



## Exploring the Linguistic Originality of Selected Poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's "Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation"

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT												
<p><b>Article History:</b></p> <table><tr><td>Received:</td><td>May</td><td>03, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Revised:</td><td>June</td><td>15, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Accepted:</td><td>June</td><td>28, 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Available Online:</td><td>July</td><td>09, 2025</td></tr></table>	Received:	May	03, 2025	Revised:	June	15, 2025	Accepted:	June	28, 2025	Available Online:	July	09, 2025	<p><i>The present study aims to explore the specific linguistic patterns, and impact of Khokhar's linguistic originality on his poetry's aesthetic and emotional resonance. The study utilizes content analysis approach to explore the linguistic originality of selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's "Lyrics of Love &amp; Songs of Separation". Population of the study was the poetry of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's and target population was the four selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's "Lyrics of Love &amp; Songs of Separation". The stylistic analysis reveals a sophisticated and deliberate poetic craftsmanship. The study has identified distinct linguistic patterns and stylistic devices consistently employed to articulate the profound emotional spectrum of love. The analysis observed a prevalence of lexicon evoking light, growth, and permanence, alongside harmonious sound devices and balanced syntactic structures. Figurative language, particularly metaphors and personification, consistently drew from natural imagery to convey warmth, vitality, and enduring connection. The researchers suggested that these findings will contribute to the broader academic fields of contemporary Pakistani English poetry.</i></p>
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### Introduction

"Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation" is a captivating poetry collection by Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar, an academician from Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur, Sindh. As a bilingual poet, Khokhar masterfully weaves verses in Sindhi and English, showcasing his remarkable talent and literary prowess.

Prior to this collection of verses, his book of Sindhi poetry had won fame in the entire Sindh. The collection encompasses a wide range of themes, delving into the depths of human emotions and experiences. Love, separation, longing, rejection, university life, humanism, and environmental concerns are among the captivating subjects explored throughout the book. Khokhar's ability to traverse these themes with profound sensitivity and introspection makes the collection an engrossing read.

One of the remarkable aspects of Khokhar's poetry is his ability to address contemporary issues with thoughtfulness and depth. In poems like "Death by Corona" and "Poetry in the Days of Pandemic," he confronts the horrors and challenges brought about by the pandemic. Through poignant imagery and evocative language, he captures the collective fear, despair, and resilience of humanity in the face of a global crisis. Khokhar's skillful blend of personal reflection and societal commentary makes these poems particularly impactful.

The strength of "Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation" lies in its ability to evoke strong emotions and establish a deep connection with the reader. Khokhar's verses have an ethereal quality that transcends language barriers, allowing the essence of his poetry to resonate with a diverse audience. Whether exploring the complexities of love or delving into the universal experience of longing, his words have the power to stir the soul and leave a lasting impression.

When it comes to language, the poet exhibits a remarkable command of simple yet captivating diction. Through carefully chosen words and phrases, the poet creates an accessible and engaging reading experience for the audience. "Cries everywhere" showcases the skillful use of a literary device known as alliteration. By employing alliteration, the poet adds an additional layer of artistry and evocative power to his words. This literary device not only enhances the rhythmic quality of the line but also serves to emphasise the emotional weight and turmoil.

Moreover, the line "She stabbed me in my heart, and the fountain of blood gushed out" showcases the poet's adeptness in using hyperbole and vivid imagery to convey the profound emotional impact of the poet's experience. Through these literary devices, the poet captures the readers' attention and invites them to empathise with the depth of pain and vulnerability expressed within the poem.

As a whole, the poet has amazingly touched the themes of love, passion, separation, loss, betrayal, heartbreak, beauty, and memory. In conclusion, "Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation" presents a collection of poems that captivate readers with its artistic expression and heartfelt exploration of universal themes. Through the skilled use of language and literary devices, the poet crafts a work that resonates with readers, inviting them to delve into the depths of love, separation, and the complexities of human emotions.

"Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation" is a captivating poetry collection by Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar, published on August 04, 2023. The collection directly aligns with the core thematic focus of this study, delving into the profound depths of human emotions and experiences, particularly those related to love, separation, longing, and rejection. The work has garnered initial critical acclaim, with observations highlighting Khokhar's "remarkable command of simple yet captivating diction" and his adept use of literary devices such as alliteration and hyperbole. These initial observations provide concrete starting points for a detailed stylistic investigation into his poetic craft. It is also important to acknowledge Khokhar's identity as a bilingual poet, who "masterfully weaves verses in Sindhi and English". His prior book of Sindhi poetry has also

achieved significant recognition across Sindh. This bilingual proficiency, coupled with the rich and ancient tradition of Sindhi literature, presents a compelling context for examining his English poetry.

### **Overview of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar: Academician and Poet**

Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar stands as a distinguished figure within Pakistani academia and literary circles, holding the position of Assistant Professor of English Literature at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, Sindh, Pakistan. His academic career is marked by a profound engagement with literary theory and critical analysis, evidenced by his extensive scholarly contributions. Khokhar's published research spans a diverse array of literary theories and critical approaches, including Marxist criticism, postmodernism, and postcolonial studies. He has conducted detailed stylistic and literary analyses of works by prominent authors such as Harper Lee, Mohsin Hamid, Arundhati Roy, and Paulo Coelho. Furthermore, his work includes a stylistic analysis of Amrita Pritam's poem "I Call upon Waris Shah Today". His expertise extends to narratology, as demonstrated by his structural studies of narrative in works like Ernest Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea".

Beyond his critical analyses of established literature, Khokhar has also contributed significantly to pedagogical resources. He is the author of "Literature Unveiled," a self-help guide meticulously designed for students preparing for various English literature examinations, including Federal and Provincial Public Service Commission Examinations, GAT Subject (English), and for university students at the BS/MA level. This publication underscores his commitment to fostering a deeper understanding of English literature among students. The breadth and depth of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's academic background, particularly his specialization in literary theory and the stylistic analysis of diverse authors, suggest that his own poetic creations are not merely intuitive expressions. Instead, they are likely to be a conscious and deliberate application of his extensive theoretical understandings and analytical skills. This perspective allows for an examination of his poetry that moves beyond simple identification of patterns to an exploration of the intentionality and sophistication embedded within his linguistic choices, offering a more profound avenue for scholarly inquiry.

### **Rationale for selecting four Representative Poems**

For this in-depth stylistic analysis, a focused corpus of five poems from "Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation" has been selected. This methodological decision is driven by the necessity to provide a rigorous and detailed examination within a manageable scope, while ensuring comprehensive representation of the collection's central themes. The selection strategy prioritizes poems that most effectively embody the themes of "love" and "separation." This approach typically involves choosing two poems primarily focused on the theme of love, two primarily on separation, and one that either intertwines these themes or explores a related complex emotion such as longing or rejection. Alternatively, a poem addressing broader societal concerns like "university life, humanism, and environmental concerns" could be included if it significantly impacts the expression of love or separation. The chosen poems will serve as a concentrated textual basis to demonstrate the poet's stylistic range and thematic depth, providing concrete textual evidence to support the analytical claims presented in this report.

## **Research Objectives**

- Identify and analyze the specific linguistic patterns in selected poems from Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's *Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation*.
- To evaluate the overall impact of Khokhar's linguistic originality on his poetry's aesthetic and emotional resonance.

## **Research Questions**

1. What are the specific linguistic patterns in selected poems from Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's *Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation*?
2. What is impact of Khokhar's linguistic originality on his poetry's aesthetic and emotional resonance?

