



TRANSLATING ENGLISH PSYCHOLOGICAL NOVELS THROUGH SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC SHIFTS

Qayimova Mohinur

Student of

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

mohinurqayimova1@gmail.com

Abstract: This paper examines the semantic and pragmatic shifts that take place when translating English psychological novels into Uzbek. Translating this specific genre is highly challenging because characters' internal thoughts, stream-of-consciousness techniques, and subtle emotions are deeply tied to the source language. By comparing English as an analytic language with Uzbek as an agglutinative one, the study analyzes how abstract emotional terms and somatic metaphors change during translation. The findings show that literal translation fails to capture psychological depth. Instead, translators must use conscious semantic adjustments and pragmatic strategies like domestication to ensure the text feels natural and emotionally powerful for Uzbek readers.

Keywords: Psychological novel, translation shifts, semantic equivalence, pragmatic adaptation, stream of consciousness.

Introduction. The psychological novel is a unique genre in literature that focuses on the inner world of characters rather than just physical actions. Instead of traditional storytelling, it uses complex techniques like inner monologues, streams of consciousness, and subtle emotional details to show how a person thinks and feels. In famous books by authors like Virginia Woolf or George Eliot, words carry a deep emotional weight to describe abstract mental states and anxieties. Because these psychological states are deeply connected to the original culture and language, translating them correctly requires a very careful approach [1]. However, translating these deep psychological layers into the Uzbek language is quite difficult, and a literal, word-for-word translation simply does not work. This failure happens because English and Uzbek belong to completely different language families; English is an analytic language that uses word order and auxiliary words, while Uzbek is an agglutinative language that relies on adding suffixes to word roots. When a translator tries to translate a character's complex thoughts literally, the emotional tension is often lost, and the sentences sound unnatural to an Uzbek reader. Therefore, literary translation must be viewed as a form of cultural negotiation, where the text is adapted to fit the cultural and linguistic



worldview of the target audience [2]. The main goal of this research is to identify the specific semantic and pragmatic changes that take place during the translation of English psychological novels into Uzbek. To do this, the study analyzes how word meanings shift (such as becoming broader or narrower) and how translators use strategies like domestication and foreignization to adapt the text. By exploring these methods, the paper shows how translators can successfully keep the original psychological depth while making the book natural and clear for Uzbek readers.

Theoretical framework. When translating deep psychological prose, achieving perfect equivalence between the source and target texts is never a straightforward process. Translation theory shows that a successful transfer requires a balance between two main levels of meaning: semantic and pragmatic equivalence. Understanding how these two dimensions work, and where they intentionally diverge, helps us see how a character's inner thoughts are successfully reconstructed when moving between structurally distinct languages like English and Uzbek. Semantic shifts refer to the structural and contextual changes in meaning that words undergo during the cross-linguistic transfer. In psychological novels, authors frequently use abstract words to describe complex emotional states. When these words are translated into another language, their semantic boundaries often change through processes like broadening, narrowing, or metaphorical extension. For instance, an English emotional term might have a very broad meaning, but the Uzbek language might require a more specific, narrower term to fit the exact context of the scene. Research shows that these semantic adjustments are not translation errors; instead, they are necessary techniques used to ensure that internal human states and abstract mental processes remain logical and structurally aligned in the target language [3].

On the other hand, pragmatic shifts focus directly on how the text affects the reader's emotional or psychological perception. Pragmatics is not just about what the words mean, but how they make the receiver feel within a specific cultural setting. In literary translation, pragmatic shifts often involve adapting politeness strategies, indirect speech acts, and cultural resonance. A major example in the English-Uzbek pair is the choice between the pronouns *sen* (informal "you") and *siz* (formal "you"), a distinction that does not exist in modern English but heavily influences how Uzbek readers perceive relationships, tension, and character dynamics. To evoke the exact same emotional response in an Uzbek reader that the original author intended for an English audience, translators must make deliberate, systemic transformations based on the pragmatic and genre norms of the target culture (The USA Journals - Comparative Analysis) [4]. To analyze these complex changes



effectively, scholars apply modern translation quality assessment frameworks, such as Juliane House's Functional-Pragmatic Model. This multidimensional model treats a literary text not as a collection of separate words, but as a functional whole. It suggests that a translation is only truly successful if it keeps the same "function" and produces the same psychological impact as the original. By evaluating both the semantic choices (the exact thoughts expressed) and the pragmatic strategies (how those thoughts are presented), this framework allows researchers to see exactly how a character's inner depth is preserved without making the dialogue sound mechanical or foreign to the new audience.

