although the technique retains some lyrical attributes and gives the meaning some interpretive flexibility, it frequently loses the cultural, emotional and symbolic richness of the original Urdu text. The abundance of cultural allusions, idiomatic phrases, and religious overtones that are involved in Urdu are often lost in translation. Furthermore, the Sufi and mystical layers inherent in the works of Gillani are mostly not available to the English speaking audiences and it is a reflection of the language and cultural barriers that suppress wholesome translation of the meaning (Imran et al., 2024).

According to Marshall (2024), the distinction between human translation (HT) and machine translation (MT) is largely based on the kinds of errors that they can make most: machine will show too much literalism and will commit more errors with choosing terminology and style, whereas human translation will tend towards fluency and style errors. Both HT and MT often commit errors in accuracy as both incorrectly translate domain-specific terminology, favored incorrect terms, mistranslations, particularly when translating into their native language.

The research by Ahmad et al., (2024), examined the translations of the poems of Parveen Shakir and identified the various perspectives of translation that bring about different levels of similarity in linguistic and textual nature between the original text and the translated version. Translators use methods such as substitution and omission so as to produce more poetic features of rhyme and meter and to preserve the original meaning and the impact on the reader. Translations have not been totally able to maintain core themes and imagery because of the linguistic and cultural differences, which lead to a partial to distal equivalence.

Literary and pragmatic features vary greatly in being equivalent in the translation process especially in Urdu to English. Literary devices like metaphors, rhyme, and references to other cultures usually need a creative translation, through which translators achieve distal equivalence, in which meaning is retained in its essence and not exactness. Conversely, the pragmatic features which concentrate on communicative intents of the conversational origins, intonation, and context require the utterance to be accurately portrayed to make the translation

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sound to the targeted audience. The most significant obstacle to maintaining the cultural elements is the inherently idiom-specific, religious and historical allusions found in Urdu poetry, especially in the works of poets such as Allama Iqbal, where a culturally specific symbol often lacks an equivalent in English (Ajmal & Khan, 2024).

Other researchers such as Alowedi and Al-Ahdal (2023), discuss the shortfalls of machine translation AI in accurately translating the Arabic poetry, saying that despite AI progress such as neural machine translation, the machine translation fails to translate the cultural, poetic, and emotional elements, which are important in translating the text faithfully. The results demonstrate that figurative language, allusions to the past, and artistic elements are commonly lost during Machine Translation (MT) and play a crucial role in preserving the original effect of a poem. Therefore, the study emphasizes the continued significance of the human expertise to guarantee the wholeness and richness of poetic writings, implying that AI is not yet able to substitute the human translator in literary processes.

The study by Wazir and Lodhi (2021) makes a contribution to translation studies as it explores the concepts of semantic, pragmatic, and cultural equivalence in the English translations of the Urdu poetry of Amjad Islam Amjad and identifies the problems of maintaining the poetic nuance and cultural context. This study recommends the need to bridge the cultural differences and develop the concept of understanding literary translation particularly in multilingual nations such as Pakistan in order to promote the enhancement of tolerance and acceptability of other languages and people. The translated text does not contain all the aspects of Urdu culture and, thus, a sense of romanticism and grandeur is lost. The elements of culture unique to Urdu, like the word chadar, which holds a cultural meaning, would not be easily translated using the same sense in English, and this would alter the meaning and context of the phrase.

Similarly, Vishnupriya (2019) tells about the reason why translating poetry can be so tough especially in the case of English and Tamil that belong to such different nations with diverse or completely different linguistic potential. Classical words do not have direct equivalents and therefore translators use transliteration. Some words, sayings, similes, metaphors, and names of plants, birds and bees become specific to certain cultural and geographical situations, which can hardly be translated. Literary devices, including metaphors, alliteration, assonance, rhythm, rhyme, and meter, are some of the other challenges, since they do not always translate with fidelity into other languages. Translators often face the dilemma between literal translation and conveying figurative meaning, striving to preserve both the meaning and the artistic qualities of the poem. The translation of poetry demands careful attention to linguistic, literary, aesthetic, and socio-cultural elements, as the translator must capture nuances, symbolism, rhythm, and the poet's intention while producing a text that resonates meaningfully in the target language.

