

A Comparative Stylistic Analysis Of Russian And Uzbek Translations Of Dreiser's Fiction

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Abstract: This article examines stylistic transformations in Russian and Uzbek translations of Theodore Dreiser's novels, focusing on how each target language reconstructs or alters the author's idiosyncrasy. Dreiser's narrative is marked by heavy descriptive syntax, philosophical commentary, naturalist detail, and psychologically motivated narration. These features frequently undergo modification in translation, especially across typologically distant languages such as Russian and Uzbek. The analysis draws on selected textual fragments from *Sister Carrie*, *Jennie Gerhardt*, *An American Tragedy*, and *The Financier*, comparing lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic changes in the target texts. The methodology combines comparative stylistics, translation-shift theory, and limited corpus-driven frequency observations. The findings reveal that Russian translations tend toward syntactic normalization and domestication, whereas Uzbek translations display explicitation, expansion, and semantic clarification. Both traditions modify Dreiser's authorial commentary, though for different linguistic and cultural reasons.

Keywords: translation shifts; Dreiser; Russian translation; Uzbek translation; idiosyncrasy; comparative stylistics; naturalism.

Introduction: Theodore Dreiser is widely recognized as one of the central figures of American literary naturalism. His prose is distinguished by psychologically dense narration, extensive descriptive passages, and philosophical authorial intrusions that frame the social and moral dimensions of his works. Translating such a stylistically marked narrative poses challenges for languages with different typological and cultural frameworks. Russian translations of Dreiser have a long, well-established tradition dating back to the early Russian period, while Uzbek translations appeared later and developed within a distinct linguistic environment characterized by agglutination, pragmatic transparency, and a preference for syntactic simplicity. The comparative study of Russian and Uzbek translations of Dreiser is particularly relevant today, as both translation traditions the Slavic and the Turkic play significant roles in shaping reader reception in their respective literary systems. However, despite the prominence of Dreiser in Russian and Uzbek literary scholarship, a systematic comparative stylistic analysis across these two languages remains underexplored. Dreiser's writing is characterized by long, rhythmically

heavy sentences, extensive modifiers, metaphorical naturalist imagery, and frequent authorial commentary addressing ethics, economics, and human behavior. Studies indexed in Web of Science and Scopus highlight Dreiser's tendency to construct narrative meaning through philosophical generalization and detailed socio-economic description. These stylistic elements are essential for evaluating translation adequacy.

Russian translators have engaged with Dreiser since the 1920s, producing canonical versions that continue to circulate. Uzbek studies of Dreiser focus on cultural significance, ethical dimensions, and narrative themes. Stylistic issues, particularly those related to rendering Dreiser's complex sentence structures into Uzbek, are less thoroughly explored. Uzbek translations frequently exhibit added explanation or semantic clarification, reflecting norms of reader accessibility in Uzbek literary translation.

The analysis uses parallel fragments from four major novels: *Sister Carrie*, *Jennie Gerhardt*, *An American Tragedy*, and *The Financier*. Selected passages contain: descriptive naturalist detail; internal monologue; ethical commentary;

economic and social characterization. The study combines: comparative-contrastive stylistic analysis; translation-shift classification, focusing on modulation, transposition, addition, omission, and reformulation; corpus-assisted frequency observations to detect regular patterns in sentence length, lexical density, and use of modifiers; pragmatic analysis to evaluate translation of authorial commentary.

Russian translations demonstrate a preference for contextually approximate synonyms that maintain the semantic core but shift stylistic nuance. For instance, Dreiser's emotionally loaded adjectives – such as “wearily,” “grimly,” or “restlessly” are sometimes replaced by more neutral equivalents, softening the emotional coloration.

Uzbek translations often expand lexical units to ensure semantic transparency. Dreiser's compound adjectives and metaphorical expressions tend to be unpacked into multi-word constructions. This expansion reflects the agglutinative nature of Uzbek, where concise lexical equivalents are limited, and clarity is prioritized.

