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TYPES OF HEADLINES IN THE “ASTANA TIMES” NEWSPAPER

Over the years of its existence, The “Astana Times” newspaper has not attracted the attention of Kazakhstani or foreign scientists; thus, the novelty of the study is underlined by absolutely new material. The relevance of the work is indicated by the need to train journalists in Kazakhstan who are able to write in English, the dominance of English as an international language, hence the creation of English-language media in the CIS countries, as well as globalization and the increasing role that the image of a country, formed through the media-prism, has on its investment attractiveness and tourism development. The basis of the study is 233 headlines (markers of the language style of articles) published in the above-mentioned newspaper. The aim is to identify linguistic and stylistic features of The “Astana Times” headlines and to classify them. The following methods were used: content analysis, synthesis, theoretical modeling method, information folding method. For cluster separation of headlines, the typology of A.S. Borisova was applied and supplemented. The following key results were obtained: headlines in The “Astana Times” newspaper broadcast the pro-government position of the editorial board; the headlines do not use humor, jargon, slang, irony, puns, rhyme, phraseological units, quotes; all headlines, anyway, carry an advertising character: the information content is weakly expressed, active use of “calls to action” is traced; newspaper headlines are aimed, first of all, at forming a positive image of Kazakhstan abroad; they are oriented towards foreign readers, which is confirmed by the interpretation of local words right in the headlines.

Key words: international journalism, English-language media, country PR, headline, The “Astana Times” newspaper.

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«Astana Times» газетінде жарияланған тақырыптар түрі

Осы жылдар ішінде «Астана Таймс» газеті қазақстандық немесе шетелдік ғалымдардың назарына іліккен жоқ; осылайша, зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы мүлдем жаңа материалмен белгіленуі. Жұмыстың өзектілігі Қазақстанда ағылшын тілінде жаза алатын журналистерді даярлау қажеттілігі, халықаралық тіл ретінде ағылшын тілінің басым болуы, осыған байланысты ТМД елдерінде ағылшын тілді БАҚ құрылуы, сондай-ақ жаһандану және БАҚ призмасы арқылы қалыптасқан елдің имиджінің оның инвестициялық тартымдылығы мен туризмді дамыту рөлінің артуына белгіленді. Зерттеудің базасы ретінде жоғарыда аталған газетте жарияланған 233 тақырып (мақалалардың тілдік стилін маркерлер) құрайды. Мақсат – The «Astana Times» газетінің тақырыбының тілдік және стильдік ерекшелігін анықтау, сондай-ақ оларды жіктеу. Зерттеу барысында келесі әдіс қолданылды: контент-талдау, синтез, теориялық модельдеу, ақпаратты құлдырау әдісі. Тақырыптары кластерлік бөлу үшін А.С. Борисованың типологиясы қолданылды және толықтырылды. Келесі негізгі нәтижелер алынған: «Астана Таймс» газетінде жарияланған тақырыптар редакцияның мемлекетшіл ұстанымын көрсетеді; тақырыптарда әзіл-оспақ, жаргон, сленг, ирония, каламбур, рифма, фразеологизм, нақыл сөз немесе дәйексөз қолданылмайды; барлығы қандай да бір түрде жарнамалық сипаты көтереді: ақпарат мазмұны нашар көрсетілген, calls to action белсенді қолданылуын байқауға болады; газет тақырыбы, ең алдымен, шетелде Қазақстанның оң имиджін қалыптастыру бағытталған; олар шетелдік оқырманға бағдарланған, бұл олардағы жергілікті сөздің түсіндірмесі арқылы расталады.

Түйін сөздер: халықаралық журналистика, ағылшын тілді БАҚ, елдік PR, тақырып, «Astana Times» газеті.

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Типы заголовков в газете «The Astana Times»

За годы своего существования газета «The Astana Times» не попадала в фокус внимания казахстанских или зарубежных ученых; таким образом, новизна исследования подчеркнута абсолютно новым материалом. Актуальность работы обозначена необходимостью подготовки в Казахстане журналистов, способных писать на английском языке, доминированием английского языка как международного, отсюда – созданием в странах СНГ англоязычных СМИ, а также глобализацией и возрастанием роли, которую имидж страны, формируемый через призму СМИ, оказывает на ее инвестиционную привлекательность и развитие туризма. Базой исследования выступают 233 заголовка (маркеры языкового стиля статей), опубликованные в вышеупомянутой газете. Цель – вывить лингвистические и стилистические особенности заголовков «The Astana Times», а также произвести их классификацию. В процессе исследования применялись следующие методы: контент-анализ, синтез, метод теоретического моделирования, метод свертывания информации. Для кластерного разделения заголовков применена и дополнена типология А.С. Борисовой. Получены следующие ключевые результаты: заголовки в газете «The Astana Times» транслируют прогосударственную позицию редакции; в заголовках не используется юмор, жаргон, сленг, ирония, каламбур, рифма, не применяются фразеологизмы, цитаты; все заголовки, так или иначе несут в себе рекламный характер: слабо выражена информативность, прослеживается активное применение «calls to action»; газетные заголовки направлены, прежде всего, на формирование позитивного имиджа Казахстана за рубежом; они ориентированы на зарубежного читателя, что подтверждается толкованием в них локальных слов.

