

CULTURAL AND PRAGMATIC LOSS IN PUNJABI ENGLISH METAPHOR TRANSLATION: A CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study explores the cultural and contextual challenges involved in translating Punjabi metaphors into English. Metaphors are not merely linguistic devices; they are deeply rooted in the cultural values, beliefs, and lived experiences of a community. The translation of Punjabi metaphors into English is a complex task because both languages belong to different cultural and cognitive frameworks. This research uses Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) as its theoretical foundation. A qualitative research design is adopted, and twenty Punjabi metaphors are selected as data. The findings reveal that translators must consider cultural context, target audience, and communicative purpose to achieve effective translations. The study recommends functional equivalence and descriptive translation as the most useful strategies for bridging cultural gaps.

Keywords: Punjabi metaphors, translation, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, cultural equivalence, qualitative study

1. Introduction

Language is not just a medium of communication; it is a mirror of culture. Every language carries within it the values, traditions, and worldview of the people who speak it. Metaphors, in particular, are one of the most culturally loaded aspects of any language. They reflect how a community conceptualizes and makes sense of its reality. Translating metaphors from one language to another, especially across culturally distant languages, presents significant challenges for translators.

Punjabi is one of the oldest and richest languages of South Asia. It is spoken by millions of people in Pakistan and India. The language is full of vivid metaphors that are embedded in the agricultural lifestyle, family values, spiritual beliefs, and social norms of the Punjabi-speaking community. These metaphors often do not have direct equivalents in English, which makes their translation both challenging and intellectually demanding.

The purpose of this study is to explore how cultural and contextual factors influence the translation of Punjabi metaphors into English. The study examines the extent to which meaning is preserved, lost, or transformed during the translation process. It also investigates what strategies translators can use to maintain the cultural essence of Punjabi metaphors while making them meaningful to English-speaking readers.

The theory is Conceptual Metaphor Theory, proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which holds that metaphors are not merely poetic expressions but fundamental tools of human cognition. Together, these frameworks provide a solid foundation for analyzing Punjabi metaphors and their English translations.

The study adopts a qualitative research design. Twenty Punjabi metaphors are purposively selected and analyzed in terms of their cultural background, contextual meaning, and translation strategies. The research contributes to the growing field of translation studies by highlighting the importance of cultural awareness in the translation process. It also offers

practical insights for translators, language teachers, and language learners working across Punjabi and English.

1.1 Research Questions

1. Which cultural, and linguistic choices in translating Punjabi metaphors into English lead to loss of cultural nuance or a misleading interpretation?
2. To what extent is the original meaning of Punjabi metaphors preserved, lost, or transformed when translated into English?
3. How does Conceptual Metaphor Theory explain the cognitive and cultural dimensions of Punjabi metaphors and their English translations?

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To examine how translation choices lead to loss of cultural nuance or misleading interpretation.
2. To analyze the degree to which meaning is maintained, lost, or altered when Punjabi metaphors are translated into English.
3. To use Conceptual Metaphor Theory to explore the cognitive and cultural underpinnings of selected Punjabi metaphors.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Punjabi is a language deeply enriched by cultural metaphors that reflect the everyday experiences, values, and beliefs of its speakers. Language expresses and creates cultural reality, and is endowed with cultural characteristics that play the most important role in the transfer of culture from one community to another (Newmark, 2001). However, the translation of Punjabi metaphors into English is a particularly difficult task because most of them carry meanings that are culturally specific and context-dependent. Language encompasses the whole native culture, social norms, and traditions, but translation from one language to another changes the context and sometimes meanings as well; translators feel difficulties in finding word equivalences, and sometimes the equivalence of words of one culture does not exist in the other culture (Avais et al., 2018). Standard translation approaches often fail to capture the full meaning of such expressions, resulting in either a loss of cultural nuance or a misleading interpretation.

Despite the growing interest in translation studies, there is still limited research on the specific challenges of translating Punjabi metaphors into English. Research examining the translation of Bulleh Shah's Punjabi poetry into English found that Punjabi poetry has distinct metaphors that represent Punjabi culture, but when translated into English the original meaning is lost (Kiran, 2021). Metaphor is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a cognitive and cultural one, deeply rooted in how individuals perceive and structure their world (Kövecses, 2011), and metaphor plays a critical role in shaping and reflecting cultural values, offering a powerful tool for decoding cultural worldviews (Maalej, 2004). Nida's (1964) theory of dynamic equivalence emphasizes receptor response over strict word-for-word translation accuracy, positing that language and culture are inseparable and that cultural understanding is required to produce meaningful translations. This study aims to fill that gap by examining how cultural and contextual factors affect the translation process and what strategies can be employed to produce meaningful and culturally sensitive translations.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it contributes to the field of translation studies by providing a focused analysis of Punjabi metaphors, a relatively underexplored area in linguistic research. Second, it helps translators and language professionals understand the complexities of translating culturally embedded expressions and equips them with practical strategies to handle such challenges.

