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The dynamics of conflictogeme perception in intercultural communication: examples from English-language, Russian-language, and Kazakh-language media

This article examines the linguistic and cultural encoding of conflictogemes in media discourse based on materials from three linguistic spheres: English-speaking, Russian-speaking and Kazakh-speaking media. The relevance of the study is due to the intensification of conflictogemes in both global and local information space, which contributes to the growing polarization of public consciousness. The primary focus is on the characterization of conflictogems — lexical units capable of provoking conflict and possessing semantic and pragmatic potential to shape public perception of socially significant events. The study substantiates the need for a comparative analysis of media texts in a multilingual and culturally diverse environment. The methodology of research combines critical discourse analysis, component analysis, pragmatic linguistics, and contrastive methods. The empirical database consists of a corpus of 300 media texts (100 in each language) selected according to thematic and regional criteria and published between 2020 and 2024. As a result of the analysis, five key semantic domains of conflictogems were identified: threat, enemy, chaos, security, and provocation. Their dominant stylistic markers (metaphor, hyperbole, euphemism, binary oppositions) and communicative functions (polarization, demonization, mobilization, fear activation, consolidation) were also identified. The results of the study show that each media culture uses different rhetorical strategies: English-language media emphasize universal values and mobilizing frames; Russian-language sources highlight internal opposition and ideological antagonism; and Kazakh-language discourse focuses on rhetorical stabilization and normative order. Conflictogems function not only as indicators of the political context but also as tools of cultural encoding, reflecting sociocultural values and editorial policy. The study concludes that cross-linguistic analysis of conflict rhetoric makes it possible to identify the underlying cognitive and pragmatic mechanisms of audience influence. The results obtained have practical significance for media linguistics, sociolinguistics, political discourse analysis, and intercultural communication.

Keywords: media discourse, conflictogeme, pragmatic functions, cultural-linguistic analysis, stylistic devices.

Introduction

The modern media landscape functions in conditions of increased conflict and ideological polarization, increasing scientific interest in linguistic mechanisms that create hostile images, contribute to the division and escalation of social tension. Global factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, regional armed conflicts, migration crises and protest movements have contributed to an increase in verbal aggression in the information space, highlighting the relevance of analyzing speech strategies that fuel public confrontation. In this context, special attention is paid to the concept of a conflictogeme — a language unit characterized by its conflictogenic potential, capable of activating destructive meanings, increasing tension and forming oppositional identities.

The scientific study of conflict discourse developed within the framework of critical discourse analysis. Then van Dijk argued that the media not only reflect, but also construct social contradictions through ideologically charged linguistic structures, especially in the context of racism, xenophobia and political divisions [1]. Building on this foundation, Ruth Wodak and Martin Reisigl developed a discursive-historical approach that emphasizes institutional and national frameworks in representing conflict [2].

Frame analysis, originally proposed by Erving Goffman [3] and later expanded by Robert Entman [4], considers media texts as the result of perspective-based selection — highlighting certain facts, emphasizing threats, and constructing enemy/victim frames that shape audience perception. Especially significant is the contribution of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who demonstrated the cognitive power of metaphor in structuring political and social reality [5]. Their conception of metaphor as a mode of thought is directly

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applicable to the study of conflictogemes, given the prevalence of metaphorical constructions as markers of hostility and ideological division.

The "spiral of silence" theory proposed by Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann [6] further explains how dominant media narratives suppress alternative viewpoints, reinforcing perceptions of the "silent majority" and contributing to the institutionalization of conflict. A valuable methodological tool for cross-cultural comparison is Gert Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions [7], which helps to identify differences in conflict tolerance, individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance in different cultural contexts.

Within Russian-language scholarship, A.P. Chudinov [8] has extensively explored metaphorical models of conflict in political discourse, identifying stable figurative constructions that shape perceptions of confrontation (e.g., "the enemy at the gates", "information war", "the fifth column"). Similarly, S.G. Kara-Murza [9] has examined the manipulative role of media campaigns in shaping public consciousness through the repeated activation of conflict-inducing metaphors and ideological clichés.

In Kazakh humanitarian studies, E.D. Suleimenova [10] and Zh. Smagulova [11] emphasize the role of language policy in the formation of ethnopolitical discourse, in which conflictogemes are used not only as instruments of identity protection, but also as instruments of mobilization. Studies by B. Dave [12] and S.K. Zharkynbekova [13] show that the Kazakh-language media actively create an image of an "external threat", especially during periods of internal political crisis.

Modern studies of conflict media discourse are actively developing within the framework of media linguistics. J.E. Richardson [14] identifies rhetorical strategies in print journalism, where oppositional representations are formed using dichotomies and implicative constructions. K. O'Halloran and P. Ledin [15] emphasize the multimodality of conflict discourse, arguing that visual and textual components jointly enhance conflict messages. D. Machin and A. Mayr [16] developed the concept of critical visual discursive analysis, which explores the hidden ideological structures embedded in the news presentation.

A significant contribution to the study of conflict vocabulary can be found in the work of J. Charteris-Black [17], who systematically explores the metaphors of threat, power and authority as tools of persuasion in political discourse. His concept allows us to classify conflict factors according to the types of metaphors and their cognitive significance. Equally important is the work of J. Blommaert [18], who explores unequal access to symbolic resources in the media environment and demonstrates how structural linguistic elements reinforce dominant ideologies by suppressing alternative discourses.