Ключевые слова: международная журналистика, англоязычные СМИ, страновой PR, заголовок, газета «The Astana Times».

Introduction

In 2010, the first issue of the fully English-language newspaper The “Astana Times” was published in the capital of Kazakhstan. At the time of writing this article, the media outlet is 14 years old. Nevertheless, over the years of its existence, the newspaper has never been the subject of any scientific research, which brings additional **novelty** to this work.

The media has already occupied its niche in the publication market. Its main audience is English-speaking foreigners interested in Kazakhstani news. The newspaper’s sections are quite diverse: economics, politics, business, tourism, sports, culture, people.

The first issue of the domestic English-language newspaper, timed to coincide with the OSCE summit, was released with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as the editorial offices of official newspapers: “Kazakhstani Truth” and “Egemen Kazakhstan”.

The founders of the newspaper noted in an interview that Kazakhstani English-language newspaper would be in demand in the republic, since a large number of foreigners live and work in the country.

Below is the interface of the official website of the newspaper – Fig. 1.

The **relevance** of the study is determined by the need to train journalists in Kazakhstan who are able to write in English; the dominance of English as an international language, hence the creation of English-language media in the CIS countries; as well as globalization and the increasing role that the image of a country, formed by the media, has on its investment attractiveness and tourism development.

It can be noted, that English-language newspapers exist in many CIS countries, even with similar names, for example, The “Astana Times”, “Moscow Times”, “Minsk Times”, etc. The newspaper under analysis is not some kind of unique “event” in this regard, but its publication is unique for Kazakhstan in that for the first time domestic journalists create all the content in English according to international standards.

“We tried to reorient journalists to a Western style of work. We asked them to write materials so that they would be understandable to Western readers,” says editorial representative (Kosenov, 2010). How the reorientation in the work of journalists took place is the topic of a separate study. Within the framework of this article, a **research question** is posed about what are the features of the headlines writing style in foreign-language media, and what types they belong to.

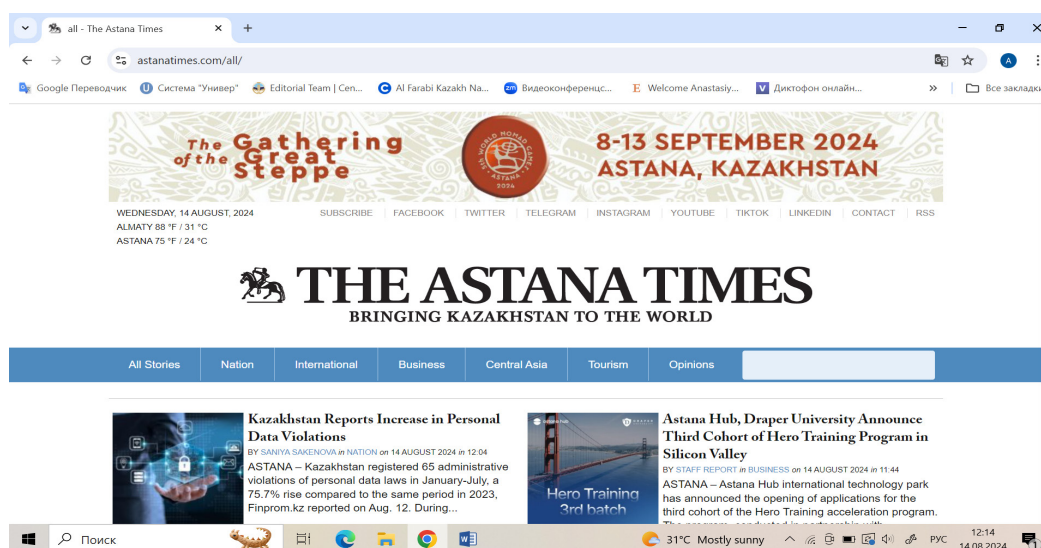


Figure 1 – Logo of the newspaper The «Astana Times»
Screenshot from the official website <https://astanatimes.com>

Thus, the **subject** of the study is the headlines of the above-mentioned newspaper; the **object** is the policy of creating a positive image of the republic in the English-language media.

The choice of English for disseminating information about Kazakhstan at the international level is obvious. In addition to being the “language of business”, English is spoken even in countries where it has no official status.

It is one of the most widely-used language for writing, creating, learning, and speaking Internet sites. English publications are widely available everywhere in the globe (Munish & Chand, 2023). In international relations, English is the official language of many structures, organs, specialized agencies, regional commissions and expert bodies. English is also used in the major international political gatherings and several scientific and sporting organizations. English is also the language of tourism, especially the tourist services. In the domain of communication, English is said to be the most powerful international language (Ndiaye, 2023).

The English language has no status in Kazakhstan, however, it is widely studied in schools and universities, knowledge of it is necessary for getting a high-paying job, and English-language media and news programs also operate in the Republic, such as “New Time” on the “Silk Way” TV channel.

