TENSE TRANSFORMATION IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK NEWS DISCOURSE: A PRAGMATIC AND FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract. *This study investigates tense transformation patterns in English and Uzbek news discourse through a corpus-based comparative analysis of 1,000 news texts (500 English, 500 Uzbek). Drawing on functional grammar, discourse analysis, and pragmatics, the research reveals fundamental typological and cultural differences in temporal framing. English news discourse exhibits a "dolzarblik piramidasi" (immediacy pyramid) model, prioritizing Present Simple in headlines (72%) to create a sense of ongoing relevance. In contrast, Uzbek news discourse, conversely, employs a "faktologik asoslilik" (factual grounding) strategy, with Past Simple dominating headlines (81%) to establish credibility. Three major shift patterns were identified in each language, with English demonstrating more complex multi-level transformations (Present → Past → Present → Future, 41%) versus Uzbek's more linear progression (Past → Past → Future, 49%). Statistical analysis confirms that cultural values (immediacy vs. factuality) significantly influence tense selection ($\chi^2 = 487.32$, $p < 0.001$). Translation analysis reveals four strategic approaches, they are: total equivalence (23%), functional equivalence (48%), adaptive (21%), and compensatory (8%). The findings have practical implications for journalism, translation pedagogy, and media literacy education.*

Keywords: *tense transformation, news discourse, temporal shift, English-Uzbek contrastive analysis, pragmatic functions, translation strategies.*

1. Introduction

Tense systems serve not merely as grammatical markers of temporal location but as fundamental instruments of discourse organization, pragmatic positioning, and cultural cognition, and this research had done by Comrie and Klein. In news discourse specifically, tense selection becomes a strategic tool for constructing newsworthiness, managing reader engagement, and framing events within culturally specific temporal paradigms. While extensive research exists on tense in English journalism and some work addresses individual aspects of Uzbek tense morphology, comprehensive contrastive study has systematically examined tense transformation patterns across these typologically distinct languages within the news genre. This research addresses three critical gaps: the absence of large-scale empirical comparison of English-Uzbek tense usage in authentic news texts, insufficient understanding of how typological differences (analytic vs. agglutinative) manifest in discourse-level tense strategies, and limited practical guidance for translators navigating temporal shifts between these languages. The study is guided by three research questions: The research employs a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative corpus analysis with qualitative discourse-pragmatic interpretation.

2. Methodology

A parallel corpus of 1,000 news articles was compiled (500 English, 500 Uzbek), sampled from comparable sources: *BBC, CNN,* (English); *Xalq So'zi*, *Kun.uz,*(Uzbek). Texts were collected between January 2024 and September 2025, covering politics, economics, science, and sports to

ensure genre representativeness. Each text was segmented into headline and main body for independent analysis of tense distribution and shift patterns. Drawing on Hopper's (1987) emergent grammar and Reichenbach's (1947) temporal framework, texts were coded for:

1. **Morphological tense** (Present Simple, Past Simple, Present Perfect, etc.)
2. **Discourse function** (immediacy creation, factual grounding, sequencing)
3. **Shift patterns** (headline → lead → body transitions)

Inter-coder reliability (Cohen's $\kappa = 0.89$) was established through dual-coding of 10% of the corpus. Chi-square tests assessed significance of tense distribution differences; descriptive statistics identified dominant shift patterns. Qualitative CDA (Fairclough, 1995) complemented quantitative findings.

Results and Discussion

3.1. Tense Distribution in Headlines

English headlines overwhelmingly favor Present Simple (72%), consistent with Bell's (1991) "journalistic present" concept: *"Government approves climate plan"* (BBC) *"Scientists discover breakthrough vaccine"* (CNN) This creates an "immediacy effect"—the grammatical present signals temporal proximity and ongoing relevance despite the event's completion. Uzbek headlines, conversely, employ Past Simple in 81% of cases: *"Hukumat yangi siyosatni ma'qulladi"* (Xalq So'zi) *"Olimlar yangi vaksina kashf qilishdi"* (Kun.uz) This reflects a "factual grounding" strategy—the explicit past tense establishes the event as verified, completed fact, enhancing credibility (Madvaliyev, 2008).

Table 1: Headline Tense Distribution

Tense	English (%)	Uzbek (%)
Present Simple	72	12
Present Perfect	13	4
Past Simple	12	81
Other	3	3

The χ^2 test confirms this difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 487.32$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1 that cultural-pragmatic factors systematically influence tense selection. If we look at to the tense transformation patterns there are English shift patterns and Uzbek shift patterns. Three dominant patterns emerged:

Pattern 1 (41%): Present Simple → Past Simple → Present Simple → Future *Example:* "President meets EU leaders" (headline) → "The President arrived in Brussels yesterday" (lead) → "Talks focus on trade" (body) → "Agreement will be finalized next week" (conclusion). This multi-layered temporality anchors events in factual past while maintaining present relevance and projecting future implications.