In the Kazakh context, B. Sagyndykov [19] analyzes conflictogemes in the Kazakh-language media during episodes of social unrest, noting the appearance of symbolic mobilization and conservative calls for collective identity even in official narratives. A.K. Seitova [20] offers a detailed study of the stylistic and pragmatic features of destructive texts rhetoric in the post-Soviet media.

Despite the vastness of the existing literature, there remains a gap in the comparative cultural and linguistic analysis of conflict situations in various language groups. In particular, a small number of studies have systematically studied the frequency, stylistic representation and audience perception of these units in English-speaking, Russian-speaking and Kazakh-speaking media within a single methodological framework that combines both quantitative and qualitative aspects.

The relevance of this study lies in the need for a systematic, comparative approach to the analysis of conflicting linguistic units operating in a multilingual media environment. Of particular value is the identification of both universal and culturally specific models of conflict representation, as well as the pragmatic functions of conflict systems aimed at mobilization, intimidation or consolidation.

The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of conflictogemes in English-speaking, Russian-speaking and Kazakh-speaking media texts through quantitative, qualitative and pragmatic analysis, as well as to identify cross-cultural differences in the strategies used.

To achieve this goal, the following tasks have been set:

1. Create a representative corpus of media texts in three languages (2020–2024);

2. Identify and classify conflictogemes by semantic field, stylistic implementation, and pragmatic function;

3. Compare the frequency and typology of conflictogemes in different language groups;

4. Analyze the audience's reaction to conflicting vocabulary in media texts.

The hypothesis of the study is that the variability of the frequency, form, and functions of conflict situations is determined not only by universal strategies of verbal aggression, but also by cultural codes, political context, and editorial standards specific to each language environment.

This article is structured as follows: the section "Materials and methods" outlines the content and methodology of the study; the section "Results and discussion" presents quantitative data and interpretative analysis; in conclusion, key results are summarized and directions for further research are outlined.

Materials and methods

The methodological basis of this research is based on an integrated approach to the analysis of media discourse, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods aimed at identifying the semantic, pragmatic and functional characteristics of conflictogemes in a multilingual information environment. The research uses tools from corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis (CDA), content analysis, and contrasting cultural and linguistic methodology. This interdisciplinary approach makes it possible to interpret conflict-oriented media discourse not only from the point of view of textual structure, but also from the point of view of ideological and cultural labeling of linguistic units.

Case design

The empirical basis of the research is a specially created corpus of media texts published between 2020 and 2024, covering sources in English, Russian and Kazakh. The final corpus includes a total of 300 texts, 100 texts from each language group. The selection process was based on the following criteria:

• Linguistic criterion: balanced representation of three languages (English, Russian, Kazakh);

• Geographical criterion: inclusion of both international and national sources;

• Thematic criterion: focus on publications that reflect signs of conflictogemes, polarization, confrontation, threats to national security, or ethnopolitical instability.

The corpus includes a wide range of genres such as news articles, analytical reports, feature stories, opinion columns, and interviews. The English-language segment consists of texts from BBC News, CNN, The New York Times, Reuters, Al Jazeera, The Guardian, The Diplomat, Eurasianet, Times of Central Asia and The Astana Times. The Russian-language segment includes materials from RBC, RIA Novosti, TASS, Kommersant, Lenta.ru, Medusa, Vedomosti, Forbes Russia, as well as Informburo and Tengrinews. The Kazakh-language segment includes texts published in Egemen Kazakhstan, Aikyn, Kazym, Qazaq uni, Zhas Alash, BAQ.kz and Turkestan.

All texts have been digitized and integrated into a single database. The corpus has passed the pre-filtering stage to eliminate duplicates and exclude publications that do not meet the thematic criteria of the study. The final data set provided representativeness, genre diversity, and balance, which allowed for a reliable comparative analysis of conflictogemes in three linguistic and cultural contexts.

The identification of conflictogemes was based on the following working definition: a conflictogeme is a lexical or phraseological unit with a negative evaluative connotation capable of initiating, aggravating or legitimizing conflict in public discourse. The identification process was carried out in two stages.

At the first stage, automated analysis was carried out using corpus linguistics tools, in particular the Sketch Engine platform and frequency analysis modules, to extract high-frequency blocks showing conflict potential.

At the second stage, the results were checked manually. The lexical elements were considered in context to eliminate false positive results.

Quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis

The quantitative analysis included:

• Calculation of the total number of conflictogemes in each language segment;

• Calculation of the average density of conflictogemes per text;

• Distribution by year (2020–2024);

• Identification of cross-lingual differences in frequency and usage.

The qualitative analysis was based on the principles of content analysis and discourse analysis and included:

• Interpretation of conflictogemes in their socio-cultural contexts;

Identification of stylistic devices (e.g. hyperbole, metaphor, euphemism, binary oppositions);

• Classification of pragmatic functions (e.g., polarization, demonization, mobilization, intimidation, consolidation);

• Analysis of interaction with cultural codes (for example, traditional symbols, motifs of unity, national archetypes).

In addition, an analysis of audience perception was conducted based on the study of readers' comments posted in media publications. This included an expert assessment of the emotional tone with response levels

ranging from neutral to hostile. The data obtained allowed us to establish a correlation between specific types of conflictogemes and the emotional reactions they caused, helping to identify direct or indirect links between linguistic choice and levels of discursive polarization.