When studying the media, it is worth mentioning the influence of the English language. The most typical context is the so-called expat media – the press intended for foreigners living and working in the country (Mratkhezun & Bush-

kanets, 2021). However, first of all, English-language media are created in the republic to form a positive image in the international arena, that is, for foreign readers.

In the period of globalization, when data spreads at high speed, the formation of a “foreign policy image” has become one of the main tasks of any country (Anisimova, 2021). With the spread of digital technologies and the possibilities of the Internet, the creation of a media site has become much less time-consuming, and its maintenance, filling with content, updating no longer requires large labor costs. At the same time, the influence of Internet media is significant. In recent years, even such a concept as “digital diplomacy” has appeared, associated with information in the web space.

According to scientists, digital communication is becoming an infrastructure and an important attribute of international contacts (Mratkhezun & Bushkanets, 2021). Kazakhstan is trying not to miss such an opportunity.

Thus, the **hypothesis** put forward is that the materials of The “Astana Times” are not intended for the domestic media consumer, they are more of an advertising nature than informational, aimed at forming a positive image of Kazakhstan abroad, and in language and style, they differ from the headlines of the local press and originally English.

The **aim** of the study is to analyze the linguistic and stylistic features, as well as the types of headlines of the newspaper The “Astana Times”. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve the following **tasks**: select headlines, group them ac-

ording to the selected method, analyze them, and confirm or refute the hypothesis based on the obtained results.

Materials & Methods

The headlines of the newspaper “Astana Times” served as the research material. 233 headlines were analyzed, this is the total number of articles, which

were published in the electronic version of the newspaper on its official website during the control month – 2024, June. The general summary is uploaded to Google Drive and available for reading: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IZJsUbWE0impPj0AfDLk46HmjWa1tRth/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101871757278392270359&rtpof=true&sd=true>. The beginning of the data is presented in the table below. See Fig.2.

Figure 2 – Example of the collected data’ design

№	Headline	Author	Section	Date & time of publication
1	Astana to Host Qualifying Competition for World Nomad Games	BY SANIYA SAKENOVA	in CULTURE, EDITOR’S PICKS, SPORTS	on 1 JUNE 2024 in 09:00
2	Kazakh National Bank Unveils New 10,000 Tenge Banknote Design	BY AIBARSHYN AKHMETKALI	in EDITOR’S PICKS, NATION	on 1 JUNE 2024 in 09:30
3	Kostanai, Small Green Town in Northern Kazakhstan, Where History is Evident at Every Turn	BY ASSEL SATUBALDINA	in EDITOR’S PICKS, KAZAKHSTAN REGION PROFILES: A DEEP DIVE INTO THE HEART OF CENTRAL ASIA, TOURISM	on 1 JUNE 2024 in 10:00
4	Kazakh Board Game Togyzkumalak Gains Popularity Among Youth	BY AIBARSHYN AKHMETKALI	in 5TH WORLD NOMAD GAMES, CULTURE, EDITOR’S PICKS, SPORTS	on 1 JUNE 2024 in 10:30
5	Kazakhstan Celebrates Children’s Day	BY ZHANNA SHAYAKHMETOVA	in NATION	on 1 JUNE 2024 in 16:46
6	Kazakh and US Scientists to Study Human Nutrition of Bronze Age	BY AIBARSHYN AKHMETKALI	in CULTURE, EDITOR’S PICKS	on 2 JUNE 2024 in 10:00
7	Kazakhstan Holds Potential for Unique UNESCO Heritage Nominations, Archeologist Says	BY AIBARSHYN AKHMETKALI	in CULTURE	on 2 JUNE 2024 in 10:18
8	Eight-Year-Old Kazakh Chess Prodigy Aims for International Success	BY NAGIMA ABUOVA	in EDITOR’S PICKS, PEOPLE, SPORTS	on 2 JUNE 2024 in 11:00
9	Almaty: Gateway to Kazakhstan’s Natural Wonders	BY SANIYA SAKENOVA	in EDITOR’S PICKS, KAZAKHSTAN REGION PROFILES: A DEEP DIVE INTO THE HEART OF CENTRAL ASIA, TOURISM	on 2 JUNE 2024 in 12:15
10	Latest AIFC Report Delves into Regional Transport Infrastructure, Trends	BY ASSEL SATUBALDINA	in BUSINESS, EDITOR’S PICKS, INTERNATIONAL	on 3 JUNE 2024 in 10:19

It is not difficult to justify the researcher material's choice. The headline is the most important part of the news. The reader chooses which article to read based on its headline. In addition, in 60-80% of cases, the reader may not read the entire article, he can draw a conclusion about the content of the material from the headline (Osipov, 2021). Many media researchers have substantiated the importance of the headline.

The success of each print or online material largely depends on how interested the reader is in reading it, and the reader's interest in the content and subsequent formation of an opinion about the subject of the article are determined by a number of different factors, among which the leading position is occupied by the attractiveness of the headline. It is the headline that awakens the reader's interest, determines the relevance and novelty of the material offered for reading (Kinderknecht & Stepanyuk, 2016).