Pattern 2 (27%): Present Simple → Past Simple → Past Perfect *Example:* "Markets fall amid crisis fears" → "Investors sold shares" → "Prices had dropped 15% before intervention". The Past Perfect establishes temporal precedence, clarifying event sequences.

Pattern 3 (18%): Present Simple → Present Perfect → Past Simple *Example:* "Scientists find cure" → "Researchers have developed new treatment" → "Trials began last year". The Present Perfect bridges past action and current relevance.

Uzbek Shift Patterns:

Pattern 1 (49%): Past Simple → Past Simple → Future *Example:* "Prezident shartnoma imzoladi" (headline) → "Uchrashuvda ikki tomon kelishuvga erishdi" (body) → "Hamkorlik yanada kengayadi" (conclusion). This linear progression emphasizes factual completion before projecting outcomes.

Pattern 2 (31%): Past Simple → Present Simple → Past Simple *Example:* "Loyiha yakunlandi" → "Hozirda natijalar ko'rsatilmoqda" → "Ishlar 2023-yilda boshlangan edi". Brief present-tense intervals highlight ongoing aspects within a primarily past-oriented frame.

Pattern 3 (14%): Past Simple → Future → Present Simple *Example:* "Tadqiqot amalga oshirildi" → "Natijalar ertaga e'lon qilinadi" → "Olimlar hozir tahlil qilmoqda"

3.2 Pragmatic Functions

English tense choices prioritize immediacy: Present Simple creates a "you-are-there" effect (Chovanec, 2014), while Present Perfect signals continuing relevance: *"Market has crashed"* (implies ongoing crisis)**.** Uzbek tense choices prioritize factuality: Past Simple establishes completeness and verifiability: *"Bozor pasaydi"* (reports a verified fact). This aligns with Hall's (1976) monochronic vs. polychronic time orientation-English treats time as segmented resource requiring rapid consumption (monochronic), while Uzbek integrates events into broader contextual flows (polychronic tendencies). English Progressive forms (*"Scientists are discovering"*) enhance engagement by depicting events as unfolding processes. This construction appeared in 15% of English body text but only 6% of Uzbek texts. Uzbek Progressive (*-moqda*) tends toward official ongoing actions: *"Qurilish ishlari davom etmoqda"* (Construction work continues). Analysis of 50 parallel English-Uzbek news articles revealed for translation approaches:

Table 2: Translation Strategy Distribution

Strategy	**Percentage**	**Example**
Total Equivalence	23%	*"wrote" → "yozdi"*
Functional Equivalence (present perfect → past simple)	48%	*"has announced" → "e'lon qildi"*
Adaptive	21%	*"is meeting" → "uchrashdi"*
Compensatory	8%	*"has won" → "yaqinda g'alaba qozondi"* (lexical ompensation)

Functional equivalence dominates (48%), wherein translators prioritize pragmatic effect over formal structure. For instance, English Present Perfect typically becomes Uzbek Past Simple, as the grammaticalized "current relevance" of English Perfect lacks direct morphological equivalent in Uzbek. To preserve this meaning, translators add adverbials (*yaqinda* "recently," *hozirgacha* "until now") or rely on discourse context. This supports Nida's (1964) dynamic equivalence principle. effective translation reproduces the effect on target readers, not merely formal features.

4. Conclusion

This research demonstrates that tense transformation in English and Uzbek news discourse operates according to fundamentally different discourse-pragmatic logics. English deploys a multi-layered temporal architecture (Present → Past → Present → Future) to maximize immediacy and reader engagement, while Uzbek employs a more linear factual grounding strategy (Past → Past → Future) to establish credibility and completeness. Three key contributions emerge: Empirical

foundation: The 1,000-text corpus provides the first large-scale quantitative evidence of systematic tense differences between these languages in news discourse. Theoretical framework: The "three-tier transformation model" (grammatical → semantic → pragmatic) offers a replicable analytical framework applicable to other language pairs. Practical applications: Translation strategy typology and pedagogical implications inform journalism training, translation practice, and media literacy education. Future research should extend this framework to other genres (editorials, feature articles) and incorporate psycholinguistic methods (eye-tracking, reaction time studies) to measure reader processing of tense shifts.

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