This comprehensive methodology provided both the empirical rigor and the depth of interpretation necessary to conduct a culturally detailed analysis of conflictogemes in English-speaking, Russian-speaking and Kazakh-speaking media environments.

Results and discussion

1. Rationale and structure of the results presentation

The analysis of media discourse through intercultural and cognitive-linguistic lenses requires a systematic, multi-level examination of language units that carry conflict-generating potential. In accordance with the objectives of the study and the characteristics of the compiled corpus, data processing followed a sequential structure, transitioning from quantitative measurements to qualitative interpretation. This approach ensured both statistical reliability and in-depth insight into the semantic, stylistic, and pragmatic patterns of conflictogeme usage across different linguistic environments.

The rationale for a two-tiered analytical approach draws on an interdisciplinary model that combines corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis (CDA), pragmalinguistics, and contrastive cultural-linguistic analysis. The quantitative level allows for the measurement of frequency and density of conflict-related units, tracking their dynamics during a period of political and social turbulence (2020–2024), and identifying lexical saturation patterns across Russian-, English-, and Kazakh-language media. This statistical foundation supports the interpretative layer of analysis.

The qualitative component focuses on identifying semantic fields, recurrent themes, and dominant stylistic strategies that shape the pragmatic impact of conflictogemes within each media culture. This level goes beyond frequency data, interpreting media language as a tool of ideological and cultural influence, adapted to the communicative goals of each linguistic segment. To maintain scholarly rigor and internal coherence, the results are presented across the following analytical sections:

– Quantitative Analysis of Conflictogemes — includes absolute and relative frequencies, interlingual comparisons, and temporal distribution patterns, allowing for the identification of general trends, peak periods of lexical aggression, and discourse-specific saturation levels.

– Typological and Semantic Analysis — classifies conflictogemes by thematic domains (e.g., threat, opposition, destabilization, security), revealing the rhetorical focus of each linguistic media group.

– Stylistic and Pragmatic Analysis — investigates rhetorical intensification strategies (e.g., hyperbole, metaphor, euphemism), discursive constructions of ideological opposition, and pragmatic functions (e.g., demonization, mobilization, polarization).

– Comparative Cultural-Linguistic Analysis — relates the use of conflictogemes to cultural codes, communicative norms, and editorial policies, identifying both universal and culturally specific features.

– Audience Perception Assessment — analyzes reader reactions in the comment sections of media texts, tracing correlations between linguistic choices and public emotional responses.

This structure reflects the logic of the empirical material and fulfills the academic requirement for transparency and reproducibility. It ensures interpretive coherence, argumentative consistency, and alignment with the methodological objectives.

2. Quantitative analysis of conflictogemes

Quantitative analysis constitutes the initial stage of interpretation, offering an objective account of lexical aggression levels, their temporal variation, and differences in frequency across linguistic and cultural media contexts. The data presented here are drawn from the annotated corpus compiled according to the previously described selection criteria. The analysis covers the period from 2020 to 2024 and includes 100 texts per language group — English, Russian, and Kazakh.

To enhance interpretive value, results were structured according to semantic types of conflictogemes that reflect dominant conceptual clusters in the discourse: threat/attack, enemy figure, chaos/instability, state security, and internal opposition. This classification enables both frequency-based measurement and identification of prevalent thematic vectors in conflict-producing rhetorical strategies across different media cultures (Table 1).

Total Frequency of Conflictogemes by Semantic Type in English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-Language Media Texts (2020–2024)

Type of Conflictogeme	English-language Media	Russian-language Media	Kazakh-language Media
Threat / Attack	390	460	270
Enemy Figure	310	420	295
Instability / Chaos	280	380	235
State Security	250	285	250
Opposition / Internal Enemy	250	280	200

The largest number of units was recorded in the Russian-language media, especially in the categories of "threat" (460 units) and "enemy image" (420 units), which indicates the predominance of confrontational and hostile rhetoric. English-language media show moderate performance, especially in the categories of "threat" (390) and "enemy image" (310), reflecting the specifics of the global geopolitical narrative. In the Kazakh-speaking segment, there is a relative predominance of topics related to security (250) and the internal opposition (200), which correlates with the nationally oriented agenda and domestic political challenges of recent years (Table 2).

Average density of conflictogemes topics per text (by semantic types)

Type of Conflictogeme	English-language Media	Russian-language Media	Kazakh-language Media
Threat / Attack	3.90	4.60	2.70
Enemy Figure	3.10	4.20	2.95
Instability / Chaos	2.80	3.80	2.35
State Security	2.50	2.85	2.50
Opposition / Internal Enemy	2.50	2.80	2.00