In this study, the headline is presented as a kind of “marker” of the language style of the entire article published in the newspaper. In addition, headlines, as a rule, reflect the best journalistic practices, they are short, clear and bright. That is why headlines were chosen as the basic material of the research.

During the process of working under the collected material, the following research methods were used: content analysis, synthesis, generalization, the method of theoretical modeling, the method of collapsing information; the cluster technique was used in terms of the possibility of highlighting large and small semantic units in the headings, and do their graphic representation.

Cluster analysis (CA) can be used merely as a technique for exploratory data analysis or a data reduction tool, it is a way of grouping cases described by their profile on a set of variables so that groups of similar cases (clusters) can be analyzed separately, or themselves used as the cases for further analysis. CA is sometimes used for theory confirmation or theory generation, wherein the clusters are taken to indicate important subcategories of the modeled instances (International Encyclopedia of Education, 2023). In this study, cluster analysis was performed by identifying different types of headlines.

Literature Review

The literature review for this study can be divided into several subtopics. The first of which will be the analysis of the linguistic and stylistic features of the headline. Many scientists have devoted their research to this topic. For example, researcher O.V.

Dergacheva, studying the structural and semantic features of the title complex, identifies unidirectional and complex, fully informed and incompletely informed headlines (Dergacheva, 2015).

It is worth noting the rather different opinions of researchers regarding the stylistic features of English-language headlines.

For example, there is an opinion that an English newspaper headline is expressive due to its colloquial nature. Quite often, English headlines have a familiar nature (Molochkova, 2001). English-language texts published in the media are distinguished by the use of clichés and stamps, stereotypes, vocabulary with emotional and expressive connotations, the use of euphemisms and periphrases, and the manipulation of factual information (Shemelina, 2008). In an English-language headline the use of irony is also an important technique. The role of hyperbole is also significant – an exaggeration aimed at enhancing the meaning and emotionality of the statement. Linguists also highlight such a stylistic device as periphrasis (Fedosova & Skuratova, 2020).

The functional features of the headline were studied by the classics. Teun Adrianus Van Dijk identified the main functions that a newspaper headline implements: it gives new information (informative function), presents the main idea or thought of the article (communicative function), attracts the attention of the addressee to the material (advertising-expressive function), distinguishes the newspaper article on the page from a number of similar ones (graphic-highlighting function), arranges newspaper articles according to the degree of information relevance or subject matter (distribution function), determines the place of the newspaper article in the selection (connective function) (Dijk, 1989). The decisive factors of a good headline were identified: readability, attractiveness, informativeness, conciseness (Cordoba-Cabus, 2019). The semantic composition of media headlines was studied: most often, they begin with the questions “how” and “why”. In addition, modal constructions “can you”, “are you sure” are used. The main goal of this technique is to arouse curiosity, to excite further interest (Borisova, 2010).

Researchers have identified the basic principles of the headings' language and style, these are the desire for a laconic expression of thoughts, the rejection of subjectivity and excessive expression, the rejection of scandalousness, the inadmissibility of the author's use of the personal pronoun “I”; the rejection of complex epithets, metaphors; the active use of complex abbreviations, which is due to the gravitation towards a lapidary style of presentation (Tolstunova, 2010).

For this study, it is also important to review the existing scientific literature on the topic of the English-language press. In this regard, I can highlight the work of a group of scientists who studied the English-language media discourse. Their article addresses the problem of the functional potential of the present-day English-language media discourse and its role in English-speaking societies and other countries where English does not have official national status (Guslyakova et al., 2023). As noted earlier, the English language has no one status in Kazakhstan.

The headlines of English newspapers were also studied separately: according to the research results, they represent a multi-stage presentation of the main points of a newspaper article or report (Chigina & Petukhova, 2016).

The next category in the review includes works on the study of the factors influencing Internet media and, separately, the development of strategic communications.

Many researchers agree that until relatively recent time, traditional media (press, radio and television) were the main instrument for shaping public opinion, not only within the country but also in the international arena. During last decades, new media have been added to them, allowing direct contact with the general public abroad (Minaeva, 2021). A special role in this process belongs to the global network, which, being a specific interactive means of mass communication, is already actively used in the political process (Nurpeissova & Davletyarova, 2017). Scientific works also emphasize the growing importance of strategic communications.

Strategic communication is a new concept of achieving national interests by combining public administration and the communication component. Currently, strategic communication in the international arena means creating, transforming and maintaining the reputation of the state, as well as adjusting the country's brand. It is becoming an effective mechanism for managing the international reputation of the state (Minaeva, 2021).

So, from a brief review of the literature it follows that scientists have come to the conclusion about the importance of building the image and brand of the country in the international arena, and as a working tool for this purpose, Internet media can be effectively used, publishing the necessary data, and in order for the information to reach the foreign audience directly, it is worth doing this in English. Kazakhstan has actively joined this process through strategic communications.

Research & Results

The ability to create headlines for media is one of the professional qualities of a journalist. Sometimes the style of headlines is dictated by the editor-in-chief or by the editorial policy itself. There are practices when a separate specialist works on headlines: that is, the journalist writes only the text of the article, and the editor comes up with the headline. However, such a practice is not widespread in Kazakhstan. The working personnel in domestic media is limited, therefore, as a rule, the author-journalist creates both the article and the headline. The only thing is that he can/should adapt to certain requirements.