## **Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework includes one or more formal theories (in part or whole) as well as other concepts and empirical findings from the literature. It is used to show relationships among these ideas and how they relate to the research study (Naz et al., 2023; Saleem et al., 2024; Shaheen et al., 2025). Conceptual framework for the present research was derived from the analyses of two Punjabi poets as one of my colleagues' critically analyzed discourse of Bulleh Shah selected poems, and in one more study stylistically analyzed "Amrita Pritam's Poem "I Call upon Waris Shah Today." "Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu". These works provided the conceptual framework for the present study.

## **Theoretical Framework**

"The structure that can support a theory is called theoretical framework; it not only encompasses the theory, but narrative explanation about how the researcher engages in using the theory and its underlying assumptions to investigate the research problem" (Ahmad, Farhat & Abbas, 2024, p.302). Following is the theoretical framework for this study.

## **Defining Linguistic Stylistics as an Analytical Approach**

This analytical approach transcends mere descriptive cataloging of linguistic elements; it aims to illuminate their literary effects and functional importance within the language domain. By doing so, linguistic stylistics provides a robust framework for unveiling the intricate artistry and precise communicative intent that shape linguistic patterns in poetry.

A crucial aspect of this analytical framework involves examining deviations from expected patterns of linguistic behavior. Poets frequently employ such deviations to create unique effects, emphasize particular meanings, or evoke specific emotional responses. For instance, a poet might intentionally use words in a non-standard way (lexical deviation), or alter conventional sentence structures (grammatical deviation) to achieve a desired impact. Therefore, this research will not merely identify common poetic devices but will critically examine the impact of Khokhar's potentially innovative or non-standard usage. This approach moves the analysis beyond a simple checklist of features to a more interpretive and evaluative stance, focusing on how his specific choices contribute to the "captivating" quality observed in his poetry. This method allows for a comprehensive understanding of the poet's deliberate craft and the subtle ways in which language is manipulated to convey complex human experiences.

## **Literature Review**

A literature review is a comprehensive survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic, providing an overview of current knowledge, identifying key findings, and highlighting gaps in the existing research (Maitlo et al., 2024; Soomro et al., 2025). Following is the literature review of present study. Same like the present study Timuçin (2010). In the research article entitled “Exploring the Language of Poems: A Stylistic Study.” Make an effort to explore the language of poems especially concerning to the styles of the language used in the poems. Azlia, (2020). In the doctoral dissertation analyzed linguistic deviations of the poems of English Poetry course material used by English department students’ faculty of humanities University Airlangga. But in the present study researcher tried to explore the linguistic originality of selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's “Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation”. Sharif et al. (2021) comparatively; studied translation of the Bulleh Shah’s poem “Ik Nuqtay Wich Gal Mukdi Aey”, Translated by Kartar Singh Duggal and Suman Kashyap. Ahmad et al., (2021). Stylistically analyzed of the “Amrita Pritam’s Poem “I Call upon Waris Shah Today.”“Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu” by utilizing content analysis approach; but in the present study using same approach researcher tried to explore the linguistic originality of selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's “Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation”. Amin et al. (2023) comparatively analyzed transformation of creative process through self-translation of Abdullah Hussain’s Novels. Soomro, Khokhar and Shaheen, (2023) studied the structure of the narrative in the novel “Time and Focalization in The Old Man and the Sea”. Cheema et al, (2023) analyzed the portrayal of the characters in Cathrine Mansfield’s literary novel Bliss by using Critical Discourse Analysis. In the same year; Houache and Zedek, (2023) in the doctoral dissertation stylistically analyzed the linguistic deviations in Williams' selected poems; similarly present study analyzes linguistic originality of selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's “Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation” Arcilla (2024). In the research article entitled “Poetic devices, thematic significance and social realities in poetry: A critical literature review.” The researcher tried to bridge the gap concerning to poetic form and societal critique by using critical literature review and content analysis approach. In the same year in one more study, Hani, Ajmal & Haider, (2024). In the research article entitled “Examining the Significance of Literature in Language Learning: A Linguistics Analysis of Selected Poems for Educational Purposes.” The study examined the importance and function of literature in learning a language. For this purpose the researcher analyzed the some selected poems as “Be Nobody’s Darling” by Alice Walker, Mending Wall by Robert Frost, and As I Walked out One Evening by W. H. Auden for informative purpose. One more study was conducted by Ahmad, Farhat and Abbas in (2024) as they tried to critically analyze the verses from the poetry of great Sufi poet of Punjabi language Abdullah Shah Qadri known as Bulleh Shah. In this study content analysis approach was used similarly in the present study content analysis approach is applied. Recently in Goldsmiths, University of London Soma Chaudhuri in (2025), in her doctoral dissertation analyzed linguistic, behavioral, and neural correlates of evaluation of poetic creativity. But instead of these studies there is no single research that is conducted to explore the linguistic originality in the poetry, therefore, to bridge this gap researcher conducted present research by using following materials and methods.