Third, the study is valuable for language teachers and learners who work across Punjabi and English, as it highlights the importance of cultural context in language learning and communication. Fourth, the theoretical integration of Conceptual Metaphor Theory offers a multi-dimensional analytical framework that can be applied to other language pairs as well. Finally, this research raises awareness about the cultural richness of the Punjabi language and the need to preserve that richness in translation

2. Literature Review

The translation of metaphors has been a topic of considerable interest in linguistics and translation studies. Researchers have long recognized that metaphors are not simple figures of speech but complex cognitive and cultural phenomena. Understanding the literature on metaphor translation helps situate the current study within a broader scholarly context.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory, introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their landmark work *Metaphors We Live By*, fundamentally transformed the understanding of metaphor in linguistics. Before this theory, metaphor was largely considered a decorative feature of literary language. Lakoff and Johnson challenged this view by arguing that metaphor is not simply a matter of words but a matter of thought. According to them, human beings understand abstract and complex concepts through more familiar and concrete experiences, and this cognitive process is what gives rise to metaphor. For example, the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR leads people to use expressions like "he attacke]d my position" or "she demolished his argument," because they unconsciously understand argument through the framework of warfare.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) identified three main types of conceptual metaphors: structural metaphors, orientational metaphors, and ontological metaphors, each reflecting a different way in which one conceptual domain is mapped onto another. This theory is highly relevant to translation studies because it explains why metaphors are so deeply tied to the cultural and cognitive experiences of a speech community. When a translator moves a metaphor from one language to another, they are not just transferring words; they are navigating between two different cognitive and cultural worlds. In the context of this study, Conceptual Metaphor Theory provides a framework for understanding how Punjabi metaphors are structured at the cognitive level and why they often resist direct translation into English.

Metaphor in Language and Culture

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) fundamentally changed the way linguists think about metaphor. In their seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*, they argued that metaphors are not decorative language features but fundamental structures of human thought. They proposed that human beings understand abstract concepts through concrete experiences, and this cognitive process gives rise to conceptual metaphors. For example, the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY shapes many everyday expressions across different languages. This cognitive view of metaphor has had a lasting impact on translation studies because it explains why metaphors are so deeply tied to cultural experience.

Building on this foundation, Kovecses (2005) explored how metaphors vary across cultures. He argued that while some metaphors are universal because they are based on shared human experiences, many others are culture-specific. These culture-specific metaphors reflect the unique values, practices, and worldview of a particular community. This insight is especially relevant for the study of Punjabi metaphors, which are firmly rooted in the agricultural and family-centered culture of Punjab. The challenge for translators is to recognize these cultural roots and find ways to communicate them effectively in the target language.

2.1 Translation Studies and Cultural Equivalence

Nida and Taber (1969) introduced the concept of dynamic equivalence in translation, arguing that a good translation should produce the same effect on the target reader as the original had

on the source reader. This idea shifted the focus from word-for-word translation to meaning-based translation. Nida's framework remains influential in translation studies, particularly in discussions of how to handle culturally specific expressions like metaphors. However, critics have noted that achieving full dynamic equivalence is not always possible when the source and target cultures are very different (Baker, 2011).

Venuti (1995) raised important questions about the ethics of translation. He distinguished between domestication, which adapts the source text to the target culture, and foreignization, which retains the foreign characteristics of the source text. In the context of metaphor translation, domestication might involve replacing a Punjabi metaphor with an equivalent English idiom, while foreignization might involve keeping the Punjabi metaphor and adding an explanation. Both strategies have their strengths and weaknesses, and the choice between them depends on the purpose of the translation and the needs of the target audience.

2.2 Studies on South Asian Metaphor Translation

Research on the translation of South Asian metaphors, including Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindi metaphors, has grown in recent years. Ahmad (2017) examined the translation of Urdu metaphors into English and found that many metaphors lost their cultural depth in translation. He recommended the use of footnotes and explanatory notes as supplementary strategies to preserve cultural meaning. Similarly, Khalid and Akhtar (2019) studied the translation of Punjabi proverbs and found that functional equivalence was the most effective strategy for maintaining communicative impact.