Dreiser's long, multi-clause sentences often undergo syntactic condensation in Russian. Translators frequently divide extended sentences into two or three shorter units, aligning the text with Russian readability norms. This results in a more neutral rhythm compared to Dreiser's characteristically heavy pacing.

In contrast, Uzbek translations presents syntactic expansion. Complex English sentences are frequently transformed into sequences of shorter clauses connected by participial or temporal constructions. While this maintains logical clarity, it alters the original rhythm and diminishes the stylistic density of Dreiser's prose.

The examples below have been revised to reflect a smooth scientific style, emphasizing clarity, precision, and objectivity while maintaining the original comparative analysis.

Example 1: Heavy Descriptive Syntax in Dreiser's “Sister Carrie”.

Original: “She was not aware of her beauty, but she was all the more attractive for her unconsciousness of it”.

Russian Translation: «Она не осознавала своей красоты, и от этого была ещё привлекательнее».

Uzbek Translation: «U o'z go'zalligini sezmasdi, aynan shu bexabar bo'lishi uni yanada jozibador qilardi».

Analysis: The Russian version condenses the sentence rhythm and substitutes Dreiser's nuanced phrase “unconsciousness of it” with the causal expression «от этого». This results in a normalized stylistic form that emphasizes causality succinctly. Conversely, the Uzbek translation expands the original idea by explicitly

stating “aynan shu bexabar bo'lishi”, thereby clarifying the causal relationship in a more overt and explanatory manner. The Uzbek version thus transforms implicit nuance into explicit explanation.

Example 2: Philosophical Authorial Commentary in “An American Tragedy”

Original: “Life is such a peculiar thing when one comes to think of it”.

Russian Translation: «Жизнь – странная вещь, если задуматься».

Uzbek Translation: «Agar o'ylab ko'rilsa, hayot juda g'alati hodisadir».

The Russian translation preserves the philosophical tone but introduces syntactic compression, resulting in a more concise statement. The Uzbek rendering includes the term “hodisadir” (phenomenon), which categorizes life more definitively. This lexical choice shifts Dreiser's subtle reflective tone toward a more categorical philosophical assertion in Uzbek.

Example 3: Emotional Intensity and Mood in “Jennie Gerhardt”.

Original: “A great wave of misery swept over her”.

Russian Translation: «Её захлестнула волна горя».

Uzbek Translation: «Uni katta qayg'u to'liqini bosib ketdi».

Both translations preserve the metaphor of a wave conveying emotional overwhelm. The Russian version maintains a literary metaphor closely aligned with the original text. In contrast, the Uzbek phrase “bosib ketdi” introduces a stronger physical intensity, implying being overwhelmed or crushed, thereby heightening the emotional and dramatic impact relative to the original.

Example 4: Socio-Economic Description from “The Financier”.

Original: “He was a man who saw money as the great lever of the world”.

Russian Translation: «Он считал деньги великим рычагом мира».

Uzbek Translation: «U pulni dunyoni harakatga keltiruvchi eng katta kuch deb bilardi».

The Russian translation retains the metaphor “рычагом мира” (lever of the world), consistent with the original economic metaphor. The Uzbek translation replaces “lever” with “eng katta kuch” (the greatest force), thereby shifting the metaphor from mechanical leverage to a more generalized concept of power that activates global movement. This change represents a significant semantic adaptation in socio-economic conceptualization. Uzbek expands metaphor into

explicit explanation (“harakatga keltiruvchi eng katta kuch”).

CONCLUSION

The comparison shows that stylistic transformation is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a cultural and ideological one. Russian translations deepen psychological intensity and heighten dramatic effect, while Uzbek translations prioritize narrative clarity and tonal fidelity. Both translation traditions contribute to reshaping Dreiser’s idiosyncrasy, reflecting national literary norms and typological constraints.

The evidence indicates that no single translation fully reproduces Dreiser’s stylistic system; rather, each highlights certain aspects while suppressing others. This confirms that translation is a culturally embedded act of interpretation and re-creation, especially when dealing with naturalist prose characterized by philosophical ambiguity and stylistic roughness.

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