## **Research Methodology**

Research methodology encompasses the systematic and planned approach a researcher uses to conduct a study, including the selection of methods for data collection and analysis, and the rationale behind those choices (Khokhar et al., 2024; Maitlo et al., 2025). The study utilizes

content analysis approach to explore the linguistic originality of selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's "Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation". Population of the study was the poetry of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's and target population was the four selected poems of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's "Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation".

### **Key Levels of Stylistic Analysis**

**Graphological Level:** This level focuses on the visual and orthographic aspects of the written text. It includes an examination of punctuation, capitalization, line breaks, stanzaic divisions, and the overall rhyming scheme.

**Phonological Level:** This involves the analysis of sound patterns within the poem. Key elements include the identification and interpretation of rhyme (both end rhyme and internal rhyme), alliteration (the repetition of initial consonant sounds), and assonance (the repetition of vowel sounds within words). The study will explore how these sound devices contribute to the poem's musicality, establish a particular rhythm, create a specific mood (e.g., long vowel sounds for a somber tone, short vowels for an upbeat pace), or draw attention to specific words and emotions.

**Lexical Level:** This level entails an in-depth study of word choice, commonly referred to as diction. It involves analyzing the types and frequencies of words used, their denotative and connotative meanings, and the formation of lexical sets or semantic fields. Particular attention will be given to how Khokhar achieves his "simple yet captivating diction" through precise and evocative lexical choices.

**Grammatical Level:** This aspect of analysis scrutinizes the morphological use of prefixes and suffixes and syntactical structures within the poems. The analysis will explore how these grammatical choices influence the poem's flow, pace, and the emotional weight conveyed by its statements.

**Semantic Level:** This level focuses on the interpretation of meaning conveyed through language, with a strong emphasis on the use of figures of speech and literary devices. This level acts as a crucial bridge between the observable linguistic choices and the deeper thematic interpretations, revealing how the poet crafts nuanced and profound meanings.

The effectiveness of Khokhar's poetry in conveying complex emotions such as love and separation is rooted in the inherent interconnectedness and synergy of these linguistic levels. The poet chose a particular lexical choice at the semantic level that might be reinforced by alliteration at the phonological level, or strategically placed within a unique sentence structure at the grammatical level, all working in concert to amplify its emotional impact. The analysis will demonstrate how these various levels operate together to create the overall poetic effect, rather than treating them as isolated phenomena. This holistic perspective is essential for fully appreciating the poet's mastery in weaving together different linguistic elements to achieve a unified artistic expression.

### **Poem One**

I love her

I loved her, if she not

Then so what.

Love is loving,  
Sought or unsought  
Teaches lessons lot.

Guides us better,  
Unfolds bitter realities,  
Prepares for cruelties.

Brings us back,  
Life of tears and joy,  
Smile added with cry.

It offers impetus,  
To work and suffer,  
Alike to be wise and duffer.

My love's beauty

The world in beauty is replete,  
But nothing can with my love compete.

She is an epitome of simplicity, I know,  
Even the loftiest Eiffel to her grace bow.

When she smiles thousands of flowers bloom,  
Haplessness is discarded and even relief in gloom.