The "Astana Times" headlines clearly demonstrate that the authors tailor them to the format. The average headline length is 10 words. All of them are standardized, in the form of a complete sentence, there are no very short or very long ones; all of them are expanded.

The headline has specific stylistic, genre, compositional characteristics, as well as a special pragmatic setting (Borisova, 2010), as a rule, it consists in "selling" or advertising the article. The newspaper has obvious problems with this. It should be noted, that several functional styles: scientific, popular science, conversational and business, are practically not used for writing the headlines of the newspaper under research. The journalistic style prevails.

As for the font design of the headlines, this media outlet uses bold one. Headlines in different sections do not differ from each other in any way – they are all standard black and of the same font size. Graphic elements are not used to highlight the headlines (check marks, dots, rhombus, exclamation marks, etc.). In principle, the headlines in this mass-media cope with their secondary task – to visually divide the material into blocks.

To create clusters, we will try to apply the typology of newspaper advertising headlines given by researcher A.S. Borisova. According to it, we will get the following result:

1. Question headline. Among 233, only one was found – "*National Geographic: Why 2024 is the Best Year to Explore Kazakhstan*". Although this type is quite typical for Russian-language and Kazakh-language media in Kazakhstan: the headline asks a question, the answer to which is contained in the article itself. A rhetorical question headline can also act as a subtype. The newspaper's journalists do not use it. This fact has a negative impact on the popularity of materials on the Internet. This can be

explained by the fact that users often type a question into a search engine in the hope of finding the desired material with an answer.

2. Demonstrative headline (demonstrative pronouns are used). Only 2 examples out of 233 were found: “*Kazakhstan to Open Branches of Eight International Universities This Year*” and “*Coventry University to Open Branch in Astana This Year*”. As it can be seen, the headlines are identical, and they have the same author – Dana Omirgazy. In these examples, the pronouns indicate the year without naming it, thus not arousing the reader’s interest in any way.

3. Headline-statement (used rarely, only if there is 100% certainty and guarantees). Examples: “*Green Economy is Key to Prosperity*” and “*Przewalski’s Horses Land in Kazakhstan...*”. In the examples above, there is indeed 100% certainty in the facts on the part of the editors – the first phrase is an international cliché, the second is a historical fact proven by archaeologists. “*Kazakhstan Advances Gender Equality, Combats Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking*” – in this example the statement is not proven, and cannot be proven, it is used for advertising purposes in order to inform tourists about social safety for them in the country.

4. Headline – solution to the problem. Three most striking headlines of this type can be identified in the newspaper during the analyzed period: “*Kazakhstan Continues Compensating Flood-Affected Citizens*” – here the solution to the problem of the affected population is seen in the payment of material compensation from the state. “*Kazakhstan Offers to Act as Logistics Hub on Eurasian Transport Corridors*” – the problem of large distances on the Eurasian continent and cargo transportation, transport points can be solved by turning Kazakhstan into a hub. “*Kazakhstan Redirects Billions in Recovered Assets to Social Projects*” – the shortage of money in the state budget for solving social problems can be covered by illegal funds returned to the republic.

5. The headline – a link to an authoritative source – is a winning model. The advantage is that mistrust overcomes to some extent. Most often, a famous person (singers, actors, athletes, TV presenters, etc.) acts as a “witness”. There are not many headlines associated with specific individuals, names and surnames are indicated only in two cases: “*From World Stages to Goodwill Ambassador: Kazakh Violinist Marat Bisengaliyev Shares Inspiring Journey*” and “*Dimash Kudaibergen Participates in Chinese TV Project*”. Once, the pseudonym of a singer was used: “*Kazakhstan’s Goodwill Ambassador Adam Breaks Boundaries with Music*”. A direct

powerful link to an authoritative source was also used – “*Kazakh State Counselor Comments on Adopted Plan to Combat Gambling*” – in this example, the state counselor’s commentary really seems authoritative, i.e. trustworthy.

6. Headlines containing numbers and figures, statistics. In the newspaper under consideration, this type is encountered often because it is more concrete and specific, which is loved by the business public. Headlines of this type are varied, for example: “*Kazakh Energy Ministry Launches 60 Investment Projects*”, “*Kazakhstan-China Cargo Transport Reaches Record 28 Million Tons*”. Less common, but still encountered are headlines with approximate figures, they are intended not so much to provide specific information as to impress the reader with their scale and influence him: “*Nearly Ten Million Foreign Tourists Visit Kazakhstan in 2023*”.

