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## Linguistic representation of the phenomenon of national identity in Kazakhstani mass media

The article explores the verbalization of the phenomenon of national identity in the context of Kazakhstani media discourse as an important channel for transmitting societal values and norms. The study focuses on two popular online news platforms that shape public opinion in Kazakhstan. The methodological framework is based on discourse analysis, which makes it possible to identify linguistic and stylistic features that contribute to the construction of perceptions of national belonging. The paper examines authors' strategies of influencing the reader, the choice of vocabulary, and mechanisms for creating persistent stereotypes that reflect or shape national self-awareness. Special attention is given to the role of the author as an active subject of media discourse and the influence of the socio-political context on the perception of identity. The research findings emphasize the significance of media discourse in the process of forming collective identity and public sentiment in contemporary Kazakhstan.

*Keywords:* national identity, ethnos, nation, media discourse, media text, verbalization.

### Introduction

National identity represents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, deeply interwoven with social, philosophical, psychological, cultural, and ethnic dimensions. The exploration of national identity necessitates a holistic approach, acknowledging its fluid and dynamic nature. A vast body of research dedicated to this subject has enabled the identification and categorization of key approaches to its understanding. A. Yashin defines identity as “a property of the human psyche to express in aggregate the idea of his belonging to various social, national, professional, linguistic, political, religious, racial, and other groups or communities, or to identify himself with a particular person as the embodiment of the properties inherent in these groups or communities” [1]. This definition underscores the inherent interconnectedness between individual self-perception and collective affiliation.

Given that identity involves the self-determination of an individual, its study must encompass all interacting elements. Societal elements exert a considerable influence on identity formation, as individuals internalize experiences, knowledge, and both favorable and unfavorable perspectives originating from their social milieu. The heightened interest in social identity issues witnessed in recent decades is, therefore, a natural consequence of its pervasive influence on individual and collective behavior. This study specifically focuses on the defining characteristics of national identity, a prominent subset of social identity, while acknowledging the intricate interplay between the two.

The importance of examining national identity arises from its inherent susceptibility to change, driven by crucial factors such as political ideologies, economic fluctuations, the rise of multiculturalism, and assimilation processes. Globalization, migration patterns, and technological advancements further contribute to the evolving landscape of national identity. Understanding these dynamic forces is essential for navigating the complexities of modern society and fostering inclusive and cohesive communities. The continuous re-evaluation and adaptation of national identity in response to these influences highlight its enduring relevance in the 21st century.

### Material and research methods

The investigation of national identity in this work is carried out through a discursive practice approach. E. Chepkina asserts that “the identity of the subject arises in discourse and, accordingly, every statement of the subject is an action to establish his own identity” [2]. The authors examine the phenomenon of national

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identity in Kazakhstan through the prism of media discourse, recognizing the fundamental role of mass media in shaping and conveying concepts of national identity in contemporary society. Thanks to its extensive audience reach, media discourse possesses the capacity to influence the formation of national ideology and *national self-consciousness* while serving as a representative material for the analysis of the verbalization of national identity.

The study includes media texts from two of the most recognized Kazakhstani news websites: *tengrinews.kz* and *inform.kz*. Content analysis of the national identity phenomenon, supplemented by linguocultural commentary within the media context, facilitates not only the reinforcement of existing national stereotypes but also their re-evaluation in light of globalization and cultural exchange.

### *Results and Discussion*

National identity encompasses a perception of “the nation as a coherent whole, represented by unique traditions, culture, and language” [3]. It is not an innate characteristic; however, an individual’s nationality directly influences the self-identification process. E. Hobsbaum aptly observes that the former ideal of states comprised a linguistically, culturally, and ethnically homogeneous populace [4]. In the contemporary world due to globalization and political dynamics along with significant migration most countries have become multi-ethnic. And therefore creation of unified national identity among citizens, which serves to consolidate society, is considered an acute problem. There is a burgeoning need for developing an identity that is based not only on ethnic origin and shared historical legacies, but also on a unity of opinions, principles, and moral values.