To visualize the overall dynamics of changes, a linear graph was used to illustrate the annual fluctuations in the total number of conflict situations. The absolute peak in all language groups fell on 2022, which is directly related to the growth of international tensions, mass protests in Kazakhstan and the beginning of a full-scale armed conflict in Eastern Europe. Particularly noteworthy is the sharp increase in conflict-related vocabulary in Russian-language sources, reaching 480 units, which indicates an increase in ideologized discourse. The English-speaking segment also reached its highest level in 2022 (395 units), while Kazakh-language media showed the most significant year-on-year growth in the same period (from 220 in 2021 to 355 in 2022), which is likely due to domestic political events in January 2022 (Qantar) (Fig. 1).
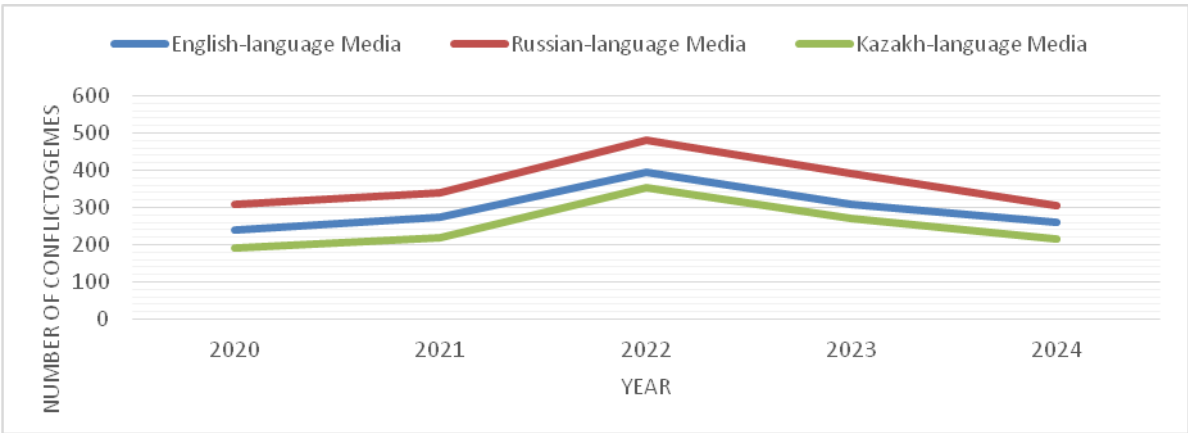

Figure 1. Dynamics of Conflictogeme Usage in English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-Language Media (2020–2024)

In the post-crisis period of 2023-2024, all three media environments demonstrate a moderate decline in the intensity of conflict-related vocabulary. This trend may reflect editorial efforts to stabilize the informational landscape, as well as shifting priorities in media policy and agenda setting.

The quantitative analysis thus reveals clearly defined differences between the three linguistic media cultures. Russian-language sources are characterized by a higher density of conflict-laden content. English-language media exhibit a moderate level of stylistic aggression, largely shaped by global political discourse. Kazakh-language texts, by contrast, display a relatively lower concentration of conflictogemes, suggesting a tendency toward informational restraint and ideological moderation.

These findings establish a robust foundation for the subsequent stages of qualitative analysis, which examine the semantic domains, stylistic strategies, and cultural-pragmatic functions of conflictogemes across the three language systems.

3. Typological and semantic analysis of conflictogemes

This stage of the analysis focuses on classifying conflictogemes according to semantic criteria and identifying the dominant conceptual frames around which conflict discourse is structured in English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-language media. This approach enables an interpretation not only of frequency patterns, but also of the thematic orientation of conflict rhetoric — what fears, values, ideas, and images are activated within each linguistic context, and how they shape public perceptions of ongoing events.

Within the present study, conflictogemes were grouped into five core semantic domains, each reflecting a dominant meaning frame within the media discourse:

– Threat / Attack — representing the perception of external pressure, aggression, or invasion;
– Enemy / Opposition — encompassing lexical units that label the "other" or political adversaries;
– Chaos / Instability — referring to the breakdown of order, crisis, and unpredictability;
– Security and Sovereignty — associated with defense, protection, and national control;
– Provocation / Incitement — involving actions that initiate conflict, protest, or destabilization (Table 3).

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Semantic Classification of Conflictogemes by Language Group (Most Frequent Examples)

Semantic Domain	English-language Media	Russian-language Media	Kazakh-language Media
Threat / Attack	invasion, assault, nuclear threat, aggression	нападение, агрессия, военное вмешательство, натиск	шабуыл, қауіп, зорлық, соғыс қаупі
Enemy / Opposition	enemy, rebel forces, rogue regime, terrorist group	враг, радикалы, иноагенты, пятая колонна	жау, оппозиция, теріс күштер, қарсы тарап
Chaos / Instability	unrest, collapse, disruption, turmoil	беспорядки, кризис, хаос, уличное насилие	бүлік, тәртіпсіздік, тұрақсыздық, толқу
Security / Sovereignty	national security, sovereignty, defense, control	безопасность, суверенитет, охрана границ, контроль	ұлттық қауіпсіздік, егемендік, шекара күзеті, бақылау
Provocation / Incitement	provocation, incitement, agitation, manipulation	провокация, подстрекательство, манипуляция, давление	арандату, итермелеу, ық

The analysis of the table allows us to make several key observations. In English-language media, semantics related to external geopolitical threats prevail, while lexical units such as invasion, nuclear threat, and terrorist group presuppose a global interpretation of events and the projection of conflict to the outside. On the contrary, Russian-language discourse is characterized by a focus on internal ideological conflict, which is reflected in the frequent use of terms such as fifth column ("foreign agents") and radicals ("radicals"). Here, the conflict is seen as the result of internal subversion and threats from within.

Kazakh-language media, on the other hand, focus on stability and national security. Opposition is more often expressed in euphemistic or neutral terms, such as arsi tarap ("the opposite side") and teris kter ("negative forces"), rather than openly hostile formulations. This trend may reflect both the influence of political censorship and the rhetorical tradition of moderation in Kazakh-language journalism. The prevalence of terms such as egendik ("sovereignty"), ulttykhauipsizdik ("national security") and bakhylau ("control") indicates that the discourses of protection dominate the narrative of the Kazakh media.