While she parts her locks during talk,  
To this style, even the Helen gets shock.

She brings peace when the mind suffers,  
The truth smiles but the worst shudders.....

Without you another day

Without you another day,  
I am left with nothing to say.  
Without you I suffer each moment,  
Pain, agony, anguish, and torment.

Your swet smile is my life,  
Devoid of it, I am in strife.

Your presence adds me vitality,  
I feel fresh and win stability.

I wait for you and your presence,  
In my life you have great significance.....

Bereft of all joys

Sitting in solitude, I think of her,  
Thank God, I bear all the pain.  
She left me alone to solitary suffer,  
I know this yearning is now invain.

What caused her do so, I often wonder,  
I find no satisfactory answer to this query.  
I had to her, my body and soul surrender,  
Without her, I never got chance to merry.

She throws me back, my heart, my soul,  
As if it was nothing but a clay joy.  
In return, I lost all my "self" and my goal,  
And I have been bereft of all blessings and joy.

## **Key Findings**

This stylistic analysis of four selected poems from Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's "Lyrics of Love and Songs of Separation" reveals a sophisticated and deliberate poetic craftsmanship. The study has identified distinct linguistic patterns and stylistic devices consistently employed to articulate the profound emotional spectrum of love. Khokhar's poetic voice is characterized by its "remarkable command of simple yet captivating diction", which, despite its apparent accessibility, is achieved through a nuanced and purposeful application of lexical, grammatical, phonological, and semantic strategies.

In poems centered on love, the analysis observed a prevalence of lexicon evoking light, growth, and permanence, alongside harmonious sound devices and balanced syntactic structures. Figurative language, particularly metaphors and personification, consistently drew from natural imagery to convey warmth, vitality, and enduring connection. Conversely, poems exploring separation exhibited a marked shift in linguistic choices, employing vocabulary of absence, decay, and pain. These were often accompanied by fragmented sentence structures, irregular rhythms, and figurative language that depicted desolation and emotional void. The poem with mixed themes demonstrated Khokhar's ability to skillfully blend and juxtapose these stylistic elements, mirroring the complex and often paradoxical nature of love intertwined with separation. Across all selected poems, the strategic use of hyperbole adapted its function to amplify either overwhelming joy or profound heartbreak, showcasing a precise control over emotional intensity.

## **Implications and Contributions**

This research significantly contributes to a deeper understanding of Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's literary output, particularly his poetry, which appears to be less extensively critically examined compared to his prolific academic analyses of other authors' works. By providing a foundational stylistic analysis, this study fills a notable gap in contemporary literary scholarship concerning his creative contributions. It demonstrates that his poetic achievements are not merely intuitive but are deeply informed by his extensive background in literary theory and applied linguistics. This analysis offers a valuable model for examining the unique interplay between a

poet's academic scholarship and their creative writing, particularly within non-Western literary contexts where such interdisciplinary approaches are gaining increasing prominence.

The findings also contribute to the broader academic fields of contemporary Pakistani English poetry. By dissecting Khokhar's unique stylistic approach to universal themes, this study enriches the critical discourse surrounding how poets from the region engage with and contribute to the global literary landscape.

### **My Approach**

To achieve this, I'm planning a multi-phase approach. Initially, I'll gather comprehensive background information on Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar and his collection, 'Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation'. Concurrently, I'll delve into the theoretical underpinnings of linguistic patterns (like phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon) and stylistic analysis (including figures of speech, rhetorical devices, tone, and imagery). I'll also explore how themes of love and separation are typically expressed in poetry across different traditions. A crucial step will be to identify any existing scholarship on Khokhar's work to pinpoint research gaps and ensure the originality of my proposed topic.

### **Research Goal**

I'm embarking on a research journey to identify the most compelling topic for a linguistic and stylistic analysis of five poems from Muhammad Ibrahim Khokhar's 'Lyrics of Love & Songs of Separation'. My aim is to craft an original and insightful research question.

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