The self-identification of individuals is an intricate and multifaceted process. Moreover, integration into a society characterized by ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity complicates the already challenging identification process. Being part of the USSR has left an indelible mark on the current demographic landscape of Kazakhstan. In the context of the presence of numerous ethnic groups, the acquisition of independence, and a dynamically developing world, the issue of forming a national identity that can serve as a unifying tool for the multi-million population of Kazakhstani society has become one of the most pressing challenges.

The issue of national identity has been extensively examined by various Kazakhstani scholars, including R.K. Kadyrzhanov [5], I.M. Akylbaeva [6], D. Sharipova [7], M.B. Zhiyenbayev [8], M.Sh. Kabaziev [9], and Zh.E. Kolbachaeva [10]. There are also some works highlighting the importance of mass media in shaping the identity of a nation [11]. Following the attainment of independence, the state was confronted with the imperative of establishing a unified identity for all citizens of Kazakhstan. The Kazakh government has implemented several policies aimed at fostering ethnic harmony. One notable initiative is the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, which works towards strengthening interethnic relations and promoting national unity. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev emphasizes the significance of preserving interethnic harmony within the nation. His principle of “Unity in Diversity” has inspired a corresponding project aimed to showcase the cultural diversity and intercultural synergy present in Kazakhstan.

Despite the vigorous promotion of the “Unity in Diversity” concept, which includes ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity, there is a bit of dispute over national identity within society. On one hand, there is a growing population of Kazakh-speaking people who aspire to revive the heritage of the Turkic world and keep the distinctive national characteristics of the Kazakh people. On the other hand, there is a number of russified Kazakhs who are westernized, support bilingualism, and cultivated more adaptive worldview. This dichotomy regarding national self-identification among the Kazakh-speaking populace compels the authors to address this critical issue pertinent to contemporary Kazakhstan.

This article presents an analysis of selected news articles about events in Kazakhstan and globally, encompassing economic, political, and cultural issues. A prominent indicator of national identity that can easily be seen in the text is the usage of words representing nations and nationalities. Consequently, the lexemes such as «Қазақстан», «Қазақстандықтар», «Қазақстандық», less frequently «Қазақ елі» are used.

The creation of news is a collaborative effort involving the media text author and editors. Being product of multiple contributors, the news message encapsulates a wide range of representations of national identity. A significant aspect of national identity manifestation in news messages is the author’s self-identification with the Kazakh nation, which reflects a sense of belonging. In this context, the focus shifts to the varied linguistic expressions indicative of such involvement, representing a linguistic approach to the examination of national identity. The use of possessive pronouns, in particular, often serves to express the author’s identification with his nation. Compare:

– *Дипломат экотуризмнің Қазақстан үшін маңыздылығына ерекше тоқталды. Кэти Личтің айтуынша, біздің ел-құстарды бақылайтын қауымдастық үшін басты бағыттардың бірі* [inform.kz 13.01.25];

– *2024 жылы еліміз халықаралық аренада бірқатар маңызды іс-шараларға қатысты, бұл елдің жаһандық беделін арттыруға және халықаралық ынтымақтастықты нығайтуға ықпал етті* [inform.kz 04.01.25].

The identity factor may also be examined through the lens of modality, particularly text modality. According to N. Valgina, modality constitutes a crucial component of text formation and perception, as it integrates all text units into a cohesive semantic and structural entirety [12]. E. Anisimova posits that “modality is a category that encompasses a variety of types of qualification of the reported, incorporating both subjective (emotional, positive, negative, etc.) and objective (logical, intellectual, etc.) assessments of the text’s content” [13].

Objectivity in journalism represents an aspirational standard that is exceedingly challenging to attain. Despite the ostensible neutrality of presentation, the author’s perspective on the events described inevitably infiltrates the text, manifesting implicitly through subtle cues that an observant reader must discern. Uncovering this implicit subjectivity necessitates considerable effort and critical analysis. The challenge lies not solely in the intentional manipulation of facts — although this occurs — but in the unconscious influence of the author’s worldview, values, and beliefs throughout the news story creation process.

This subjectivity is evident at all phases of text development, from topic selection to final editing. At the outset, during the fact selection stage, the journalist filters the information. He chooses one incident that is worth audience attention among dozens or even hundreds. This selection, regardless of its apparent obviousness, is inherently subjective.

