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## Agency and Evidentiality under English Dominance in Russian and Uzbek News Translation

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### Annotation

*This article examines how English-source news discourse changes when it is translated for Russian and Uzbek readers. The study focuses on two compact but influential zones of journalistic language: agency and evidentiality. A controlled mini-corpus of three Reuters headlines from 2024 was used as analytical material, and Russian and Uzbek newsroom-style renditions were produced for comparison. The analysis shows that English tends to compress agency, delay source attribution, and package evaluation into short headline formulas. Russian usually tolerates this compression more easily and often preserves institutional shorthand. Uzbek more often expands the structure, restores explicit actors, and marks the source of information earlier. These shifts are not random stylistic choices. They reflect asymmetrical linguistic prestige in a plurilingual media environment and the need to rebalance clarity, authority, and reader processing effort. The article argues that pragmatic equivalence in news translation is achieved not through lexical mirroring, but through controlled redistribution of who acts, who knows, and who is named.*

### Keywords

*News translation, agency, evidentiality, plurilingualism, language dominance, Russian, Uzbek*

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## Rus va o'zbek tillariga yangilik matnlarini tarjima qilishda ingliz tilining ustunligi sharoitida agentlik va evidensiallik

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### Annotatsiya

*Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilidagi yangilik diskursi rus va o'zbek auditoriyasi uchun tarjima qilinganda qanday o'zgarishi tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot jurnalistik tilning ixcham, ammo ta'sirchan ikki zonasi, ya'ni agentlik va evidensiallikka qaratilgan. Material sifatida 2024-yilda Reuters'da chiqqan uchta sarlavhadan tuzilgan nazoratli mini-korpus olindi, taqqoslash uchun esa rus va o'zbek tilida redaksiya uslubdagi variantlar yaratildi. Tahlil shuni ko'rsatadiki, ingliz tili agentlikni siqishga, manbani keyinroq ko'rsatishga va bahoni qisqa sarlavha formulalariga joylashga moyil. Rus tili bunday siqishni ko'proq saqlab qoladi va institutsional qisqartmalarga chidamliroq. O'zbek tili esa ko'pincha tuzilmani yoyadi, aniq bajaruvchini qaytaradi va axborot manbasini ertaroq belgilaydi. Bunday siljishlar tasodifiy uslubiy hodisa emas. Ular plyurilingual media makonida til nufuzi notekis taqsimlanganini hamda aniqlik, ishonchlilik va o'quvchi qabulini qayta muvozanatlash zaruratini aks ettiradi. Maqolada yangilik tarjimasida pragmatik ekvivalentlik leksik ko'chirish bilan emas, balki kim harakat qiladi, kim biladi va kim nomlanadi, shu unsurlarni boshqarilgan tarzda qayta taqsimlash bilan ta'minlanishi asoslanadi.*

**Kalit so'zlar** Yangilik tarjimasi, agentlik, evidensiallik, plyurilingualizm, til ustunligi, rus tili, o'zbek tili

## Агентность и эвиденциальность в условиях английского доминирования при переводе новостных текстов на русский и узбекский языки

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**Аннотация** В статье рассматривается, как англоязычный новостной дискурс меняется при переводе для русской и узбекской аудитории. Анализ сосредоточен на двух сжатых, но значимых зонах журналистского языка: агентности и эвиденциальности. В качестве материала использован контролируемый мини-корпус из трех заголовков Reuters за 2024 год; для сопоставления были подготовлены русские и узбекские версии в редакционном стиле. Исследование показывает, что английский язык стремится сжимать агентность, откладывая указание на источник и упаковывая оценку в краткие заголовочные формулы. Русский язык обычно легче сохраняет такую компрессию и институциональные сокращения. Узбекский чаще разворачивает структуру, возвращает явного деятеля и раньше маркирует источник информации. Эти сдвиги нельзя считать случайными. Они отражают неравномерное распределение языкового престижа в плюрилингвальной медиасреде и необходимость заново соотносить ясность, авторитетность и усилие читателя. В работе утверждается, что прагматическая эквивалентность в новостном переводе достигается не лексическим зеркалом, а управляемым перераспределением того, кто действует, кто знает и кто назван.