The theme of chaos and instability is present in all three language environments, but formulated in different ways. In English-language texts, this is often metaphorically conveyed through references to natural disasters (collapse, riots), while in Russian and Kazakh media it is usually associated with street violence and mass protests, often based on local contexts — in particular, on the events of Qantar 2022 in Kazakhstan.

Thus, the typological analysis shows that lexical choices are directly shaped by editorial policies, cultural codes, and the prevailing political environment. While English-language media tend to emphasize the concept of global threat, Russian media construct the narrative of the "enemy within", and Kazakh media foreground defense and control. These differences are not only linguistic in nature, but also ideological: through conflictogemes, media reinforce value-laden oppositions such as order/chaos, us/them, and threat/security, which reflect both societal worldviews and strategies of discursive influence.

4. Stylistic and pragmatic analysis of conflictogemes

The stylistic and pragmatic dimensions of media discourse play a pivotal role in shaping the perception of conflict and in transmitting ideologically charged meanings. Conflictogemes do not function in isolation; their impact is amplified when embedded within broader rhetorical structures where expressive means serve not only descriptive but persuasive functions. Based on the collected corpus, several dominant stylistic markers were identified as consistently accompanying conflict-related lexicon. These include hyperbole, metaphor, euphemism, binary oppositions, and the repetitive use of frame-based constructions. The intensity and combination of these devices vary across English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-language media contexts.

The analysis revealed that English-language media frequently employ hyperbole (a devastating threat, unprecedented danger) and cognitive metaphors (a ticking time bomb, a storm of violence) that construct images of uncontrollable threats. Russian-language sources tend to emphasize demonization through expressions such as вирус антироссийской истерии ("virus of anti-Russian hysteria") or взрывоопасная обстановка ("explosive situation"), and also make use of euphemisms (превентивная мера — "preventive measure", устранение угрозы — "neutralization of threat") that obscure the repressive nature of certain actions.

Kazakh-language texts demonstrate lower levels of explicit aggression but nonetheless deploy conventional rhetorical patterns, including euphemisms (алдын алу әрекеті — "preventive action", реттеу тетігі — "regulatory mechanism"), national symbolism (ұлттық құндылықтарды қорғау — "protection of national values"), and binary oppositions such as біз — олар ("us vs. them"). These elements point to a ritualized pragmatic model that is culturally embedded (Table 4).

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Stylistic Markers of Conflictogemes in Media Discourse (by Language Group)

Stylistic Device	English-language Media	Russian-language Media	Kazakh-language Media
Hyperbole	a devastating threat, unprecedented danger	тотальное разрушение, неизбежная катастрофа	орасан зор қауіп (enormous threat), қайтымсыз жағдай (irreversible crisis)
Metaphor	a ticking time bomb, storm of violence	вирус протеста (virus of protest), взрывоопасная обстановка (explosive situation)	қоғамдық жарылыс (public explosion), қатерлі дауыл (dangerous storm)
Euphemism	strategic elimination, controlled response	превентивная мера (preventive measure), нейтрализация источника угрозы (neutralization of threat source)	алдын алу әрекеті (preventive action), реттеу тетігі (regulatory mechanism)
"Us vs. Them" Oppositions	us vs them, defenders vs attackers	патриоты против предателей (patriots vs traitors), враг народа (enemy of the people)	біз — олар (us — them), отаншыл — арандатушы күштер (patriots — provocative forces)
Framing Ritualization	threat to democracy, defend our values	угроза государству (threat to the state), сила сплочённого народа (strength of the united people)	ел бірлігі (national unity), ұлттық қауіпсіздік (national security), қазақ рухы (Kazakh spirit)

The comparative analysis reveals that stylistic choices in media discourse serve distinct pragmatic functions and reflect broader communicative strategies. First, polarization involves dividing social reality into "us" and "them", with each side assigned a fixed set of moral and ideological attributes. Second, demonization portrays the enemy not merely as an opponent, but as an existential threat, often described in apocalyptic terms (e.g., virus of protest, terrorist cell, арандатушы күштер — "provocative forces"). Third, mobilization entails calls to action, encouraging collective organization and defense of cultural or political boundaries — typically articulated through ritualistic phrases such as defend the country or resist the threat to Kazakh spirit.

Fourth, fear activation functions as a mechanism for managing public attention and legitimizing restrictive measures (e.g., inevitable catastrophe, uncontrolled destabilization). Finally, consolidation refers to lin-

guistic strategies aimed at constructing an image of unity, cohesion, and national resilience (ел бірлігі — "national unity", the people as one).

These communicative functions are closely aligned with the cultural codes and information strategies specific to each media environment. In English-language discourse, the emphasis falls on defending ideological values and universalist principles such as democracy. Russian-language media, in contrast, foreground rhetoric of defense, aggression, and mobilizing pressure. Kazakh-language sources tend to emphasize order, national identity, and the prevention of chaos.

Thus, the stylistic and pragmatic analysis demonstrates that conflictogemes function as ideological markers that shape emotional perception, audience response, and social behavior. Through language, the media convey not only images but also normative frameworks that delineate the boundaries between what is considered legitimate and illegitimate, safe and threatening, acceptable and forbidden.

