# SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC DIMENSIONS OF NEW SINCERITY IN CONTEMPORARY YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE AND THEIR TRANSLATION INTO RUSSIAN AND UZBEK

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***Abstract:*** *This article examines the semantic and pragmatic features of New Sincerity in contemporary Young Adult literature and analyzes how these features are reproduced in Russian and Uzbek translations. Focusing on John Green's The Fault in Our Stars, the study explores metaphor, focalization, humor, and conversational discourse as linguistic markers of emotional authenticity. The findings demonstrate that effective translation of New Sincerity depends not on literal equivalence, but on the preservation of emotional tone, pragmatic intention, and reader empathy.*

***Keywords:*** *New Sincerity, Young Adult literature, literary translation, semantics, pragmatics, metaphor, emotional authenticity.*

## Introduction

The beginning of the twenty-first century has been marked by a noticeable shift in literary sensibility. Literary forms once regarded as secondary have assumed a central cultural position, with Young Adult (YA) literature becoming an influential domain of contemporary literary production

(Cart, 2016; Procházková, 2022). This development reflects a wider cultural movement away from postmodern detachment and ironic distance toward emotional authenticity, affective intensity, and ethical responsibility. Scholars have observed that late postmodern irony, though initially effective as a critical strategy, gradually fostered emotional disengagement and a sense of moral stagnation (Kelly, 2010). As a response, critics began to conceptualize a new aesthetic paradigm, often termed New Sincerity, which emphasizes vulnerability, emotional openness, and sincere communication while preserving structural and intellectual awareness (Kayavo, 2025).

While the theoretical foundations of New Sincerity emerged primarily within adult literary fiction, more recent research indicates that Young Adult literature has become one of its most vibrant and socially impactful expressions (Lawton & Cain, 2022; Waltcher, 2021). This study maintains that YA fiction represents a crucial cultural space in which the transition from ironic detachment to genuine engagement is actively negotiated. It further proposes that the semantic structures and pragmatic strategies associated with New Sincerity pose specific and complex challenges for translation into Russian and Uzbek.

**Methodology**

The research is based on a qualitative interdisciplinary framework that combines literary theory, narratology, pragmatics, and translation studies. The narratological perspective is grounded in Genette's (1980) concept of focalization, which is used to analyze how first-person narration structures the reader's access to characters' emotional and ethical consciousness. The semantic analysis is informed by conceptual metaphor theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), enabling the identification of recurring cognitive

patterns that shape the novel's system of meaning. From a pragmatic standpoint, the study draws on Leech's (1983) model to investigate the communicative functions of humor, irony, and speech acts within interpersonal interaction.

The central object of analysis is John Green's The Fault in Our Stars (Green, 2012), chosen for its significant cultural influence and representative role in contemporary Young Adult literature. The Russian and Uzbek translations are examined comparatively to determine how semantic structures and pragmatic nuances are reinterpreted and reconstructed within different linguistic and cultural frameworks.

**Results and Discussion**

The rise of New Sincerity can only be fully understood within the broader context of late postmodernism. Scholars such as Hutcheon (1988) and McHale (2004) observe that postmodern devices, particularly irony and metafiction, gradually became institutionalized and conventional, thereby losing much of their initial critical energy. Wallace (1993) further contended that although irony once functioned effectively as a means of exposing hypocrisy, its overuse ultimately resulted in emotional disengagement. By dismantling belief without offering meaningful alternatives, irony risked producing a state of affective paralysis. In response, New Sincerity does not abandon irony altogether but redefines its role within a broader framework of emotional openness and ethical seriousness (Kelly, 2010).

Young Adult literature reflects this aesthetic shift with particular clarity. In a cultural environment shaped by digital immediacy, interactive readership, and participatory media practices, narratives characterized by emotional transparency resonate strongly with contemporary audiences (Hayles, 2007;

Van Leeuwen, 2021). YA fiction foregrounds subjective consciousness, interpersonal intimacy, and moral reflection, positioning it as a particularly suitable medium for sincerity-driven storytelling.

In The Fault in Our Stars, semantic precision becomes central to the articulation of New Sincerity. The metaphor of the "little infinity" transforms the concept of finitude from an exclusively tragic condition into a space of relational significance. Rather than presenting death as absolute negation, the metaphor emphasizes depth of experience and shared presence within temporal limits. This conceptual framing aligns with existential interpretations of value emerging through relational intensity (Khan et al., 2022). At the same time, the metaphor avoids sentimental exaggeration, sustaining emotional clarity and measured restraint (Zelichenok, 2014). Such equilibrium between vulnerability and intellectual control embodies the aesthetic logic of New Sincerity.

The novel further develops this semantic framework through recurring water imagery. Motifs of drowning, flooding, and containment operate simultaneously as representations of bodily fragility and psychological instability. These images heighten emotional tension while avoiding melodramatic excess, thereby reinforcing the text's commitment to authenticity over pathos.

On the pragmatic level, humor functions as a crucial strategy of emotional regulation and identity negotiation. Phrases such as "cancer perks" demonstrate how characters linguistically reclaim agency in situations typically framed by medical discourse or social pity (Galimova & Mukhtarova, 2019). Humor operates not as denial but as resistance, preserving dignity and interpersonal equality. In this configuration, irony safeguards sincerity from

becoming overly sentimental. Rather than negating emotion, it moderates and structures it.

The translation of these semantic and pragmatic mechanisms presents considerable difficulties. Emotional authenticity depends not solely on lexical transfer but also on the preservation of tone, rhythm, and culturally embedded meanings. The Russian translation generally maintains metaphorical richness and structural complexity, thereby retaining philosophical depth. The Uzbek translation, by contrast, often emphasizes clarity and cultural accessibility, which strengthens readability but may reduce ironic tension or simplify metaphorical nuance. These variations indicate that translating New Sincerity requires adaptive strategies focused on recreating pragmatic intention and affective resonance rather than adhering to strict formal equivalence.

**Conclusion**

Young Adult literature has emerged as a key space for expressing emotional authenticity in contemporary cultural discourse (Waltcher, 2021; Lawton & Cain, 2022). Through precisely constructed metaphors, measured imagery, and carefully regulated pragmatic use of humor, The Fault in Our Stars illustrates how the principles of New Sincerity function simultaneously on semantic and pragmatic levels.

The translation of texts grounded in New Sincerity requires particular attentiveness to tonal nuance, cultural specificity, and the preservation of reader empathy. In this context, effective literary translation cannot rely on direct lexical equivalence alone; rather, it must reconstruct the emotional atmosphere and communicative intention of the original within the target language. By examining these processes, the present study contributes to translation theory

by showing how sincerity and affective meaning may be successfully negotiated across diverse linguistic and cultural systems.

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