**Ключевые слова** Новостной перевод, агентность, эвиденциальность, плюрилингвизм, языковое доминирование, русский язык, узбекский язык

### Introduction

News translation almost never behaves like a calm lexical substitution. A report moves from one newsroom to another under pressure of time, house style, political salience, and audience expectation. In that movement, some elements shrink, some expand, and some quietly change function. Bell (1991) showed long ago that news language is not a transparent pipeline but a selective discursive form. Later work in news translation made the

same point from the translational side: international news is routinely rewritten, reframed, and culturally adjusted before it reaches another audience (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2009; Schäffner, 2012; Valdeón, 2015).

The present topic becomes sharper in a plurilingual environment where English often enters as the first framing language. Multilingualism, as Cenoz (2013) notes, is not merely the coexistence of several codes. It also involves uneven symbolic value, different

domains of use, and unequal circulation power. In news discourse this asymmetry matters. English headlines frequently arrive with compressed institutional logic already built in, while Russian and Uzbek editors must decide whether to keep that compression, decode it, or redirect it for local readability.

This article focuses on two indicators that expose such decisions with unusual clarity: agency and evidentiality. Agency refers here to how explicitly the text names the actor of an action. Evidentiality refers to how the text signals the source or status of knowledge, whether through direct attribution, impersonal prediction, institutional authority, or delayed source marking. These categories are small on the surface. Yet they strongly affect how readers interpret responsibility, certainty, and credibility. The article therefore asks a narrow question: how are agency and evidentiality redistributed when English-source headlines are rendered into Russian and Uzbek under conditions of English discursive dominance?

### Method and Material

The analysis uses a controlled mini-corpus rather than a large automated dataset. Three Reuters headlines published in 2024 were selected because each concentrates a different kind of compression typical of Anglophone news style: market probability, metaphorical technological evaluation, and climate reporting with delayed source attribution (Reuters, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c). Since this article aims to isolate pragmatic mechanisms rather than describe one outlet's editorial policy, Russian and Uzbek target versions were produced analytically in newsroom style. That choice is deliberate. It limits empirical breadth, but it makes the translator's decision points fully visible.

The first headline is *\*Fed seen nearly as likely to cut rates by 50 bps as 25 bps\**. The second is *\*US nuclear plants won't power up Big Tech's AI ambitions right away\**. The third is *\*2024 will be world's hottest year on record, EU scientists say\**. These examples were not chosen because they are spectacular. They

were chosen because they compress judgment into a very small verbal space. Following Entman's (1993) framing perspective, House's (2015) attention to functional equivalence, and Munday's (2012) emphasis on evaluative decision-making, I compare each item by asking three questions. Who is presented as acting? How is knowledge sourced? What is gained or lost when the headline is reshaped for Russian and Uzbek readers?

### Analysis and Discussion

The first item stages probability without a visible human assessor: *\*Fed seen nearly as likely to cut rates by 50 bps as 25 bps\** (Reuters, 2024a). The phrase *\*seen nearly as likely\** is a compact evidential device. It signals market interpretation, but it does not say who performs that interpretation. The headline sounds informed precisely because the actor disappears. A Russian rendering can preserve this structure relatively comfortably: *\*Снижение ставки ФРС на 50 б.п. почти столь же вероятно, как и на 25 б.п.\** The actor remains implicit, the institutional shorthand survives, and the headline retains financial density. Uzbek resists such compression more strongly. A functionally clear version would be closer to *\*Bozor tahlilchilariga ko'ra, FRS stavkani 50 bazis punktga tushirishi 25 punktga tushirishi kabi deyarli ehtimolga ega\**. Here the source is moved forward and the institutional abbreviation is unpacked by the surrounding syntax. Agency is not merely translated. It is restored.

The second item shifts the problem from probability to metaphorical agency: *\*US nuclear plants won't power up Big Tech's AI ambitions right away\** (Reuters, 2024b). The line gives agency to *\*nuclear plants\** while also using *\*power up\** in a semi-metaphorical way. English financial and technology journalism tolerates this blend of literal infrastructure and figurative acceleration. Russian can reproduce much of the compression, though usually with a more explicit predicate: *\*АЭС США не смогут быстро обеспечить энергией амбиции Big Tech в сфере ИИ\**. The metaphor survives in

weakened form, but the headline still sounds idiomatic for a Russian business page. Uzbek requires stronger rebalancing. A plausible newsroom-style version would be *\*AQShdagi atom elektr stansiyalari Big Tech kompaniyalarining sun'iy intellekt bo'yicha rejalari yaqin muddatda zarur energiya bilan ta'minlay olmaydi\**. The English rhetorical compactness dissolves into explanatory syntax. This is not a failure of equivalence. It is a pragmatic correction. The Uzbek line names the actor more transparently and removes the risky ambiguity of *\*power up\**.