The subsequent stage, interpretation of events, is particularly vulnerable to subjectivity. The author of the media text employs various verbal techniques, specific words, syntactic constructions, and stylistic devices to shape the reader’s perception of unfolding events.

Ultimately, the manifestation of modality is reflected in the accompanying commentary. An analysis of the presentation style, the frequency of certain word usage, and the application of rhetorical devices enables the revelation of the author’s underlying position. For example:

– *Квадробинг Қазақстанға да келді: тосқауыл қою жолы қандай? Дәл осы жат қылық елімізге де жетіп отыр* [inform.kz 21.12.24].

Informing readers about the appearance of quadrobics in Kazakhstan, the author intentionally depicts this phenomenon in a negative light, as evidenced by the selective vocabulary, including terms such as «тосқауыл» (obstacle) and «жат қылық» (inappropriate behavior). The title of the article, which captivates the reader’s attention, is formulated as an interrogative sentence (Quadrobics have come to Kazakhstan: how can they be prevented?), thereby semantically reflecting the author’s stance regarding quadrobics.

A notable characteristic of media texts is evaluative semantics. The analysis revealed that articles and news reports from Kazakhstani media over the past two years predominantly convey positive information. Compare:

– *Қазақстанның 400-ге жуық дипломаты сирек тілдерді меңгерген* [inform.kz 19.12.24].

Positive information disseminated through the media significantly influences a nation’s image, with national identity serving as a crucial component. An individual’s capacity to identify with their country is enhanced by an appealing image and favorable reputation of the country. Both image and reputation are dynamic constructs; thus, they necessitate continuous management. The media plays a pivotal role in this regard. The publication of positive articles instills a sense of pride among the citizens of Kazakhstan and cultivates favorable associations among international audience. Phenomenon of national identity elucidates the choice to highlight the proficiency of domestic diplomats in foreign languages. Although the role of a diplomat inherently requires knowledge of foreign languages, the author of the media text deemed it essential to underscore the number of Kazakhstani diplomats proficient in rare foreign languages. Take a look at another example:

– *Биыл Мәжіліске үш заң таза қазақ тілінде әзірленіп түскен. Жыл басынан Парламент қарауына түскен заңдардың ішінде үшеуі таза қазақ тілінде әзірленген. Бұл туралы депутат Абзал Құспан Түркістан қаласының ерекше мәртебесі туралы заң жобасын талқылау кезінде айтты* [inform.kz 18.12.24].

The formulation of three bills in the Kazakh language is another example of positive news. Previously, laws and other normative legal acts were written in Russian and then translated into Kazakh, which empha-

sizes the prevailing language dynamics in Kazakhstan, marked by a distinct predominance of Russian over the state language. Such developments, which pertain to linguistic matters, are prevalent within the media discourse of Kazakhstan, as language serves a pivotal role in national differentiation.

Additionally, the realm of positive news encompasses notable events on the global stage and the accomplishments of compatriots, which collectively evoke a sense of national pride. In Kazakh media, articles referencing foreign states and representatives of other nationalities are particularly common. It reflects a desire for acknowledgment by the international community. This endorsement and recognition of “others”, in this context, serves to enhance the collective self-esteem of the nation. For example:

– *Ұшақ апаты: Әзербайжан жұрты қазақ халқына алғыс айтып жатыр. Өкінішке қарай, әуе апатынан мерт болғандар бар, бортта болған барлық Қазақстан азаматы қайтыс болды. Апаттан аман қалған жандарға біздің дәрігерлер мен басқа да құзырлы органдардың мамандары жан-жақты көмек көрсетіп жатыр* [inform.kz 28.12.24].

In the context of the Azerbaijani plane crash near Aktau, the author documents the gratitude expressed by Azerbaijani citizens towards the Kazakh populace. This gratitude emphasizes the provision of healthcare by Kazakh doctors and various support services. Such expressions of appreciation reflect a sense of pride in the proactive stance of the state and its commendable ethical character.

– *Қазақ халқының қиын сәттегі көмегін әрдайым есте сақтаймыз — әзербайжан тілшісі* [inform.kz 25.12.24].