According to a comparative analysis conducted by Boukreris et al., (2016), machine translations, especially the ones offered by such software as Google Translate, have become progressively better; however, they do not yet signify the importance of human translation in the quality or shades. Human translation needs serious linguistic, semantic and cultural knowledge, as these are able to transmit the meaning, style and context of the culture, which machines are unable to replicate. This paper shows, using the examples of the Germinal by Zola, that machine translations tend to give literal, inappropriate, or wrong translations, particularly on complex sentences in terms of syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Although machine translation is useful in cases where one wants to make quick or bulk translations, it is still a mechanical translation but not peculiar in terms of errors or not posing creativity and interpretation ability as is the case with human translators. The researchers come to the conclusion that, at the moment, machine translators cannot be taken to replace human translators, especially when it comes to translating the work in its essence, tone, and cultural appeal.

According to Pinheiro (2016), the quality of translations should be investigated in more detail

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and accuracy, particularly with references to the artistic value of the translation. According to Pinheiro, accuracy in explaining the process of translation is also essential mainly when translating poetry between one language and another, and developed the term Cultural translation to denote this. As Saldanha and O'Brien (2014) also observed, the importance of imagination on literary translation, which is often challenging to the Machine Translation systems. Machine translations are not as effective in preserving the artistic elements even though it is capable of creating a literal text replica. This is true particularly in the poetry of Shakir, in which one has to perceive her feminist concerns and introspective reflections, through the prism of lingual and culturally sensitive nuances.

Tulkin et al. (2022) also discussed the specific peculiarities of the translation process and coherence of the form and content of the translation by Minevich Lev Penkovsky, who was a skilled specialist in the field of Uzbek ancient literature and translated the poetry of Zahiruddin Babur to Russian. It was observed that Penkovsky managed to reconstruct poetry features like relief, sound symbolism, and classical rubaiyat rhymes. The translation thereby grasps the main notion of the rubaiyat, the most internal thoughts of the lyrical hero, and historical facts.

The theory of dynamic equivalence was given by Nida in 1964, and it is critically important to retain the meaning as well as the emotional effect to the original text in a translation. The technique is particularly effective when it comes to translation of poetry since the material is often complicated, and also has emotional, cultural, and connotative symbolism. Metaphors, allusions, rhythm, and other features of poetry are essential in catching the atmosphere of the original poem, thus, poets who translate poetry have to retain balance between promoting the language structure and its preservation. Although it has improved over the years, machine translation has never been successful in translating works of literature, especially in particular poetry. Hutchins and Somers' (1992) initial investigation emphasizes that Machine Translation systems perform better on technical or factual content when lexical and grammatical accuracy are the primary concerns. Poetry's use of metaphorical language and inherent ambiguity make poetry easy for machines to misread, which results in translations that fall short of the original's emotional impact or deeper meanings.

Although much is known about general differences between human and machine translation, there is still limited research specifically comparing how each handles literary devices in Urdu poetry, such as imagery, symbolism, personification, and sound patterns. Furthermore, it is not evident how such differences influence the emotionality of translated poetry, especially in monumentally personal and culturally diversified texts of Parveen Shakir. This gap is filled by researching the differences between human and machine translations in the translation of poetic techniques and how much assessing machine translation converts or erases the emotional impact of the poetry of Shakir in English.

3. Materials and Methods

This research is a comparative qualitative study, which explores the differences between machine translations and human translations of poetry written by Parveen Shakir. A qualitative method is the best approach in this case since translation of poetry requires cultural subtlety, symbolic meaning and emotional appeal which can never be satisfactorily measured in quantitative terms. The research thus aims at concentrating on textual richness, figurative language and emotive articulation, examining how these survive or are transformed in various translation forms.