7. Continuing headline. This type of purely advertising headline is slightly different from what is offered in the newspaper under research. Here I will take as a basis the topic in the headlines, which continues from issue to issue. There were two such topics: the fight against the consequences of floods and the increasing role of women in Kazakhstani society. Four articles were published on the topic of floods during the month (in chronological order): “*Kazakhstan Continues Compensating Flood-Affected Citizens*”(05.06.2024), “*Kazakhstan Flood Recovery: Thousands Compensated, Tokayev Urges Swift Action*” (10.06.2024), “*Tokayev Thanks Citizens, Countries for Helping to Overcome Flood Crisis*” (19.06.2024), “*Floods in Kazakhstan: State, Businesses Continue Assistance for Affected Families*” (26.06.2024). As we can see, these headlines have a positive connotation: the state and the citizens themselves are actively helping the victims. The flood is presented as a natural disaster that cannot be resisted and for which it is impossible to prepare. At the same time, Russian and Kazakh-language media actively published materials about the theft of state budget funds allocated for the construction of dams and cleaning of riverbeds. This information could have a negative impact on the image of the state (corruption, theft), so the editorial office preferred to avoid it in the headlines. Let’s recall that from March to April 2024, Kazakhstan faced the largest flood in the last 80 years, Aktobe, Atyrau, West Kazakhstan and North Kazakhstan regions suffered.

Another long-running theme of the month is gender equality. Kazakhstan, an Asian country, is trying to create in Europe an image of a country where the fight for women’s rights is taking place. Five articles were published on this topic: “*Experts*

Highlight All-Society Effort as Kazakhstan Pushes for Gender Equality”, “*Kazakhstan Takes Bold Step Toward Zero Tolerance for Violence Against Women*”, etc.

8. Humorous headline. During the specified period, not a single article with this type of headline was published, which, of course, negatively affects the reader’s attention and imagination. The reason may lie in different cultures and attitudes to jokes, humor, and, in principle, to things that can be laughed at. Sometimes foreigners may not perceive the manifestation of creativity, the weaving of local jokes. In addition, we should not forget that Kazakhstani journalists most likely do not think in English, but only translate their thoughts. It can only be noted that the reason for creating humorous headlines was very good – a comic’s festival was taking place in Astana, but the newspaper limited itself to standardized headlines such as: “*Astana to Host Four-Day Comic Con 2024 in July*” and “*Hannibal Star Mads Mikkelsen Set to Headline Comic Con Astana*”.

9. Headlines with different brand names (in this case, the advertised product). Since, according to the hypothesis put forward, the newspaper is nothing more than a large PR project to promote Kazakhstan, then, accordingly, I will consider how the name “Kazakhstan” and its direct associates are used in the headlines.

111 headlines of the newspaper contain the word “Kazakhstan”, almost every second one. Headlines with the word “Tokayev” were used 13 times. With the word “president” (in relation to Tokayev) – 3 times. Headlines with the word “Astana” were used 31 times. At the same time, the word “capital” was used in the headlines 3 times. Many headlines are related to oil production and national oil-companies (oil as an association with the Republic of Kazakhstan). For example, “*KazTransOil Boosts Tengiz Field Exports Via Aktau Port*”.

It is worth paying attention to the fact that the headlines of The “Astana Times” newspaper incorrectly/ambiguously use the concepts: “Kazakh” (name of nationality or ethnic origin) and “Kazakhstani” (related to or belonging to the country). Let’s consider several examples. “*Over 68% of Kazakh Citizens Reflect Optimism About Future*” – here journalist is clearly talking about citizens of Kazakhstan, and not only about Kazakhs, because Kazakhstan is a multinational country. But in the next headline: “*Zhas Qazaq Summer Camp Welcomes Over 250 Ethnic Kazakh Children*” everything is correct – here author is talking specifically about Kazakh children by national origin. In the next headline “*Kazakh Government Committed to En-*

sure Economic Growth at 6%” – the speech is about the Kazakhstani government, which includes people of different national or ethnic origins. The problem of translating these concepts into English remains open, because in most dictionaries “Kazakh” means both Kazakh and Kazakhstani. Nevertheless, the local population clearly distinguishes between these two concepts.

10. Headlines with local words. I want to supplement the existing typology according to A.S. Borisova, by introducing in it two additional components.

The analyzed newspaper often uses local words in the headlines, usually providing their decoding or interpretation. Let’s look at some examples. “*Kazakh Board Game Togyzkumalak Gains Popularity Among Youth*” – the headline not only gives the name of the game (togyzkumalak), but also explains that it is a Kazakh board game. The headline from the “Discover Kazakhstan” section: “*Beshbarmaq – One Dish, Many Stories*” – again there is an explanation that beshbarmaq is a dish. “*Sadak Atu: Reviving the Tradition of Kazakh Archery*” – here is not just the name of a traditional sport (sadak atu), but also an explanation that it is traditional archery from horseback. The following headline is quite interesting: “*Save Berkuts: Kazakhstan Joins Forces to Protect Golden Eagle Population*” – berkut is the traditional Kazakh name for the golden eagle. Berkut is a localism that many Europeans will not understand, so the headline contains a “hint” by which foreigners can correctly interpret the term. The next example: “*In Footsteps of Warriors: Historical Legacy of Kazakh Batyrs*” also contains a direct interpretation: batyr is a Kazakh warrior.