Zahid and Mehmood (2021) conducted a study on the translation of culturally bound expressions in South Asian literature and concluded that translators often face a dilemma between remaining faithful to the source culture and making the text accessible to the target audience. Their findings are consistent with the challenges identified in this study. More recently, Saeed (2022) applied Conceptual Metaphor Theory to analyze Punjabi metaphors in stories and found that these metaphors are deeply rooted in shared cultural experiences, making them particularly challenging to translate into culturally distant languages like English.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is concerned with understanding meanings, experiences, and cultural phenomena in depth rather than measuring them statistically (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A qualitative approach is appropriate for this study because the focus is on analyzing the cultural and contextual dimensions of Punjabi metaphors, which requires close textual analysis and interpretive judgment rather than numerical measurement.

The metaphors were purposively selected to represent a range of cultural themes including family, social relationships, emotions, hardship, and morality. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allows the researcher to select data that are most relevant to the research questions and theoretical framework (Patton, 2002).

The analysis was carried out through close reading and thematic analysis. Each metaphor was examined in terms of its source cultural context, its literal meaning, its implied or connotative meaning, and the strategies used to translate it into English. The translations were then evaluated against the criteria of Conceptual Metaphor Theory to assess how well meaning and cultural essence were preserved.

3.2 Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling to select 15 short stories from intermediate-level English language textbooks as the primary data source. Purposive sampling was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to intentionally choose data-rich sources that are relevant to the research objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Intermediate-level textbooks were

specifically targeted as they contain a balanced range of metaphorical expressions suitable for qualitative analysis.

3.3 Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded in two complementary theoretical frameworks. Theoretical framework is Conceptual Metaphor Theory, proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). This theory holds that metaphors are not merely linguistic expressions but cognitive structures through which human beings understand and organize their experience. According to this theory, a metaphor maps one conceptual domain, known as the source domain, onto another, known as the target domain. For example, in the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR, the concept of war is mapped onto the concept of argument, shaping the way we think and talk about disagreements. This framework is used in the present study to analyze the cognitive and cultural structure of Punjabi metaphors and to understand why they are often difficult to translate into English.

This frameworks offer a multi-dimensional analytical lens. Conceptual Metaphor Theory addresses the cognitive and cultural dimension. This study provides a more complete picture of the challenges and strategies involved in translating Punjabi metaphors into English.

4. Data Analysis

This section presents a detailed analysis of twenty selected Punjabi metaphors. The analysis focuses on the cultural background of each metaphor, its meaning in context, and the translation strategies used to render it in English. The analysis is organized under thematic sub-headings for clarity.

4.1 Results and findings

Table 4.1

Summary of Punjabi Metaphors, Translations, and Strategies

No.	Punjabi Metaphor (Romanized)	Literal Translation	English Equivalent	Translation Strategy
1	Dil da kach	Glass of the heart	A fragile heart	Functional Equivalence
2	Haath phar lena	Hold hands (stop)	To stop someone from going wrong	Descriptive Translation
3	Aakhaan da tara	Star of the eyes	Apple of one's eye	Cultural Equivalent
4	Mitti pao	Put soil over it	Let it go / Bury the past	Paraphrase
5	Nak vich dum	Breath in the nose	At the end of one's rope	Functional Equivalence
6	Pairaan te pani pana	Pouring water on feet	To honour/worship someone	Descriptive Translation
7	Dil phar ke rona	Tearing the heart and crying	To cry one's heart out	Cultural Equivalent
8	Chulha balna	To light the stove	To earn a livelihood/ make ends meet	Paraphrase
9	Lakeer da fakeer	Devotee of the line	Blindly following tradition	Descriptive Translation
10	Agg lana	To set fire	To instigate / provoke	Functional Equivalence
11	Sar te hath rakhna	Placing hand on head	To bless / protect someone	Cultural Equivalent

12	Khoon peena	To drink blood	To exploit or harass someone constantly	Paraphrase
13	Mann par aana	Heart becoming Heavy	To feel overwhelm with emotion	Functional Equivalence
14	Chhati te pathhar rakhna	Placing a stone on Chest	To bear grief silently	Cultural Equivalent
15	Chamdi launaa	To peel the skin	To exploit someone mercilessly	Descriptive Translation
16	Bail da puttar	Son of a bull/ox	A very hardworking or stubborn person	Paraphrase
17	Aakhaan meettna	To close one's eyes	To ignore deliberately	Functional Equivalence