The data set has included four chosen poems by Parveen Shakir. These poems were selected purposely due to the presence of thick symbolic messages and hard lexicon that are challenging to translate. These poems have been carefully selected since they have a lot of symbolic connotations and challenging words which cannot be literally translated. These

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features make these poems unique as compared to rest of poems in *Defiance of the Rose*, and language is more complex and the machine translation is less. The poems are examined in three forms (1) the original Urdu text of Parveen Shakir, (2) Naima Rashid human translation in her book *Defiance of the Rose* (2019), and (3) machine-based translations that are produced using popular AI-based tools. Google Translate and U-Dictionary (the tools of machine translations) are chosen due to being one of the most available, popular, and used tools by the general readers of the world and, therefore, the real-life experience of the Urdu literature with the digital translation. Rekhta Dictionary is selectively used to translate titles only; it is originally designed as a lexical resource and offering no complete text translation. This 3-fold selection enables fair comparison of professional literary translation, most commonly offered automated systems, and lexical assistance platform.

This paper examines the ways the poetic style of Shakir is translated with reference to key literary devices. Special emphasis has been made on the employment of metaphor, symbolism, imagery, personification, and simile because they possess cultural and emotional implications in Urdu poems. Through the process of studying how these qualities are maintained, altered, or damaged in translation, the research does not only compare the semantic accuracy but also shows how the translations reflect the aesthetic and affective aspects of the original writings.

Batool et al., (2022) in the earlier study compared poetic works of Shakir with translations of Naima Rashid through the Preliminary Pragmatic Model (PPM) to determine pragmatic and dynamic equivalence. According to their results, universal themes and less complex poems tended to be partially parallel whereas culturally enriched and dense in metaphors poems did not transfer effectively, indicating gaps in communicating literary and cultural content. Nevertheless, they did not conduct a multivariate or cross-sectional study, but only a binary one comparing Shakir and Rashid. The current study is a step further because it integrates machine translation into the framework, thus comparing both human creativity and AI limitations in the same comparative framework.

4. Data Analysis

This chapter is an analytical comparison between human and machine translations of selected poems by Parveen Shakir. It examines how poetic images are viewed by the two styles of translations as well as cultural subtlety. The discussion of these four poems is taken individually and shows how meaning and expression differ in human and AI-based translations.

Poem#1

Urdu Text (پروین شاکر)	**Human Translation (Naima Rashid)**	**Machine Translation (Google Translation, U-Dictionary, Rekhta Dictionary)**
نارسائی تتلیاں فصیلِ شب عبور کر کے میری کور کوکھ کے لیے پروں میں رنگ، آنکھ میں کرن لیے کلائیوں سے ہو کے اب ہتھیلیوں تک آ گئیں مگر مری تمام اُنگلیاں کٹی ہوئی ہیں !	**Access Denied** Butterflies, after crossing the ramparts of evening, have come to fill my blind womb with colours in their wings and twinkles in their eyes. They've flown past my wrists straight into my palms, but now that they are	**Insufficiency/ inaccessibility/ non-access** Butterflies Crossing the wall of night For my womb With color in their wings, rays in their eyes They have now reached my palms From my wrists But All my fingers are cut off!

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	dancing in my palms, all my fingers are slashed at the knuckles.	

The term *"نارسائی"* ("Narasai") is a loaded symbol. This is translated from Google Translate. In Urdu it does not just mean insufficiency, it means failure to achieve something, lack of completeness, something that one always wants to do. The translation of the Naima, *Access Denied,* makes this a piercing contemporary metaphor - it possesses impact, however it also pulls the word into the language of administration and technology. It translates the title into the English language so that it is impressive, though it changes the emotional coloring of subtle yearning to rough rejection. The machine translation of the text *(Insufficiency / inaccessibility / non-access)* is more faithful in terms of the semantic field but is incoherent as poetry.