The findings further indicate that the pragmatic effectiveness of conflictogemes is not solely determined by lexical choices or stylistic techniques, but also by the overarching communicative strategy prevailing within each linguistic media context. To illustrate these differences, a comparative schematic was developed to reflect the intensity of five key pragmatic functions — polarization, demonization, mobilization, fear activation, and consolidation — across English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-language media. The schematic is based on corpus generalizations and quantifies the relative salience of each function within the analyzed material (Fig. 2).
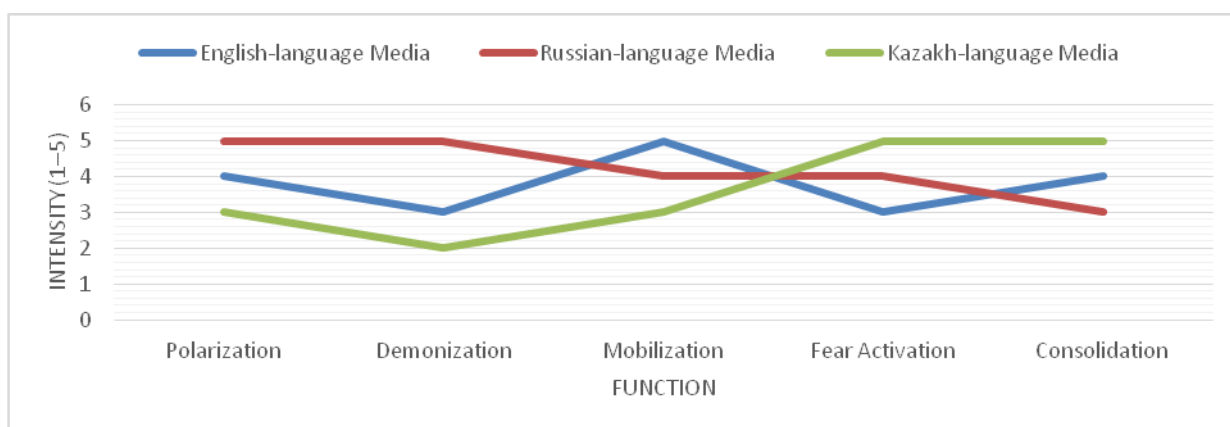

Figure 2. Intensity of pragmatic functions of conflictogemes in English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-Language media discourse (evaluated on a 1–5 scale based on corpus analysis)

The values presented in the figure confirm the previously observed stylistic and pragmatic distribution patterns. In Russian-language media, demonization and polarization emerge as the most active strategies. These functions work in tandem with metaphorical and hyperbolic stylistic devices that legitimize mobilization-oriented and repressive discourse. In the English-language segment, the emphasis falls on mobilization and value-based consolidation, while demonization functions are realized to a moderate extent — typically within the framework of diplomatic confrontation.

Kazakh-language texts, by contrast, are characterized by the predominance of fear activation and consolidation. This reflects a stabilizing narrative and a tendency toward political restraint in domestic media rhetoric. The visualized schema thus not only corroborates the findings from earlier tables and stylistic analysis, but also outlines the pragmatic profile of each media discourse, highlighting the balance between explicit and implicit forms of linguistic influence.

5. Comparative cultural-linguistic analysis of conflictogemes

The comparative analysis of conflictogemes in the media discourse of three linguistic and cultural groups — English, Russian, and Kazakh — reveals not only lexical and pragmatic distinctions, but also deeper foundations rooted in cultural codes, communicative strategies, and value orientations. This level of analysis is grounded in an interdisciplinary framework that incorporates Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions, Teun van Dijk's principles of critical discourse analysis, and George Lakoff's theory of conceptual metaphor.

Together, these approaches enable the interpretation of differences in conflict discourse not merely as linguistic variation, but as reflections of the sociopolitical and ideological orders within each media environment. The way conflict is framed — whether through threat metaphors, polarization, or appeals to national unity — serves as an indicator of culturally specific patterns of public persuasion and editorial control (Table 5).

Comparative Overview of Conflict Discourse Across Linguistic and Cultural Parameters

Analytical Parameter	English-Language Media	Russian-Language Media	Kazakh-Language Media
Frequency of Conflictogemes	Moderately high (focus on external threats)	Very high (external + internal opposition)	Low (emphasis on stability)
Dominant Style	Rational-dramatized, hyperbolic	Emotional-polemical, aggressively ritualized	Restrained, euphemistic, consensus-oriented
Key Pragmatic Functions	Mobilization, value defense	Polarization, demonization, mobilization	Consolidation, fear activation, normative legitimization
Typical "Enemy" Figure	External (terrorist, aggressor, dictator)	Internal (traitor, "foreign agent", "fifth column")	Implicit, softened (forces of social instability — қоғамдағы тұрақсыздықтың күші)
Cultural Codes	Individualism, freedom, universal rights	Collectivism, ideology, internal threat	National unity, order, sovereignty

The analysis shows that English-language media, especially those operating according to the Western model (BBC, NYT, The Guardian), tend to rely on rhetoric based on universalist values such as the protection of democracy, human rights and allied cooperation. The prevailing conflict frame is focused on external factors, with opponents portrayed as deviations from global norms (for example, rogue states, terrorist threats). Hyperbole and emotionally charged metaphors are used to mobilize public opinion in defense of shared values. This model corresponds to a cultural profile characterized by a low distance from power and a high level of individualism (Hofstede), which emphasizes personal position and responsibility to society.