18	Muh kala karna	To blacken one's Face	To bring shame or disgrace	Cultural Equivalent
19	Ek aakh naa jamna	Not liking even one Eye	To dislike someone completely	Descriptive Translation
20	Zeban torna	Breaking the tongue	To go back on one's word	Functional Equivalence

The translation strategies applied are based on the frameworks of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Metaphors Related to Emotions and Inner States

Punjabi culture places great importance on emotional expression, and this is reflected in many of its metaphors. The metaphor *Dil da kach* (literally: glass of the heart) is used to describe a person who is emotionally sensitive or fragile. The heart is conceptualized as a fragile object made of glass, which can break easily. This metaphor maps the source domain of fragile material onto the target domain of emotional vulnerability. In Conceptual Metaphor Theory terms, it reflects the universal conceptual metaphor THE HEART IS A CONTAINER OF EMOTIONS, but with a culturally specific image. The most appropriate English translation is a fragile heart or a sensitive soul, using functional equivalence to convey the emotional meaning without losing the essence of the original expression.

Another emotionally rich metaphor is *Mann par aana* (literally: the heart becoming heavy). This expression is used when a person is overwhelmed by sadness, nostalgia, or deep feeling. The translation to feel overwhelmed with emotion captures the functional meaning well. However, the physical imagery of a heavy heart is lost if a purely abstract translation is used. A more culturally aware translator might write my heart grew heavy to preserve the somatic image that is central to the Punjabi expression. This example shows how Skopos Theory and Conceptual Metaphor Theory together guide the translator toward a more nuanced and culturally sensitive rendering.

Metaphors Related to Social Relationships and Honour

Honour and social relationships are central to Punjabi culture, and this is reflected in metaphors such as *Muh kala karna* (literally: to blacken one's face) and *Nak vich dum* (literally: breath in the nose). The first metaphor refers to bringing shame or disgrace to oneself or one's family. The colour black is culturally associated with shame and moral failure in Punjabi society. The concept of blackening the face symbolizes social disgrace in the eyes of the community. The

English equivalent to bring shame or to disgrace translates the functional meaning but loses the vivid visual imagery of the original. A descriptive translation such as to blacken one's name comes closer to capturing the cultural significance.

Nak vich dum means to be at the end of one's rope, expressing a state of extreme exhaustion or frustration. The nose here symbolizes the last breath of life, suggesting that a person is barely holding on. This metaphor draws on the embodied experience of physical exhaustion and maps it onto emotional or psychological stress. The English idiom at the end of one's rope is a functional equivalent that captures the meaning, though the cultural and physical imagery of breath and the nose is replaced by a different physical image. According to Skopos Theory, if the purpose is clear communication, this functional equivalent is acceptable. However, if the purpose is to preserve cultural richness, a descriptive translation with an explanatory note would be more appropriate.

Metaphors Related to Hardship and Livelihood

Several Punjabi metaphors reflect the hard realities of rural and working-class life. *Chulha balna* (literally: to light the stove) is a metaphor for earning a livelihood or struggling to make ends meet. The stove, or chulha, is a central symbol in Punjabi household life, representing the family's survival and daily sustenance. The metaphor draws on the embodied experience of cooking and providing food to conceptualize the broader idea of economic survival. The translation to make ends meet works well as a functional equivalent because it captures the same struggle for basic survival. However, the image of the stove, which is so culturally specific to the Punjabi household, is completely absent in the English equivalent.

Chhati te pathhar rakhna (literally: placing a stone on one's chest) is another powerful metaphor that describes bearing great grief or sorrow with patience and silence. The physical image of placing a heavy stone on the chest evokes the weight of suffering that a person endures quietly. This metaphor reflects the Punjabi cultural value of silent endurance in the face of hardship. The English translation to bear grief silently or to endure pain in silence captures the functional meaning but loses the powerful physical imagery. A culturally informed translator might use to carry a stone in one's heart as a closer equivalent that preserves some of the original imagery.