In Urdu poetry, *"شب"* (night) is rarely just darkness. It has a connotation of parting (فراق), sadness (غم), and the long hours of standing in hijr (distance with the beloved). It is a time and emotional space, the time of desire. Even the word of فصیل is stratified: yes, it is a wall, but not just a wall. In traditional terms, it implies a strengthened wall - a wall separating one world to another, usually suggesting inaccessibility or incarceration. When she writes: فصیل شب عبور کر کے, Parveen Shakir paints a picture of the night as a walled city that has to be broken to access life, love or pleasure.

The translation by the human, of the *ramparts of evening*, seems at least to be in part successful, in that the word *ramparts*, by recalling such a thing as stone ramparts and division, recreates the majesty of the word فصیل. However, the transition of the *night* into the *evening* is not a trivial one, it shifts the emotional register. The word شب is filled with sadness and remoteness in Urdu, whereas the word evening in English is mostly filled with softness, transition or even romanticism. This risks to diminish the intensity of Shakir imagery.

The machine translation *wall of night* preserves the word *night*, which is more consistent with the emotional intensity of the Urdu, but the term wall in English is a flat word. It has no historical and poetic echo of فصیل, which in Urdu reminds of ancient walled cities and fortresses - the barriers hard to cross. The machine remains literal but becomes depthless; the human being becomes not literal but enriches style.

The other word *"کرن"* (Kiran) is of great significance. In Urdu, it is a ray of light, and in many cases represents hope, warmth or some divine grace. Shakir arrays it in the eyes of butterflies: a surreal, delicate image. Human translation makes this as *twinkles in their eyes,* which smooths out *ray* to a sparkle, a kinder and more childish picture. It also intensifies personification but changes the symbolism of divine light into playful brightness. The machine produces *"rays in their eyes"*, which in English is a difficult phrase to pronounce but is semantically more close to Shakir. Here the machine translation is weak when style is concerned but not the meaning. The limitation of the human translation is that in rendering it lyrical, it weakens the seriousness of *ray*.

Another word in last line of poem, (کور کوکھ) (kor kokh) - literally meaning blind womb. It is a devastating Urdu metaphor that causes infertility, barrenness, and hopelessness. Human translation, *to fill my blind womb*, is a partial expression, although the verb fill distorts the meaning in terms of restoration, as though the empty could be remedied. The machine version *for my womb* is empty and desultory, and wipes out the metaphor altogether; at least it does not introduce an unintentional touch of healing. Here, the human translator adds a poetic twist to the line but loses its hopeless tone, whereas the machine takes away all the poetry and makes no mistake.

The last line of the poem is brutal and put to an end: تمام اُنگلیاں کٹی ہوئی ہیں (cut all the fingers off). Human translation, *slashed at the knuckles*, lends some rhythm and creates a startling image, yet *slashed* implies harm, and there is no deeper damage than that. The machine

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translation *all my fingers are cut off!* , conveys the complete loss, but crudely, lacking rhythm and metaphor. The Urdu line here is a mixture of horror and art; and both the translation retains half of it.

The human translation is successful in capturing the larger portion of the literary devices in the poem, the metaphor and symbolism, yet the original bleak hopelessness has been mellowed down by some interpretive chices. Conversely, the machine translations maintain just surface meanings and not the underlying images and make the poem look fragmented and weak. Emotionally, the human translation enables the element of sorrow and resignation to play out slowly and rhythmically, preserving the silence and the tragedy of the grief experienced by Shakir. The machine translations, nevertheless, turn these feelings into the expressions that are crude and clumsy, depriving the poem of its delicate form. The human translator tries to negotiate meaning and but the machine translation concentrates on the literal form of expression. As the work stated by Batool et al. (2022), reveals the ways in which machine translations have a greater degree to ignore poetic devices and misinterprets the intended emotion in the Parveen Shakir poetry.