Separately, I can mention the headlines with the names of Kazakhstani cities. The editors of the media do not expect that the names will be familiar to foreign readers, so explanations are almost always given: “*Kostanai, Small Green Town in Northern Kazakhstan, Where History is Evident at Every Turn*” – the Kostanai city, its size, climate (it’s cold in the north) and location are clearly described. “*Taraz City – Cradle of Islamic Civilization and Trade with Great Artisan Past*” – the historical past of the Taraz city is described, where there are now many museums, monuments and exhibits of religious artifacts.

Very rarely (2 out of 233) localisms are not explained. This undoubtedly arouses the reader’s interest and encourages him to look for additional information in the article itself or in additional sources. For example, “*National Kurultai Welcomes Prominent Kazakh Journalists, Broadens Its Scope*”

and “*Kazakh Athletes Achieve Complete Victory at Asian Championship on Tenge Ily*” – there is no explanation of what kind of sport “tenge ily” is and what “kurultai” is. Definitions of these concepts can easily be found on the Internet, and, as a rule, after finding the information independently, the reader will familiarize himself with the journalistic material.

In order to strengthen and accelerate the formation of a positive image of Kazakhstan in the international arena, the newspaper’s headlines, and accordingly, the materials, pay great attention to the republic’s cooperation with international organizations. Their names very often appear on the front pages of the newspaper. Here are some examples: “*UNICEF Kazakhstan Officially Partners with Forthcoming World Nomad Games in Astana*”, “*OPEC+ Members Extend Voluntary Oil Production Cut Until September*”, etc. At the same time, I will focus on the fact that the use of borrowed vocabulary is practically absent.

11. Headlines with call to action. There are also headlines in The “Astana Times” containing a verb in the imperative mood, the so-called “call to action” in public relations.

The purpose is to create an intended feeling and user engagement. The users (readers here – auth.) clearly prefer calls to action that have a high explainability and feels intuitive. Its design should have a high level of transparency and show straight away what it demands and what the result of the action is (Mejtoft et al., 2021). There are a huge number of examples in the newspaper, most of them promoting tourist trips around the country. For example, “*Discover Kazakhstan: “Almaty Sea.” Why Lake Qapshagai Is so Beloved?*”, “*Explore Day-Trip Adventures Beyond Astana’s Urban Core*”, “*Discover Weekend Wonders: Ballet, Music, and Exhibitions in Astana and Almaty*” and other similar ones.

Therefore, if we graphically briefly present all the clusters (11) obtained during the analysis, we will see the following picture, see Fig. 3