Russian-language sources (for example, RIA Novosti, TASS, RT) focus on internal conflict, in which the enemy is often portrayed as "one of us who turned his back on us". Conflictogens are used here to designate the opposition, protest movements, and pro-Western orientations as destructive forces. The rhetorical model is ideologically saturated, built on binary oppositions (we are against them), ritualized formulas (enemy of the people, threat to the state) and mobilizing narratives (strength in unity, time to unite). This strategy reflects a power-distancing collectivist culture with strong vertical power structures. From Van Dyck's point of view, it is a discourse of domination, where language serves the ideological interests of the hegemon.

Kazakh-language media (Egemen Qazaqstan, Aiqyn, BAQ.kz). They adhere to the rhetoric of careful distancing from open confrontation. Conflict topics are often reinterpreted from the point of view of security, stability and national integrity, reflecting the need to consolidate society after the events in Kvantara and amid ongoing tensions in the region. Euphemisms and ambiguous expressions hide the rigidity of positions, creating a discourse of symbolic control. This reflects a cultural code of respect for State institutions, a preference for unity and harmony, as well as a high level of uncertainty avoidance when assessing conflicts. The predominance of indirect descriptions of conflicts and the absence of explicit demonization indicate a strategy aimed at maintaining an image of controlled stability and institutional trust. These characteristics correspond to the culture of high-context communication described in the works of Edward Hall and Mildred Gudikunst.

The comparative analysis confirms the hypothesis outlined in the introduction: conflictogens are not universal in form or meaning, but are embedded in culturally specific language models. This language choice reflects dominant sociocultural norms, media strategies, and political priorities. While English-language media tend to portray conflict within the framework of globalized binary concepts of good and evil, Russian-language media are formed as a result of internal ideological struggle, and Kazakh-language media promote the idea of national unity and prevailing stability.

Thus, the linguocultural specificity of conflictogemes reflects deep-seated mechanisms of conflict representation and serves as a discursive tool for socialization, control, and the construction of collective identity within the media space.

Additionally, reader responses to selected texts from the corpus were analyzed to assess the emotional reception of conflict-related language. Comments posted under publications in English-, Russian-, and Kazakh-language media reveal distinct emotional patterns. In the English-language segment, responses more frequently express solidarity and support; in Russian-language contexts, aggression and polarization dominate; and in Kazakh-language media, anxiety prevails, accompanied by expressions of support for stabilization-oriented narratives. These differences correlate with the identified pragmatic strategies and reinforce the conclusion that audience emotions are closely shaped by editorial discourse and the broader cultural-linguistic context.

Conclusion

This study provided a comprehensive account of the functioning of conflictogemes in the media discourse of three linguistic environments — English, Russian, and Kazakh — using an interdisciplinary approach that combined critical discursive analysis, component semantics, and pragmatic linguistics. The results obtained demonstrate that conflictogemes function not only as lexical markers of tension, but also as culturally anchored tools for the ideological construction of social reality.

The main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

Firstly, the frequency and intensity of conflict situations vary in different media environments: Russian-language sources demonstrate the greatest intensity and aggressiveness, English-language media demonstrate a moderate level, and Kazakh-language texts contain the least explicit conflict-related vocabulary.

Secondly, the dominant semantic fields differ depending on the language and reflect different concepts of conflict: English-language media focus on external threats and protection of democratic values; Russian-language sources emphasize internal polarization and mobilization rhetoric; Kazakh-language discourse focuses on order, precaution and national unity.

Thirdly, stylistic and pragmatic analysis has shown that the use of conflictogemes is constantly accompanied by hyperbole, metaphors, euphemisms and binary oppositions. These techniques perform important functions: they demonize opponents, mobilize the audience, cause fear, and promote consolidation. The pragmatic functions of conflictogemes were differentiated and compared in different languages, which made it possible to identify the prevailing communication strategies in each media culture.

Fourth, comparative cultural and linguistic analysis has confirmed that the implementation of conflictogemes is determined by dominant cultural codes. Based on the concepts of Hofstede, van Dyck and Lakoff, the study showed that English-language discourse promotes a universalist narrative, Russian-language discourse is ideologically antagonistic, and Kazakh-language discourse harmonizes and focuses on stabilization. Thus, conflict themes not only reflect the current agenda, but also serve as discursive mechanisms for constructing group identity.

Finally, the inclusion of an analysis of readers' comments provided an insight into the emotional perception of media discourse and confirmed the pragmatic effectiveness of the identified strategies. The Russian-speaking audience showed a high level of aggression and polarization; English-speaking readers, as a rule, expressed support and mobilization; and the Kazakh-speaking audience showed increased anxiety along with constant solidarity with the official narratives.

In conclusion, this study confirmed the hypothesis that conflictogemes is shaped by linguistic and cultural frameworks, and demonstrated the value of integrating quantitative, qualitative, and pragmatic methods in media discourse research. The results obtained can be applied in the development of media communication models, sociolinguistic studies of public consciousness, and in practical areas such as media literacy, linguistic security, and value transfer in multilingual societies.