Poem #2

Urdu Text (پروین شاکر)	**Human Translation (Naima Rashid)**	**Machine Translation (Google Translation, U-Dictionary, Rekhta Dictionary)**
تشکر دشت غربت میں جس پیڑ نے میرے تنہا مسافر کی خاطر گھنی چھاؤں پھیلائی ہے اُس کی شادابیوں کے لیے میری سب اُنگلیاں... ہوا میں دُعا لکھ رہی ہیں !	**Gratitude** That tree which spread a wholesome shade upon my lonesome traveler in poverty's scorching sands, for the lushness of that tree, all my fingers inscribe a prayer in the sky.	**Gratitude/Gratefulness/ Thankfulness** The tree that grew in the desert of poverty It has spread a thick shadow for my lonely traveler. For the sake of its greenery All my fingers... Writing prayers in the air

The title *"تشکر"* (Gratitude) immediately sets the tone of the poem, carrying both cultural and spiritual undertones. In Urdu, it is not simply thankfulness but a state of reverent acknowledgment, often directed toward divine benevolence. The human translation preserves this with *"Gratitude"*, while the machine equivalents-*"Gratitude/Gratefulness/Thankfulness"* — remain closer to dictionary entries but nevertheless capture the semantic field adequately. Here, unexpectedly, the machine performs reasonably well, since the word is straightforward and less culturally layered than other titles. The phrase "دشت غربت" is a quintessential Urdu poetic construction. دشت(desert) is not simply barren land but a symbolic landscape of exile, alienation, and spiritual trial — it recalls the long Sufi and ghazal tradition where the "desert" is the space of wandering lovers or seekers. غربت, though commonly translated as "poverty," carries the dual meaning of material deprivation and estrangement in a foreign land. Together, "دشت غربت" expresses not just the "desert of poverty" but the condition of being utterly isolated in hardship. Naima's *"poverty's scorching sands"* intensifies the image with "scorching," adding sensory harshness. This choice injects vividness but risks narrowing غربت into only economic terms, leaving out its existential loneliness. The machine's *"desert of poverty"* is literal but unnuanced; it captures the words but misses their cultural freight. Thus, the human version over-colors, while the machine under-colors, and both fall short of the deep symbolic register the Urdu phrase holds.

The symbol in "جس پیڑ نے گھنی چھاؤں پھیلائی" is a tree, which is an escape in the desolate land. The Urdu line "گھنی چھاؤں"provides not only shade but protective, enveloping shelter, more

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related to emotional and even divine. Naima Rashid translates this to mean a *wholesome shade*. The use of an adjective wholesome adds more depth to the picture by highlighting vitality and sustenance in a way that is essentially appropriate with the symbolic purpose of the tree as the provider of life. But wholesome is a cultural transformation, it puts the shade into the context of health and well-being, a concept that is represented in English today, but not the enhanced thickness of گھنی چھاؤں. The machine has a more literal and more lifeless image of a *thick shadow*: shadow in English usually carries some negative undertones, which is quite the opposite of the positive and nurturing implications in Urdu. In this case, the human translation conserves the protective symbolism in interpretation, whereas the machine neutralizes it in something very nearly negative.

The last closing line, which is the most delicate, is "میری سب اُنگلیاں ہوا میں دُعا لکھ رہی ہیں". Parveen Shakir combines physical performance with spiritual expression: fingers *writing* prayers in the air. The inability of the act itself is the thing the point is opinionated helplessness (writing on nothing) and belief (thinking that prayer is there even without it being written). It is translated by Naima Rashid as *all my fingers inscribe a prayer in the sky*. The ephemeral gesture is made eternal and carved- *inscribe* provides solemnity and dignity. But this is a perceptive twist on the futility of the Urdu, about the weakness and disappearance of words. The typing in the sky is poetic, but it too is a literary expression that is clumsy. It does not reflect the contradiction of hope and hopelessness, but rather emerges as a casual remark of a person writing. Pathos is carried in the Urdu, aestheticized in the human translation, and made trivial in the machine.