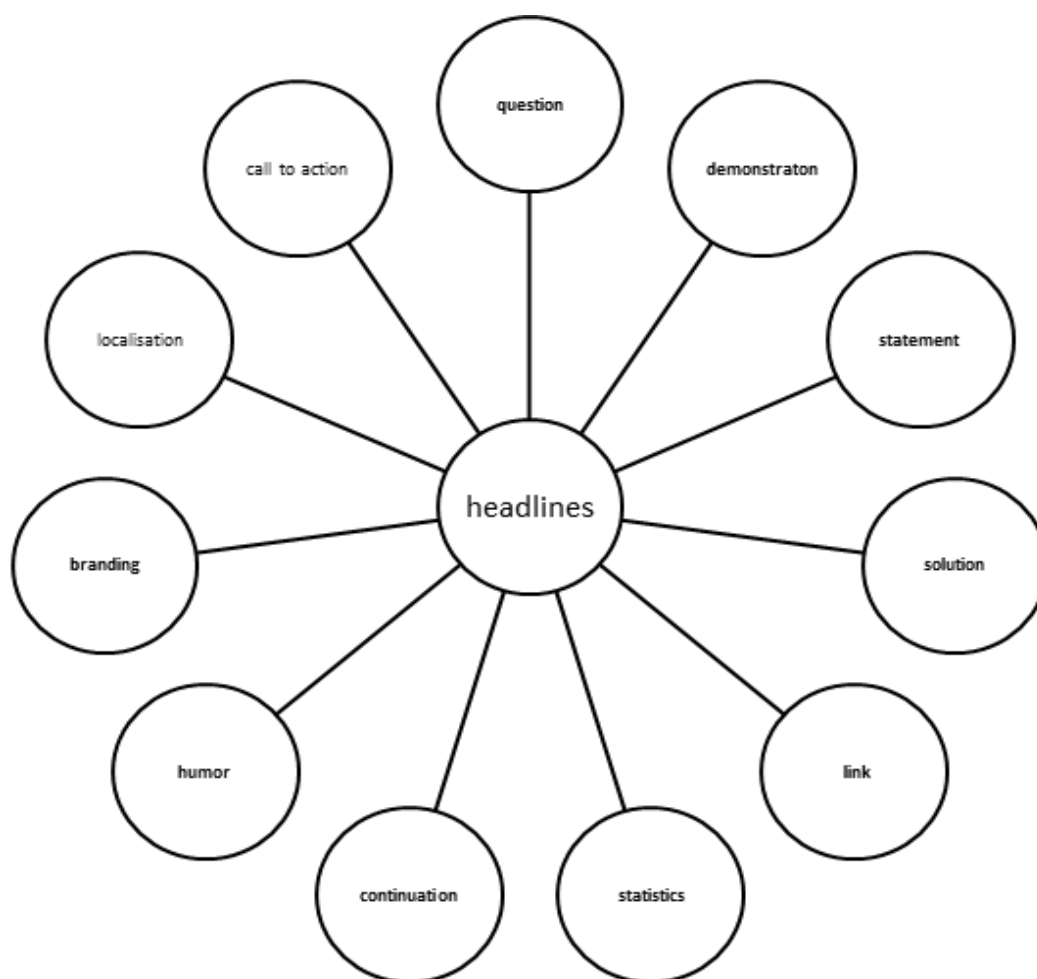


Figure 3 – Headlines’ clusters of The «Astana Times» newspaper

As can be seen from the analysis, most of the newspaper headlines are indeed of an advertising nature, not news. So, news is characterized, first of all, by novelty. But, for example, the words “for the first time”, which has a high news and even sensational connotation, was used only three times during the specified period – “*Kazakhstan Welcomes Leonardo da Vinci’s La Bella Principessa for First Time*”, “*Kazakhstan Clinches Gold at Cannes Lions for First Time*”, “*Kazakhstan’s Constitution Published in Braille for First Time*”.

In the media outlet under consideration, almost all headlines are standardized – they are sometimes enough to get basic information without reading the material itself. It does not seem possible to clearly classify them as fully informative or non-full-informative.

Fully informative headings fully actualize the semantic component of the text, while non-full-informative ones do not do this fully. A fully informative heading reveals the topic of the entire article material or the main thesis that will develop the key idea (Osipov, 2021).

Some scientists (Abbott, 2017) also consider the following types of headlines: sensational headline, intrigue, slogan, appeal, quote headline. All of them are absent in The “Astana Times” newspaper. There are no creative headlines with the conjunction “or”. All of the above indicates weak creativity and a more advertising-business orientation of the editorial policy.

Discussion

Of course, this study has its limitations, and the most important of them is the small number of analyzed headlines – 233, but the selection and creation of the database of the studied material were carried out manually in order to avoid errors in the interpretation of words by artificial intelligence or during the automatic processing of data; as is known, artificial intelligence does not understand humor and cannot always correctly interpret phraseological units.

Humans significantly outperformed the machines, indicating that AI’s understanding of humor still has room to improve (Bowyer, 2023).

The advantage of this study is that its author has a philological and journalistic education, as well as the fact that the sample included absolutely all headlines for the month. This material was studied for the first time, and clusters of newspaper headlines were also created for the first time.

This study does not aim to answer the question of how well the writing style of all the newspaper’s

authors is unified so that an article by one journalist cannot be distinguished from an article by another journalist. This is a topic for another research. However, I emphasize that the names and surnames of the authors-journalists are included in almost all articles. Only 31 materials are signed as “by staff report” or “by editorial report”. That is, 202 materials are authorial.

Conclusion

Today, it is important to trace the trends in the change of media functions from an object of simple information exchange to a subject of world politics, as well as to show the prerequisites for the emergence of Internet technologies to establish an impact on participants in international relations in terms of implementing regional and global geopolitical goals (Mratkuzin & Bushkanets, 2021). The strategic goal of the analyzed media is to form a positive image of the country.

The main goal in creating an image is superiority, being ahead in communications. This means using the most effective means of communication in covering one’s actions (Anisimova, 2021). Thus, Kazakhstan uses the website of its English-language newspaper to cover its actions for a foreign audience.

It is dangerous to be unrepresented on the Internet now, because search queries will bring up if not official information, then fake messages from bloggers, which can cause reputational risks to the country’s image. It can be said that Kazakhstan is acting proactively, filtering information and distributing it in English, which can be easily translated into any other language in the world. Moreover, the materials can be used by providing a link to The “Astana Times” newspaper. Of course, if other media outlets need information about a particular event, it will be easiest for them to borrow material professionally written by a journalist. In addition, the newspaper has no competition due to the fact that it is the only one.

So, summing up, we can highlight the following key results of the study:

1. The headlines in The “Astana Times” newspaper do not reflect the journalist’s fundamental position on a particular issue, although the author signs the article with his first and last name. None of the newspaper’s authors expresses a personal attitude to the events, but only demonstrates the pro-government position of the editorial board.

2. The headlines do not use humor, jargon, slang, irony, puns, phraseological units or quotes.

There are no creative and rhyming headlines, which, in principle, are typical for Kazakhstani journalism.

3. All headlines are stylistically uniform – each heading is a complete sentence.

4. All headlines, one way or another, carry an advertising character; they are aimed at attracting investment to the country and developing tourism. The informativeness of the headlines is poorly expressed.

5. The headlines make extensive use of localisms and call to action.

6. Headlines can be divided into 11 clusters according to the proposed typology.

The theoretical and practical significance of the obtained results is that they can be used in journalism, public relations, linguistics and in the study of international relations.

The research can be continued in several areas: comparison of article headlines devoted to the same event in Kazakhstani media in different languages; comparison of the work of the editorial boards of the English-language newspapers in the CIS countries. From the point of view of journalism education, the aspect of training Kazakhstani journalists to work in English-language media will be interesting. The value of this work lies in the possibility of its use in teaching international journalism.

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