Metaphors Related to Moral and Social Values

Punjabi is rich in metaphors that express moral judgments and social values. *Lakeer da fakeer* (literally: devotee of the line) refers to someone who follows tradition or rules blindly without questioning them. The image of drawing a line and then rigidly following it without deviation is a powerful expression of blind conformity. This metaphor does not have a direct equivalent in English. A descriptive translation such as a slave to tradition or someone who follows the beaten path can convey the meaning, but the vivid original image is somewhat diluted. This example illustrates the difficulty of translating culture-specific metaphors that draw on unique local imagery.

Zeban torna (literally: to break the tongue) refers to going back on one's word or breaking a promise. The tongue here represents speech and commitment, and breaking it symbolizes a failure of personal integrity. This metaphor reflects the high cultural value placed on keeping one's word in Punjabi society. The English expression to go back on one's word is an effective functional equivalent. However, the image of physically breaking the tongue, which adds a sense of moral gravity to the original, is lost in translation. This example, analyzed through Conceptual Metaphor Theory, shows how the source domain of physical breaking is mapped onto the target domain of moral failure.

Metaphors Related to Blessings and Affection

Sar te hath rakhna (literally: placing a hand on the head) is a well-known Punjabi metaphor for blessing, protecting, or showing care and affection. The gesture of placing a hand on

someone's head is a common cultural act of blessing in South Asian societies. The translation to bless or to protect someone captures the functional meaning but does not convey the warmth and cultural significance of the gesture. A more descriptive translation such as to lay a protective hand over someone can preserve more of the original's cultural warmth. This example shows the importance of understanding cultural gestures and practices when translating metaphors.

Aakhaan da tara (literally: star of the eyes) is an expression of deep love and affection, similar to the English phrase apple of one's eye. It is used to describe someone who is cherished above all else. This is a relatively successful case of translation, where a cultural equivalent exists in English that captures both the emotional meaning and a similar degree of poetic imagery. This example demonstrates that not all Punjabi metaphors are equally difficult to translate. When a cultural equivalent exists in the target language, the translation process is smoother and the cultural gap is more easily bridged.

4.2 Discussion

The analysis of twenty Punjabi metaphors reveals that certain translation choices consistently lead to the loss of cultural nuance. When translators rely on functional equivalence, they manage to communicate the general meaning but often strip away the vivid cultural imagery that gives the metaphor its original power. For example, translating *Chulha balna* as "to make ends meet" conveys the economic struggle but erases the deeply domestic image of the stove, which is a central symbol of family survival in Punjabi households. Similarly, rendering *Muh kala karna* simply as "to bring shame" removes the striking visual metaphor of blackening the face, which carries a much stronger social and moral weight in Punjabi culture (Newmark, 2001). As Zahid and Mehmood (2021) point out, translators working with South Asian expressions frequently struggle to balance faithfulness to the source culture with accessibility for the target reader.

Linguistic choices such as paraphrase and descriptive translation, while more culturally aware, can also lead to misleading interpretations when the translator lacks deep contextual knowledge. *Lakeer da fakeer*, for instance, is often rendered as "slave to tradition," which carries a negative and somewhat dismissive tone that is not always present in the original Punjabi use of the expression. The metaphor of *Pairaan te pani pana* (pouring water on feet) may be misread as a strange or outdated practice by an English reader if it is not accompanied by an explanation of its cultural significance as a gesture of deep reverence (Venuti, 1995). These examples confirm that translation choices are never purely linguistic; they always carry cultural and contextual consequences that shape how the target reader understands the source culture.

The findings show that the degree to which meaning is preserved varies considerably across the twenty metaphors analyzed, and this variation depends largely on how culturally distant the source and target expressions are. In cases like *Aakhaan da tara* (star of the eyes), which corresponds closely to the English "apple of one's eye," meaning is successfully preserved because both languages share a similar conceptual mapping of a beloved person as a precious object linked to sight and vision (Kovecses, 2005). Likewise, *Dil phar ke rona* translated as "to cry one's heart out" retains the emotional intensity of the original because an equivalent emotional idiom exists in English. These successful cases demonstrate that when cultural and cognitive overlaps exist between Punjabi and English, translation can be both accurate and evocative.