It demonstrates to the reader how actually and without making any allusions to thankfulness Parveen Shakir expresses it by her imagery such as the desert and the deprivation site, and the tree and the oasis. The human translation manages to maintain that contrast, to carve the shade to care as a symbol and to make the praying process so solemn and lasting. The machine version however deprives this delicacy; its phrasing causes the prayer to no more than sound ordinary and the tree no more than functional, with little of the reverberation that is inherent with the original one. The identity of the emotion, which the poem carries along, is thus not evenly propelled, human translation keeps the mood of the silent wonder, and machine translation squashes it into utterances that are not personal.

This study emphasizes that the difficulty in the translation of poetry is not in the translation of words but of silence, reverence, and emotion that bring those words into existence. Ahmad et al., (2024) share the same conclusion through their analysis of Iqbal poetry that the literal meaning might not be lost in English, but the underlying cultural and emotional meaning is frequently lost, and the study being presented sets up the process of displaying how algorithmic translation adds to the loss of emotions that poetry is all about.

Poem #3

Urdu Text (پروین شاکر)	**Human Translation (Naima Rashid)**	**Machine Translation (Google Translation, U-Dictionary, Rekhta Dictionary)**
مشورہ ننھی لڑکی ساحل کے اتنے نزدیک ریت سے اپنے گھر نہ بنا کوئی سرکش موج ادھر آئی، تو تیرے گھر کی بنیادیں تک بہہ جائیں	**Word of Caution** Little girl, don't build your castles so close to the coast. Should a reckless wave come by, it will wash away the very foundations of your house,	**Advice/Consultation** Little girl, So close to the coast Do not make your home from the sand If a rebellious wave came, then Flow to the foundations of your house

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گی اور پھر اُن کی یاد میں تو ساری عمر اداس رہے گی !	and their memories, for ever, will wreck your life.	And then in their memory The whole age will be sad!

The title "مشورہ" in Urdu means "advice" or "counsel," and it carries a tone of seriousness, often given by elders to the young. The human translator adapts this into *"Word of Caution,"* which reframes it with a warning-like quality, making it sound more poetic and contextually suited to the moral of the poem. The machine offers *"Advice/Consultation,"* which is semantically accurate but fails to capture the emotive register; "consultation" in particular feels bureaucratic, far from the intimacy of Shakir's voice.

The first "ننھی لڑکی" (little girl) is a tendering phrase that brings out vulnerability. Both translations capture the address in both versions, however, the human version inserts it naturally, with rhythm in the English language whereas the machine version inserts them in a mechanical way. The next phrase "ساحل کے اتنے نزدیک ریت سے اپنے گھر نہ بنا" is metaphorical, warning against fragile foundations built too close to danger. The human translation, *"don't build your castles so close to the coast,"*, both keeps the image, and adds to it the word *castles*, that adds a creative, childish touch, which confirms the innocence of the person receiving the message. The machine provides *so close to the coast do not make your home from the sand,* which is literal but clumsy in construction and style.

The wave image "کوئی سرکش موج ادھر آئی، تو تیرے گھر کی بنیادیں تک بہہ جائیں گی" is central. In Urdu, "سرکش موج" (rebellious wave) is a personification, making nature an adversarial force. The human translation as *"should a reckless wave come by, it will wash away the very foundations of your house"* effectively conveys both the danger and the emotional resonance, with "reckless" as a sensitive choice for *"سرکش."* The machine's version *"if a rebellious wave came, then flow to the foundations of your house"* is grammatically strained and misrepresents the destructive action, losing both clarity and poetic weight.

The closing, "اور پھر اُن کی یاد میں تو ساری عمر اداس رہے گی", is poignant, linking loss to lifelong sadness. The human translation extends it to include *and their memories, for ever, will destroy your life,* which is not only permanent and intensive but also dramatizes the verse a bit more than Parveen Shakir' tone of sorrow. The machine's *"and then in their memory the whole age will be sad"* is literal but awkward, flattening rhythm and failing to sustain the gravity of lifelong grief.