The author included a quotation from an Azerbaijani correspondent in the title, in which he thanks Kazakh people for their assistance during challenging times. This indicates author’s engagement in the event and his civic stance. The existence of an “observer” in the form of the international community may exemplify the emergence of ethnocentrism, manifested in the aspiration to showcase the distinctiveness of one’s culture. Compare:

– *Мажарстанда «Қазақстанның көшпенділері» атты көрмені 12 мың адам тамашалады* [inform.kz 10.12.24].

The announcement regarding the exhibition “Nomads of Kazakhstan” in Hungary highlights the attendance of 12,000 visitors, subtly suggesting a significant interest in nomadic culture among foreign audience. Culture plays a crucial role in the development of national identity. The internalization of culture, its preservation, and its acknowledgment by external entities are integral to the process of national self-identification among individuals.

The achievements of citizens and recognition by the international community, also significantly influence individuals’ positive perceptions of their national identity. The success of notable compatriots instills a sense of pride. This pride constitutes a fundamental element of the emotional component of national identity, which is reflected in the prominence of publications about distinguished representatives of Kazakhstan within the media discourse. Examples include:

– *Қазақстандық актер Нью-Йоркте марапатқа ие болды* [inform.kz 10.01.25];

– *Қазақстандық жас әнші Ержан Максим Дубайда өткен халықаралық беделді SANREMO BEST SONG 2025 байқауының бас жүлдесін жеңіп алды* [inform.kz 10.01.25];

– *Қазақстан Global Firepower (GFP) 2025 рейтингінде 1,1016 ұпай жинап, 58-ші орыннан 57-ші орынға көтерілді. Бұл ретте еліміз әскери қуаты жағынан Орталық Азиядағы ең үздік мемлекет мәртебесін сақтап қалды* [inform.kz 13.01.25].

Another determinant in the formation of national identity is the territorial expanse of the state. The size of the territory, natural resources, and geographical features collectively shape the image of the country for its citizens, while also serving as influential factors in attracting tourists. Pay attention:

– *Қазақстан 2025 жылы Қытайдағы ең перспективалық туристік бағыт деп танылды* [inform.kz 10.01.25].

Acknowledgment of Kazakhstan as the best destination to travel in 2025 by Chinese citizens reflects a positive international public opinion of Kazakhstan in the matter of tourism supply.

A recurring theme in Kazakhstan’s media discourse is the aspiration to engage with cultural phenomena that are likely to captivate the audience. For instance:

– *Жақында 2021 жылы әлемге әйгілі болған танымал «Кальмар ойыны» сериалының көптен күткен екінші маусымы жарық көрді. Сериалда қазақ халқына етене таныс үстел ойындары көрініс тапты. Сериал авторлары көрерменді динамикалық сюжетімен ғана емес, жаңа сынақтарымен де қайта таңғалдырды. Қызығы сол, жаңа маусымдағы кейбір ойындар Орталық Азия көшпенділерінің ұлттық ойындарына қатты ұқсайды* [inform.kz 06.01.25].

In this media text, the author draws an analogy between the games portrayed in the widely acclaimed television series “The Squid Game” and the ancient games of nomadic societies. Such content reflects the author’s intention to highlight the rich spiritual and cultural legacy of the Kazakh people. Recently, Kazakhstan has aimed to distance itself from Russia while advancing closer relations with the Turkic world. This pursuit of Eurasian integration is similarly endorsed by other Turkic nations. Evidence of this is manifested through the organization of the “Nomad Games” and various cultural events that promote Turkic traditions and customs. The inclination to reconnect with one’s roots is grounded in the notion that the preservation of identity is significantly influenced by the recollection of historical narratives. The perception and assessment of oneself and the surrounding world are largely shaped by national history and culture, which are transmitted across generations. Thus, the identity of a community, people, or state is constructed through historical traditions that have evolved over extended periods. Within the media landscape of Kazakhstan, an “external perspective” on the country is especially prevalent. In one of the articles, the author offers readers an overview of significant political developments from the preceding year:

– 2024 жылы еліміз халықаралық алты ұйымға төрағалық етті. Ешқашан еліміз бір жылда мұнша ұйымға төрағалық етпеген. Атап айтқанда, Қазақстан Шанхай ынтымақтастық ұйымы, Ұжымдық қауіпсіздік шарты ұйымы, Азиядағы өзара іс-қимыл және сенім шаралары жөніндегі кеңес, Түркі мемлекеттері ұйымы, Аралды құтқару халықаралық қоры, Азық-түлік қауіпсіздігі жөніндегі Ислам ұйымына төраға болды [inform.kz 19.12.24];

– Биылғы ақпан айында Германияның беделді ғылыми-сараптамалық орталығы — «Ғылым және саясат қоры» «Орта державалар — халықаралық саясаттағы маңызды факторлар» атты көлемді мақалалар жинағын шығарды. Онда Қазақстан алғаш рет орта державалар қатарына енді [inform.kz 19.12.24].