However, in a larger number of the metaphors analyzed, meaning is either partially lost or noticeably transformed in the process of translation. *Chhati te pathhar rakhna* (placing a stone on the chest) loses its physical and somatic quality when translated simply as "to bear grief silently," because the weight and bodily imagery of the stone disappears entirely. *Zeban torna*

(breaking the tongue) becomes "to go back on one's word," which communicates the betrayal but removes the moral gravity that the image of physically breaking speech carries in Punjabi culture (Ahmad, 2017). Nida and Taber (1969) argued that the best translation produces the same effect on the target reader as the original had on the source reader, but this standard proves difficult to meet when the cultural and cognitive frameworks of the two languages are so different.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) provides a powerful lens for understanding why Punjabi metaphors are cognitively structured in the way they are. Almost all of the metaphors analyzed in this study involve the mapping of a concrete, physical, or embodied source domain onto an abstract target domain. *Dil da kach* maps fragility of glass onto emotional sensitivity; *Nak vich dum* maps physical breath onto psychological endurance; and *Mann par aana* maps physical heaviness onto emotional overwhelm. These mappings show that Punjabi speakers understand and express their inner lives through the body and the material world around them, which is entirely consistent with what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) describe as the embodied nature of human cognition. CMT thus reveals that Punjabi metaphors are not random poetic inventions but structured reflections of how Punjabi speakers cognitively experience reality.

What CMT also makes clear is that while some of these cognitive mappings are universal, many are deeply culture-specific and shaped by the particular social and material world of the Punjabi community (Kovecses, 2005). The metaphor of the *chulha* (stove) as livelihood, or the hand on the head as blessing, are rooted in cultural practices and gestures that are unique to South Asian life and do not exist in English in the same form. Saeed (2022) similarly found that Punjabi folk metaphors are anchored in shared cultural experiences that make them particularly resistant to straightforward translation. This cultural specificity means that even when the surface meaning of a metaphor is transferred, the deeper cognitive and cultural layer, the one that connects the metaphor to real lived experience, is frequently left behind. CMT, when applied alongside Skopos Theory, thus helps both diagnose where cultural meaning is lost and guide translators toward strategies that can better preserve it.

5. Conclusion

This study has explored the cultural and contextual challenges involved in translating Punjabi metaphors into English. Through the analysis of twenty Punjabi metaphors using Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the study has demonstrated that Punjabi metaphors are deeply embedded in the cultural values, social norms, and lived experiences of the Punjabi-speaking community. These cultural roots make their translation into English a complex and nuanced task that requires more than just linguistic competence.

The findings show that while functional equivalence is the most commonly used strategy, it often results in the loss of cultural imagery and local color. Descriptive translation and paraphrase are valuable alternatives for metaphors that are too culturally specific to be replaced by an English equivalent. Conceptual Metaphor Theory provided a framework for understanding the cognitive and cultural structures underlying Punjabi metaphors.

The study contributes to the field of translation studies by providing a focused and theoretically grounded analysis of Punjabi metaphors. It highlights the importance of cultural awareness and contextual sensitivity in the translation process. It also demonstrates the value of integrating multiple theoretical frameworks to achieve a more comprehensive analysis. The results are relevant not only for translators working between Punjabi and English but also for language teachers, learners, and researchers interested in the intersection of language, culture, and cognition.

In conclusion, effective translation is not just about converting words from one language to another. It is about bridging cultural worlds and enabling meaningful communication across

different communities. Translating Punjabi metaphors into English is a task that requires cultural knowledge, linguistic skill, and above all, a deep respect for the richness and diversity of human expression.

Future Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are offered for future research and practice. First, future studies should expand the corpus of Punjabi metaphors analyzed to include a larger and more diverse set of expressions from different genres, including literature, media, and oral speech. A larger corpus would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the patterns and challenges in Punjabi metaphor translation.

Second, it is recommended that future research explore the perspective of the translator through qualitative interviews and think-aloud protocols. Understanding how professional translators approach the task of translating Punjabi metaphors can provide valuable practical insights. Third, comparative studies that examine the translation of Punjabi metaphors into languages other than English, such as French, German, or Chinese, would help identify which challenges are specific to English and which are more universal.

Third, translation educators are encouraged to incorporate cultural awareness training into their curricula. Students should be taught not only linguistic skills but also how to research and understand the cultural background of source language expressions. Fifth, the development of bilingual dictionaries and reference guides for Punjabi metaphors and idiomatic expressions would be a valuable resource for translators, language learners, and researchers. Such tools would help bridge the cultural gap between Punjabi and English more efficiently.

Finally, digital tools and artificial intelligence are increasingly being used in translation. Future research should examine how well these tools handle culturally specific Punjabi metaphors and what their limitations are. Human translators with cultural expertise will likely remain essential for nuanced metaphor translation for the foreseeable future.

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