In general, the human version is more likely to preserve the literary devices of this poem, in particular, the metaphor of the house with frail walls and the wave, which is destructive, which possess their symbolic power and rhythm. The human version retains this symbolism clearly and rhythmically, developing the warning into a poetic warning which maintains strength and gentleness. The machine version, though it repeats the bits of the literal sense, breaks the image as a set of clumsy forms, which decrease the unity and dull the impact of the warning. This difference is also apparent in the treatment of titles, where the human translator reconfigured the three poems called *Mashwara* into versions specific to the context ("Word of Caution", "Facing Up" and "A Suggestion") but the machine translators and Rekhta-dictionary defaulted to one literal configuration, obliterating the interpretative difference that the text requires.

Even the emotional ones are not fairly distributed, the necessity to regret in the human version is accompanied with muted sorrow, and the machine version transforms it into specific sentences that deprive the effect. This work is also related to the way poetry needs more than grammatical soundness, it needs a certain care of tone, silence and form which machines never seem to achieve. Aslam and Lodhi (2024) conducted their research on the poetry of

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Faiz where they present similar problems, stating that it is possible to transfer the primary meaning, but the cultural context, and aesthetic beauty cannot be achieved through literal translation. Using this argument to the sphere of the digital translations, the present study unveils how not only the imagery as presented by Parveen Shakir, but also the emotional weight of her advice is being diluted by the algorithms, leaving behind meaning that cannot be seen as resonant.

Poem #4

Urdu Text (پروین شاکر)	**Human Translation (Naima Rashid)**	**Machine Translation (Google Translation, U-Dictionary, Rekhta Dictionary)**
زود پشیمان گہری بھوری آنکھوں والا اک شہزادہ دوردیس سے چمکیلے، مُشکی گھوڑے پر ہوا سے باتیں کرتا جگر جگر کرتی تلوار سے جنگل کاٹتا آیا دروازوں سے لپٹی بیلیں پرے ہٹاتا جنگل کی بانہوں میں جکڑے محل کے ہاتھ چھڑاتا جب اندر آیا تو دیکھا شہزادی کے جسم کی ساری سوئیاں زنگ آلودہ تھیں رستہ دیکھنے والی آنکھیں سارے شکوے بھلا چکی تھیں !	**Timely Repentance** A prince with deep, brown eyes, from a land far away- his head in the clouds, riding his gleaming, musky steed, chops down the forest with his sword's blades, throws back the vines clinging to the doors, Frees the castle from the forest's embrace. When he came inside, he saw all needles stuck in the princess's body had turned rusty now; the eyes that had sought him for so long were glassy and beyond complaint.	**Early regret/repenting soon** A prince with dark brown eyes From far away Shine, the mushroom talked to the wind on the horse The liver came to the forest with a liver sword Removes the bulls wrapped in doors Sticks the hands of the palace chained in the arms of the forest When I came in, I saw it All the needles in the princess's body were rusted Wayward eyes All the doubts were forgotten!

The title *"زود پشیمان"* is itself a literary device, heavy with irony. In Urdu it means regret which comes too quickly, and frequently without reflection, but in the frame of the poetry of Shakir it possesses the meaning of remorse which is meaningless since it is too late. The human rendering, *"Timely Repentance"*, is elegant and polished, but ironically shifts the sense toward something corrective, almost positive, which dilutes the sting of Shakir's critique. The machine version, *"Early regret/repenting soon"*, though clumsy in English, is semantically closer to the Urdu by emphasizing premature and futile repentance.

The opening image of "گہری بھوری آنکھوں والا اک شہزادہ / دور دیس سے" introduces a fairy-tale setting. The prince with "deep brown eyes" from "a distant land" carries archetypal resonance. The human version presents this smoothly, using rhythm and narrative flow, while the machine collapses into awkward fragments, offering only partial clarity. The next phrase, "چمکیلے، مُشکی گھوڑے پر ہوا سے باتیں کرتا", is especially rich. Literally, it means the prince "talks to the wind" while riding a shining, musky horse. This personification conveys speed and freedom. The human version paraphrases it as *"his head in the clouds, riding his gleaming, musky steed"*, which captures movement and grandeur but sidesteps the unique Urdu metaphor of conversing with the wind. The machine version produces near nonsense:

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"shine, the mushroom talked to the wind on the horse", showing its inability to process figurative imagery.