The third item exposes the mechanics of delayed attribution: *\*2024 will be world's hottest year on record, EU scientists say\** (Reuters, 2024c). In English the claim comes first, the source comes second. The sentence creates immediate informational impact and only then anchors it in expertise. That order is highly efficient in Anglophone headline culture. Russian can often keep it: *\*2024 год станет самым жарким за всю историю наблюдений, заявили ученые ЕС.\** The prediction remains fronted, and the source arrives as a validating clause. Uzbek more often benefits from earlier evidential marking, especially when the proposition is broad and potentially contestable: *\*Yevropa Ittifoqi olimlari ma'lum qilishicha, 2024-yil kuzatuvlar tarixidagi eng issiq yil bo'ladi.\** The source is moved to the front. The sentence becomes less dramatic, but also less vulnerable to misreading. Evidentiality here is redistributed in order to manage trust.

Across the three examples a stable pattern appears. Russian tends to stay closer to English headline compression. It usually preserves impersonal assessment, delayed attribution, and institutional shorthand with moderate adjustment. Uzbek tends to unpack compressed agency, specify the information source earlier, and smooth metaphorical density into more explicit prose. The difference should not be romanticized as a simple typological contrast. It also reflects media hierarchy. English often functions as the first

discourse of global news circulation; its framing choices arrive with prestige and inertia. Russian, as a long-established language of regional analytical media, can absorb much of that framing without severe loss. Uzbek, especially when targeting a broad readership, more often re-allocates informational burden toward clarity and interpretive guidance.

This is where language dominance becomes visible not as an abstract slogan but as a textual mechanism. A dominant source language exports not only facts but also preferred economies of naming, judging, and attributing. Baker (2006) and Valdeón (2022) remind us that translational decisions participate in wider narrative and gatekeeping processes. In the present material, English dominance is most evident when brevity itself begins to travel as prestige. Yet brevity is not neutral. A short headline can hide the source of knowledge, blur responsibility, or overestimate the target reader's familiarity with institutional codes. The translator or editor then faces a choice between formal elegance and communicative sufficiency. Uzbek versions in particular often gain pragmatic adequacy by sacrificing surface compactness.

A limitation must be stated clearly. The corpus is small, and the Russian and Uzbek versions were produced analytically rather than harvested from a live parallel newsroom corpus. Therefore, the findings should not be generalized as fixed properties of either language. Still, the mini-corpus is useful for one reason: it isolates recurring pressure points. When a headline suppresses the actor, delays the source, or packages evaluation inside a metaphor, Russian and Uzbek do not respond in identical ways. That asymmetry is already enough to show that pragmatic equivalence in media translation is a matter of strategic redistribution, not lexical imitation.

### **Conclusion**

The article has argued that agency and evidentiality are reliable indicators of pragmatic shift in English, Russian, and Uzbek news translation. In the selected material, English

headlines repeatedly compress who acts and how knowledge is authorized. Russian often preserves that compression with comparatively little restructuring. Uzbek more often expands the clause, restores explicit actors, and places the source of information earlier. These moves should not be treated as mere stylistic looseness. They are functional responses to a plurilingual media environment in which English enters as a dominant framing language but cannot always dictate the most effective communicative form in the target text.

Two practical implications follow. First, translators working into Uzbek should treat

English headline brevity as a negotiable surface feature, not as a norm to be copied automatically. Second, research on media translation in Central Asian language combinations would benefit from larger parallel corpora that include real newsroom output, since the tension between prestige compression and reader-oriented explicitation is likely to recur beyond the present examples. For now, the central conclusion is modest but firm: in news translation, who speaks, who knows, and who is named are not technical leftovers. They are the core of pragmatic meaning.

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