Acknowledgement of Kazakhstan as a middle power strengthens its *position of influence on the international political arena*. It is widely recognized that the enhancement of a nation’s foreign policy potential is essential for the effective identification and representation of its citizens.

The category of positive news often includes news about the most developed areas of Kazakhstan. One of them is digitalization. Kazakhstan is among the most digitally developed countries in the world. This is definitely something people of Kazakhstan can be proud of:

– Қазақстандықтар eGov Mobile қосымшасы арқылы газға қосылуға өтініш бере алады [inform.kz 19.12.24];

– Қазақстан онлайн-қызметтер индексі бойынша 10 көшбасшы елдің қатарына кірді. Бүгінде БҰҰ бағалауы бойынша Қазақстан цифрландыру саласында ілгері жетістіктерді көрсетіп отыр. Біздің еліміз 193 мемлекет арасында 24-ші орында, сондай-ақ онлайн-қызметтер индексі бойынша 10 көшбасшының қатарына кіреді. Қазақстан Тәжікстан, Того, Сьерра-Леоне сияқты елдермен электронды үкімет саласындағы озық шешімдерін бөлісе бастады [inform.kz 11.12.24].

The author emphasizes that Kazakhstan intends to share its experience with other nations, including Tajikistan, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Articles highlighting achievements in digitalization accentuate the importance of digital reforms in Kazakhstan. It is posited that showcasing greatest strengths and masking weaknesses may reflect a national characteristic of the Kazakh people. This is evidenced by culturally infused phrase such as «Жаманын жасырып, жақсысын асырып», which has similar meaning with the idiom “Don’t wash your dirty linen in public”.

An analysis of media texts indicates that negative assessments in the Kazakh mass media, when depicting events or facts, is less prevalent than positive portrayals. For instance:

– Қазақстан көпір мәселесі оқтың-оқтың көтеріледі. Себебі арасында сапасыз салынғаны, жылға жетпей ақау шыққаны бар. Жөндеуді қажет ететіні қанишама [inform.kz 20.12.24];

– «Тәж жемісі»: Қазақстандықтардың көбі ананасты жаңа жыл мерекесінде ғана алады [inform.kz 20.12.24].

It is important to note that in the last example, the negative assessment is subtly veiled. No adverse events or situations are listed; however, the reader may discern an implicit critique of the financial circumstances of Kazakhs, raising the question, “Why can Kazakhs afford pineapples only for New Year?”

The predominance of positive articles in Kazakh media discourse may be attributable to several factors. Primarily, this tendency reflects a characteristic of the Kazakh mentality to slide over one’s faults and showcase one’s dignity. Secondly, Kazakh mass media lack full freedom of expression. In a country where a majority of media outlets rely on government funding, there’re almost no opportunities for criticizing activities of the government. Consequently, the restriction or absence of this fundamental right profoundly impacts the

construction of national identity in Kazakhstan. Having large audience, mass media functions not only as a channel for transmitting the national idea but also as an instrument in its formation.

Continuing the discussion on evaluation semantics within the Kazakhstani media landscape, particularly in the Kazakh-language segment, attention is drawn to the optimistic perspective of the author in a media text:

– *Шетелде білім алып жүрген студенттердің саны бойынша әлемдегі ең үздік 15 елдің арасында Қытай (1 млн-нан астам студент) көш бастаса, Қазақстан тізімнің соңында (78 мыңнан астам студент) тұр. Дегенмен, ел тұрғындарының шетелде оқитын студенттерге қатынасын есептейтін болсақ, әлемдегі топ-3 елдің қатарына Сирия, Өзбекстан және Қазақстан кіреді. Қазақстанның әрбір 250-ші тұрғыны шетелде білім алып жатыр. ЖІӨ деңгейін талдау көрсеткендей, Сирия, Непал, Өзбекстан және Қазақстанның экономикалық көрсеткіштері төмен болғанына қарамастан, бұл елдер өз жастарын шетелге озық білім алуға жіберуге тырысып келеді [inform.kz 10.01.25].*