The heroic sequence continues: " جگر جگر کرتی تلوار سے جنگل کا شتا آیا / دروازوں سے لپٹی بیلیں پرے ہٹاتا / جنگل کی بانہوں میں جکڑے محل کے ہاتھ چھڑاتا." These lines show the Prince slicing through the forest with his sword, shaving-off vines and liberating the castle. The human version flows logically, rhythmic, and this comes out as a rescue fairy-tale. It is a simplified version of the layered personifications that Shakir uses, like the forest having "arms" and the palace having "hands", but in general maintains the symbolic conflict. The machine, though, translates such wild metaphors into rubbish - "removes the bulls wrapped in doors" or "sticks the hands of the palace" - eliminates the meaning and the image in all their visuals.

The poem reaches its climax when the prince finally enters: " جب اندر آیا تو دیکھا / شہزادی کے جسم کی ساری سوئیاں زنگ آلودہ تھیں / رستہ دیکھنے والی آنکھیں / سارے شکوے بھلا چکی تھیں." This ending overturns the fairy-tale expectation. The "needles" rusted in the princess's body are a metaphor of wasted time, of decay, of opportunities long past. The eyes that once waited are now empty, beyond complaint. The human translation conveys this effectively: *"all needles stuck in the princess's body had turned rusty now; the eyes that had sought him for so long were glassy and beyond complaint."* The imagery of rust and glass sustains the mood of irreversible loss. The machine rendering is literal but crude, producing lines such as *"all the needles in the princess's body were rusted"* and *"wayward eyes all the doubts were forgotten."* While fragments remain accurate, the rhythm, nuance, and emotional weight collapse.

The human translation transfers the story of the delay and the regretting in a consistent way preserving the imagery of the prince, the forest and the rusted needles in the role of the lost time and the missed chances. Metaphors are explicit and tone is not offensive to the ethical weight of the poem. The machine translation, on the contrary, disintegrates such devices into fragmented fragments where the distorted phrases undermine the allegory and deprive it of symbolic profundity. The strength of sentiment is also not balanced: the human one is full of sorrow and futility with a feeling of sadness, and the machine translation is compressed into awkward language that denies the text its spirit.

This paper points out that translating allegorical poetry is virtually impossible not to maintain the cohesion and some symbolic resonance, which machines cannot always retain. The same problem was discovered by Mohsin et al., (2020) in his discussion about the work of Faiz' *Subh-e-Azadi,* that the translation did not maintain metaphorical richness and historical allusion, yet it communicated the message of freedom. Expanding that apprehension, the current analysis demonstrates that when machine systems engage the allegory of Shakir, the loss of emotional tone and imagery impact will be even stronger; leaving a fragmented version of her own meditation on regret.

5. Conclusion

The results indicate that human translation works effectively on an interpretive and aesthetic level, maintaining a large extent of the poetic images, emotional appeal and cultural sensitivity present in the poetry of Parveen Shakir. The choices made by the human translator indicate an intelligent attempt to balance between accuracy and creativity. There are slight variations of tone or rhythm, but these are within a reasonable interpretative range. In contrast, machine translation is only correct at the basic lexical and structural level. It does not support the figurative, symbolic, and emotional aspects of the text. There is a loss of meaning and artistic richness in the literal translation of metaphors and idioms and demonstrates that AI systems are yet to achieve the ability of translating poetry with cultural and emotional depth. The enhancement can be done by training machine translation models by literary and culturally specific corpora, which should be able to comprehend the contexts, tones, and sentiments.

Computational linguists and literary scholars can also collaborate to make algorithmic sensitivity to make figurative language finer. Conclusively, it is generally seen that human translation is superior with its most accurate interpretive and emotional accuracy of which machines still cannot match. However, with further progress in natural language processing, and modeling of culture, machine translation can come to be gradually used to support human ingenuity in literature translation.

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