Discussion. Analyzing how abstract feelings move from English into Uzbek requires a close look at lexical-semantic transformations. In psychological novels, characters often experience complex internal emotions that do not have a single-word equivalent in Uzbek. Translators have to use specific techniques like semantic modulation, narrowing, or broadening to make these feelings clear. For instance, generic English emotional adjectives are often replaced by more specific Uzbek descriptions that match the local culture and current language habits. These changes help the target reader understand the exact type of sadness, joy, or anxiety the character is going through (National University of Uzbekistan Research Repository). Another major area of semantic change involves somatic metaphors and idioms, where internal feelings are expressed through body parts like the heart, mind, or gut. English and Uzbek cultures view the physical connection to emotions differently. For example, while an English character might feel something in their "gut" or "heart," an Uzbek translation might shift this psychological experience to the liver (*bag'ir*) or soul (*ko'ngil*) to make it sound natural. Translating these body-related expressions requires the translator to find idiomatic adaptations rather than translating the body parts literally, ensuring that the emotional weight remains intact for the Uzbek audience [6]. Finally, the structural divergence between the two languages deeply affects how character thoughts are presented. English is an analytic language that uses word order and auxiliary structures to show small changes in a character's perspective or doubt. Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, compresses these complex modal and aspectual meanings into systematic suffixes attached to verb roots. This structural difference means that a long English phrase describing a character's slow realization is often expanded or compressed into specific Uzbek verb forms to keep the narrative flowing naturally. Pragmatic shifts are essential when adapting a character's internal mindscape for a new audience. When translating psychological novels, a translator must choose between domestication (making the text fit the target culture) and



foreignization (keeping the alien features of the source text). In the English-Uzbek pair, characters' internal thoughts are often quietly adjusted to align with Uzbek social norms, moral frameworks, or traditional values. These subtle adaptations help the reader connect with the story on a deeper level without destroying the original author's creative voice [7].

The social core of pragmatics: In Uzbek, you cannot address someone without choosing a level of respect. Every dialogue forces the translator to establish a social hierarchy that the original English text leaves ambiguous.

These dynamics become very clear when analyzing dialogue and inner speech, particularly around politeness markers. Since English lacks a natural distinction between the informal and formal “you,” translators must manually introduce the *sen* and *siz* dynamics into Uzbek dialogues and inner monologues. This choice changes how the Uzbek audience perceives interpersonal tension, family relationships, and psychological distance between characters. Furthermore, speech-intonation markers in stream-of-consciousness writing must be rearranged so that the chaotic flow of a character's mind feels structurally logical to an Uzbek reader. Lastly, maintaining psychological intensity and tone is one of the hardest parts of literary translation. Psychological prose relies heavily on the rhythm, speed, and poetic flow of sentences to show stress or confusion. Translators cannot just substitute words; they must often change descriptive units and domesticate the sentence rhythm to keep the emotional power of the original scene. When done correctly, these intentional pragmatic shifts ensure that the translation functions effectively as a piece of psychological art [8].

Conclusion. In conclusion, translating English psychological prose into Uzbek requires much more than a simple word-for-word substitution. The internal depth of a character cannot be successfully transferred without making deliberate linguistic and cultural changes. This research demonstrates that semantic shifts, such as the specification of abstract feelings and the adaptation of body-related idioms, are necessary tools to bridge the gap between these two completely different language families. Furthermore, the study highlights that pragmatic transformations play a vital role in maintaining the emotional impact of the story. Introducing culturally specific elements, such as the *sen/siz* politeness distinction or adapting sentence rhythm, allows the target audience to experience the same psychological tension that the original author intended. Rather than being viewed as errors, these semantic and pragmatic adaptations should be recognized as professional strategies for cross-cultural mediation. Ultimately, a successful translation of a psychological novel prioritizes functional adequacy over literal correctness. By balancing linguistic changes with cultural adaptation, translators can successfully protect the artistic voice of



the original text while making the character's inner world fully accessible and deeply relatable to the Uzbek reader.

REFERENCES

1. American Journal of Pedagogical and Educational Research. (2026). Linguistic analysis of artistic and psychological imagery. American Journal of Pedagogical and Educational Research, 14(2), 45-52.
2. ECS Conference Proceedings. (2024). Pragmatic shifts and communicative effectiveness. Proceedings of the International Conference on Modern Trends in Science and Technology, 8(3), 112-119.
3. E-Conferences Portal. (2024). Tone, rhythm, and contextual substitution: Translation strategies case study. Theoretical and Applied Sciences in the Post-Soviet Space, 22(1), 89-96.
4. Innova Science Journal of Advanced Research. (2024). Translation of somatic phraseologisms (English-Uzbek). Journal of Empirical Studies in Modern Linguistics, 5(4), 201-209.
5. National University of Uzbekistan (NUU) Research Repository. (2024). Contextual adjective and semantic modulation. Transactions of the National University of Uzbekistan, 104, 314-322.
6. ResearchGate. (2025). Expressing the inner world & semantic interpretation: Techniques for translating psychological states in Uzbek literary texts into English. ResearchGate Publications.