According to the journalist, China occupies the foremost position in the global ranking of countries with the highest number of students studying abroad, whereas Kazakhstan ranks last. This text fragment is characterized by ambivalence; on one hand, there is a distinctly negative assessment, while on the other hand, the author endeavors to alter the narrative. The author highlights that in relation to the population of Kazakhstan, one in every 250 Kazakhs studies at a foreign university, which constitutes a considerable statistic. Furthermore, it is indicated that, despite low economic indicators, nations such as Uzbekistan, Nepal, Syria, and Kazakhstan are striving to send their youth to developed countries for educational opportunities. The media text conveys the author's optimistic perspective on the situation. The trait of optimism, perceived as a national characteristic of the Kazakh people, has been evident throughout the historical development of society. Presently, the significance of public optimism has begun to be articulated by members of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APK) at various forums. It is apparent that the concept of fostering a unified national identity in a multinational and sovereign Kazakhstan is bolstered by the citizens' belief in a prosperous future.

Sports hold a prominent position within the information landscape of Kazakhstan. Specifically, the athletic accomplishments of the nation's citizens on the global stage frequently serve as a source of national pride, contributing to a positive national image and influencing individual self-perception positively. Kazakhstan's mass media is abundant with articles dedicated to the success of its athletes. Examples include:

– *Фристайл-могулдан Қазақстан құрамасының спортшысы Анастасия Городко Алматыда өтіп жатқан жасөспірімдер арасындағы әлем чемпионатында күміс медаль жеңіп алды [inform.kz 07.01.25];*

– *Қазақстан қысқы Азия ойындары тарихында 200-ге жуық медаль жеңіп алған [inform.kz 09.01.25];*

– *Қазақстан құрамасы семсерлесуден Әлем кубогында жүлдегер атанды [inform.kz 05.01.25];*

– *Қазақстандық ауыр атлет Катарда екі рет рекорд орнатты [inform.kz 24.12.24].*

The role of sports as a subdiscourse in the formation of national identity was studied in the work of P.G. Astashkina regarding the 2016 Olympic Games, demonstrating how the Olympics “served as a catalyst for both the construction of national identity within the media and its representation by commentators” [14].

Another media text discusses the conclusion of a tournament involving the Kazakhstan national team:

– *Қазақстан қатысқан United Cup турнирінің жеңімпазы анықталды. Осы аралас командалық жарысқа екінші рет қатысқан Қазақстан құрамасы жартылай финалға дейін жетті. Онда Польшаға жол берді. Ширек финалда қазақстандықтар өткен жылғы чемпион Германияны ұтты [inform.kz 05.01.25].*

Notably, despite the national team's loss, the author perceives participation itself as a significant achievement, emphasizing that the Kazakhstan team managed to reach the semifinals in only its second appearance. This fact highlights the theme of optimism prevalent in much of the Kazakh media's material.

Within the Kazakh media, the topic of national identity is intrinsically linked to the figure of the country's president, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. For example:

– *Президент: Қазақ тіліндегі медиаға қолдау көрсеткім келді [inform.kz 03.01.25];*

– *Қасым-Жомарт Тоқаев биыл 23 рет шет мемлекетке сапарлады, 19 халықаралық форум мен саммит жұмысына атсалысты. Халықаралық іс-шаралар аясында өзге елдің басшыларымен 27 рет кездесті. Мемлекет басшыларымен 49 мәрте телефон арқылы сөйлесті» [inform.kz 04.01.25].*

The President frequently asserts the necessity of strengthening national identity, elevating the status of the state language, and emphasizing principles of harmony, unity, and peace. It's a known fact that National identity is recognized as a determinant of an individual's affiliation with the nation as a political community. The President, along with the entire political elite, assumes a prominent role within the media landscape of Kazakhstan. Each of his statements expresses not only personal but also collective position of the whole nation.