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А.С. Абу, Р.Ж. Саурбаев

Мәдениетаралық коммуникациядағы конфликтогема қабылдауының динамикасы: ағылшын, орыс және қазақ тілді БАҚ мысалында

Мақалада үш тілдік саланың, яғни: ағылшын, орыс және қазақ тілді бұқаралық ақпарат құралдарының медиа-дискурсындағы қақтығыстың лингвистикалық және мәдени кодталуы зерттелген. Жұмыстың өзектілігі қоғамдық сананың өсіп келе жатқан поляризациясына ықпал ететін жаһандық және жергілікті ақпараттық кеңістіктегі жанжалды риториканың күшеюіне байланысты. Негізгі назар қақтығыстарды тудыруы мүмкін және әлеуметтік маңызды оқиғаларды қоғамдық қабылдауды қалыптастыру үшін семантикалық және прагматикалық әлеуетке ие жанжал — лексикалық бірліктерді сипаттауға бағытталған. Көп тілді және мәдени әр түрлі ортадағы медиатекстерді салыстырмалы талдау қажеттілігі негізделген. Зерттеу әдістемесі сыни дискурсты талдауды, компоненттік талдауды, прагматикалық лингвистиканы және контрасты әдістерді біріктіреді. Эмпирикалық база тақырыптық және аймақтық критерийлер бойынша таңдалған және 2020-2024 жылдар аралығында жарияланған 300 медиамәтіннен тұратын корпустан тұрады (әр тілде 100). Талдау нәтижесінде қақтығыстардың бес негізгі семантикалық саласы анықталды: қауіп, жау, хаос, қауіпсіздік және арандатушылық. Сондай-ақ олардың басым стилистикалық маркерлері (метафора, гипербола, эвфемизм, екілік оппозициялар) және коммуникативті функциялар (поляризация, демонизация, жұмылдыру, қорқынышты белсендіру, шоғырландыру) анықталды. Зерттеу нәтижелері әр медиа мәдениеттің әртүрлі риторикалық стратегияларды қолданатындығын көрсетеді: ағылшын тілді БАҚ әмбебап құндылықтар мен жұмылдыру шеңберлеріне баса назар аударады; орыс тілді дереккөздер ішкі қарсылық пен идеологиялық антагонизмді бірінші орынға қояды; ал қазақ тіліндегі дискурс риторикалық тұрақтандыру мен нормативтік тәртіпке бағытталған. Қақтығыстар тек саяси контекстің индикаторлары ретінде ғана емес, сонымен қатар әлеуметтік-мәдени құндылықтар мен редакциялық саясатты көрсететін мәдени кодтау құралдары ретінде де жұмыс істейді. Жанжалды риториканың кросс-лингвистикалық талдауы аудиторияға әсер етудің терең когнитивті және прагматикалық механизмдерін анықтауға мүмкіндік береді деген қорытынды жасаған. Алынған нәтижелер

медиалингвистика, әлеуметтік лингвистика, саяси дискурсты талдау және мәдениетаралық коммуникация үшін қолданбалы маңызға ие.

Кілт сөздер: медиадискурс, конфликтогема, прагматикалық функциялар, мәдени-лингвистикалық талдау, стилистикалық әдістер.

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А.С. Абу, Р.Ж. Саурбаев

Динамика восприятия конфликтогем в межкультурной коммуникации: примеры из англоязычных, русскоязычных и казахскоязычных СМИ

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В статье исследуется лингвистическое и культурное кодирование конфликта в медиадискурсе на материале трёх языковых сфер: англоязычных, русскоязычных и казахскоязычных СМИ. Актуальность работы обусловлена усилением конфликтной риторики как в глобальном, так и в локальном информационном пространстве, что способствует растущей поляризации общественного сознания. Основное внимание уделяется характеристике конфликтогем — лексических единиц, способных провоцировать конфликты и обладающих семантическим и прагматическим потенциалом для формирования общественного восприятия социально значимых событий. Обосновывается необходимость сравнительного анализа медиатекстов в многоязычной и культурно разнообразной среде. Методология исследования объединяет критический дискурс-анализ, компонентный анализ, прагматическую лингвистику и контрастивные методы. Эмпирическая база состоит из корпуса в 300 медиатекстов (по 100 на каждом языке), отобранных по тематическим и региональным критериям и опубликованных в период с 2020 по 2024 год. В результате анализа выделены пять ключевых семантических областей конфликтогем: угроза, враг, хаос, безопасность и провокация. Также определены их доминирующие стилистические маркеры (метафора, гипербола, эвфемизм, бинарные оппозиции) и коммуникативные функции (поляризация, демонизация, мобилизация, активация страха, консолидация). Результаты исследования показывают, что каждая медиакультура использует различные риторические стратегии: англоязычные СМИ делают акцент на универсальных ценностях и мобилизующих фреймах; русскоязычные источники выдвигают на первый план внутреннюю оппозицию и идеологический антагонизм; а казахскоязычный дискурс сосредоточен на риторической стабилизации и нормативном порядке. Конфликтогемы функционируют не только как индикаторы политического контекста, но и как инструменты культурного кодирования, отражающие социокультурные ценности и редакционную политику. Делается вывод о том, что кросс-лингвистический анализ конфликтной риторики позволяет выявить глубинные когнитивные и прагматические механизмы воздействия на аудиторию. Полученные результаты имеют прикладное значение для медиалингвистики, социолингвистики, анализа политического дискурса и межкультурной коммуникации.

Ключевые слова: медиадискурс, конфликтогема, прагматические функции, культурно-лингвистический анализ, стилистические приемы.

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