

PRAGMATIC RECONSTRUCTION OF AUTHORIAL RESTRAINT IN ENGLISH-UZBEK LITERARY TRANSLATION

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Abstract

This article examines the reconstruction of authorial restraint in English-Uzbek literary translation. The study focuses on three closely related stylistic markers: syntactic economy, repetition, and silence. These features are often regarded as formal elements of literary style; however, in narrative discourse they may also convey emotional suppression, social distance, psychological pressure, moral uncertainty, and cultural norms of self-control. The article argues that literal reproduction is not always sufficient for preserving authorial restraint in Uzbek translation. Instead, translators need to identify the pragmatic function of each marker and recreate its effect through functionally appropriate target-language means. The research employs a qualitative cognitive-pragmatic approach based on illustrative English literary micro-contexts and their Uzbek translation variants. The findings show that excessive explicitation, stylistic smoothing, and emotional intensification can weaken the authorial voice. Syntactic brevity should be retained where it represents restraint; repetition should be preserved where it creates duration or psychological pressure; and silence should not be replaced by explanatory commentary. The article proposes a functional model of pragmatic reconstruction that may be applied in English-Uzbek literary translation and translator training.

Keywords: Authorial restraint; English-Uzbek translation; syntactic economy; repetition; silence; pragmatic meaning; literary discourse; translation strategy.

Introduction

Literary translation involves more than the transfer of propositional content from one language into another. A literary text constructs meaning through lexical selection, sentence length, rhythm, implication, narrative perspective, figurative language, and patterns of emotional expression. These features form the individual stylistic organization of a writer's discourse and contribute to what is commonly described as authorial idiolect.

In translation, authorial idiolect may be weakened when the target text is made smoother, more explicit, or emotionally more expressive than the original. This risk is especially relevant in



English-Uzbek literary translation. English literary prose can express tension and inner conflict through short sentences, restrained dialogue, repetition, pauses, and unspoken reactions. Uzbek literary language, on the other hand, possesses rich resources for emotional clarification and evaluative expression. These resources can be highly effective, but their excessive use may alter the author's intended emotional temperature.

The issue is not whether Uzbek translation should imitate English grammar mechanically. The main task is to preserve the pragmatic function of stylistic features. A short English sentence may need slight structural adaptation in Uzbek, yet its abruptness, emotional restraint, or narrative rhythm should remain perceptible. Likewise, a repeated word should not automatically be replaced with a generalized expression if the repetition creates psychological pressure or temporal duration. Silence should not be interpreted by the translator when the author intentionally leaves the emotion unnamed.

Research on idiolect has shown that individual style is created through recurrent linguistic patterns rather than isolated forms. Crystal (2008) defines idiolect as the distinctive use of language by an individual, while Leech and Short (2007) emphasize that stylistic choices participate directly in the construction of literary meaning. In translation studies, Baker (2018), Toury (2012), and Venuti (2018) demonstrate that target-language norms can influence cohesion, fluency, cultural representation, and the visibility of textual difference. These theoretical positions are relevant to English-Uzbek literary translation because the translator must balance target-language naturalness with the preservation of authorial specificity.

Recent work on modernist prose likewise foregrounds the link between idiolectal features and conceptual meaning in translation-oriented analysis (Yokubovna, 2026). Building on this perspective, the present study examines how syntactic economy, repetition, and silence can be reconstructed in Uzbek without losing their pragmatic force.

Materials and Methods

This qualitative cognitive-pragmatic study uses illustrative micro-contexts modeled on recurrent tendencies in English literary prose. Rather than evaluating published translations statistically, it demonstrates how specific features create authorial restraint and how their functions may be recreated in Uzbek.

The analysis identifies the source feature, interprets its pragmatic and extralinguistic function, and assesses an Uzbek variant. It focuses on syntactic economy, repetition, and silence or implied emotion.

Formal correspondence is not always the best strategy. Translators may adapt grammatical structure when necessary, but should preserve narrative restraint, temporal rhythm, and interpretive space.

Syntactic Economy as a Marker of Emotional Restraint

Sentence length is one of the clearest indicators of authorial style. In English literary prose, particularly in realist, modernist, and minimalist traditions, short sentences often carry emotional meaning. They may convey shock, exhaustion, repression, disappointment, or a



refusal to sentimentalize experience. Their brevity is not accidental; it may become a form of psychological and narrative control.

Consider the following example:

Example 1: *It was bad. He knew it and did not speak.*

Uzbek translation: *Bu yomon edi. U buni bilardi va indamadi.*

The Uzbek version retains the short evaluative structure of the source text. The phrase *Bu yomon edi* does not explain what exactly was bad, and *indamadi* preserves the absence of speech. The passage remains restrained because it does not introduce emotional commentary.

A more explanatory variant, such as *Bu juda og‘ir holat edi, u ich-ichidan xavotirda edi, ammo buni aytmadi*, makes the meaning clearer but changes the style by supplying an emotion the source leaves implicit.

Syntactic economy may signal social discipline, trauma, class-based reserve, or anti-sentimental narration. The translator must decide whether brevity is merely formal or a carrier of authorial meaning.

Minor Uzbek expansion may be needed, but it should not eliminate the emotional gap of the original. Otherwise, the translator’s commentary replaces the author’s voice.

Repetition as Temporal and Psychological Pressure

Repetition is another stylistic feature that is frequently normalized in translation. Target-language editing often encourages variation because repeated words may appear monotonous. In literary discourse, however, repetition can create rhythm, duration, obsession, fear, ritual, hesitation, and emotional pressure.

Consider the following micro-context:

Example 2: *He waited and waited until the street became empty.*

Uzbek translation: *U kutdi, yana kutdi, ko‘cha huvillab qolguncha kutdi.*

The Uzbek translation does not reproduce the source mechanically. It uses *yana kutdi* and repeats the verb in the final clause. This structure strengthens the perception of time as an emotionally difficult experience. The passage does not simply state that the man waited for a long time; it makes the reader feel the duration.

A generalized translation such as *U ko‘cha bo‘shab qolguncha uzoq kutdi* conveys factual information, but it weakens rhythm. The phrase *uzoq kutdi* summarizes the experience, whereas repetition enacts it. This difference is crucial in literary translation.

Repetition may signal urban loneliness, trauma, or suppressed conflict. Translators should therefore ask what it does in the narrative before deciding whether to retain it, recreate it rhythmically, or compensate nearby.

Uzbek can preserve this effect through repeated words, parallel syntax, or rhythmic compensation. Automatic deletion should be avoided.

Silence and the Ethics of Non-Explanation

Silence is one of the most complex features of literary discourse because it is often realized through what is absent rather than what is stated. A character may remain silent, interrupt a



sentence, look away, avoid a question, or leave an emotion unnamed. Such moments may express pain, dignity, fear, shame, protest, respect, or emotional suppression.

In English literary prose, silence frequently creates interpretive space. The reader is invited to infer the character's emotional state from gesture, situation, and narrative context. In translation, the danger arises when the translator fills this silence with an explanation.

Example 3: *She looked at the door and said nothing.*

Uzbek translation: *U eshikka qaradi va hech narsa demadi.*

The Uzbek sentence is natural and preserves the original's restraint. It does not add *qo'rqib, xafa bo'lib, umidsizlik bilan, or ko'zlariga yosh olib*. Such additions may be emotionally plausible, but they are not present in the source text.

A translator who inserts emotional explanations changes the role of the reader. Instead of allowing the reader to reconstruct the character's state, the translator offers a ready interpretation. This can reduce ambiguity and weaken the author's narrative method.

Silence may indicate respect, inequality, protest, shame, or grief. Translators should interpret the social relation and narrative tension before deciding whether it remains unmarked or is reinforced through word order and punctuation.

A Function-Based Model of Reconstruction

The analysis suggests that authorial restraint can be preserved through the following principles:

Source marker	Main function	Potential translation loss	Preferred strategy
Short sentence	Shock, restraint, emotional control	Over-explanation and sentimentality	Preserve brevity or use minimal expansion
Repetition	Duration, pressure, obsession, ritual	Flattening into general information	Retain repetition or recreate rhythm
Silence	Pain, fear, dignity, protest, social distance	Added emotional commentary	Preserve implication and avoid unnecessary explanation
Pause or unfinished speech	Hesitation, uncertainty, conflict	Completion of implicit meaning	Retain incompleteness where possible

Functional preservation is the central principle: translators should first identify what a feature does, then recreate its narrative and emotional effect with Uzbek resources rather than rely on mechanical copying.

Implications for English-Uzbek Literary Translation

Literary translators should treat sentence length, repetition, and silence as meaningful components of authorial idiolect rather than automatically smooth them for target-language fluency.

Translator training should teach students to distinguish stated information from implied meaning, especially in dialogue and emotionally charged scenes.

Uzbek offers rich means for expressing feelings and interpersonal attitudes, but uncritical intensification can alter a restrained source perspective.



Translation quality should therefore be assessed not only through lexical equivalence but also through stylistic consistency: a text may be accurate yet still lose its idiolect by expanding silence, removing repetition, or turning concise narration into explicit psychology.

Conclusion

This article has examined syntactic economy, repetition, and silence as markers of authorial restraint in English-Uzbek literary translation. These features may communicate emotional control, temporal pressure, ambiguity, dignity, and unspoken conflict.

Literary translators should avoid excessive normalization and explanatory expansion, preserving source-text functions through concise syntax, rhythmic correspondence, controlled implication, and context-sensitive choices.

The study shows that authorial voice is reconstructed through pragmatic effect rather than mechanical copying. Future research may test the model on published translations and reader responses.

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