The analysis indicates that, in recent years, the Kazakh media has endeavored to reinforce national pride within society by enhancing the promotion of social values, traditional family structures, and healthy lifestyle, while also highlighting the nation's historical heritage. The Kazakh language is portrayed as a symbol of national pride, and individuals who significantly contribute to its popularization often become heroes in TV news and newspaper articles. For example:

– *Петропавлдық бойжеткен Аяжан Қойшыбай қазақша фильм, мультфильмдер интернетте қолжетімді болуы үшін шетелдік туындыларды қазақша сөйлетіп жүр* [inform.kz 13.01.25];

– *Сенатор мемлекеттік тапсырыспен жарық көретін фильмнің бәрін қазақша түсіруді ұсынды* [inform.kz 19.12.24].

These text fragments illuminate the intricate language dynamics within Kazakhstan, characterized by its duality. In a multi-ethnic society, language frequently becomes a battleground for political and social conflict. The preeminence of the Russian language over recent decades has relegated the Kazakh language to a peripheral position within the consciousness of the titular ethnic group. The contemporary language policy in Kazakhstan necessitates a reevaluation of this issue. Presently, various initiatives are being undertaken to elevate the status of the Kazakh language. One illustrative example is the holding of a national forum called “The Kazakh Language as the Interethnic Language of the Great Steppe”.

– *Шымкентте «Қазақ тілі — ұлы даланың ұлтаралық тілі» республикалық форумы өтті. Форумның басты мақсаты — қазақ тілінің тек бір ұлттың емес, бүкіл халықтың ортақ қарым-қатынас құралына айналу қажеттігін жүзеге асыру. Қазақ тілін үйренуге, дамытуға және оны қоғамдағы барлық салада кеңінен қолдануға бағыттау, қоғамдағы ролін арттыру, сондай-ақ, көптілділікті насихаттау болды* [tengrinews.kz 07.09.24].

The author emphasizes that the aim of the forum is to elevate the Kazakh language to the status of a medium for interethnic communication, thereby incorporating representatives of diverse ethnic groups into the Kazakh-speaking environment. In light of the prevailing policy, the authorities of Kazakhstan recognize the potential risks of conflicts arising from linguistic, cultural, and other differences, and consequently endeavor to foster unity among the diverse populace of Kazakhstan surrounding a predominant identity. Accordingly, the ethical principles, foundations, and values of traditional Kazakh society are increasingly depicted as common for the entire multinational Kazakhstan.

– *Қазақстандықтар 10 жылдан астам уақыт бойы бірлік пен отбасылық құндылықтардың маңыздылығын білдіретін мерекені атап өтіп келеді. Мерекенің басты мәні — ұлттық дәстүрлі құндылықтарды еске түсіру, бір-бірімізге қамқорлық жасау және отбасында жылулық пен сүйіспеншілікті сақтау маңызы* [tengrinews.kz 08.09.24].

In the aforementioned example, by “traditional national values,” the author means the original Kazakh values.

Statistical data indicate a rising proportion of native Kazakh speakers, signifying an increase in the number of individuals belonging to the titular nation in comparison with other ethnic groups. One contributing factor to this growth is the state policy advocating for the resettlement of ethnic Kazakhs. Interestingly, previous term for repatriated Kazakhs was «оралмандар», which translates as “returnees”. Later, this term was supplanted by the term «қандастар», which can be translated as relatives, fellow tribesmen, or those of consanguineous ties. In 2024, a total of 14,391 Kazakhs repatriated to their historical homeland:

– *2024 жылда 14 391 этникалық қазақ тарихи отанымен табысып, қандас мәртебесін алды* [tengrinews.kz 22.10.24].

The significance of ethnicity is paramount for the Kazakh-speaking population of Kazakhstan. This is evidenced by the proliferation of publications concerning native Kazakhs residing in other countries. For instance, in reporting on an Englishman's visit to Kazakhstan, the author emphasizes in the headline that he has Kazakh roots.

– *Бойында қазақ қаны бар ағылшын Қазақстанға велосипедпен келді. Ұлыбритания тұрғыны Аманжол Николас Мухамеджанов Макинтайр Келлетт Қазақстанға нағашы жұртын іздеп келген.*

*Ұлыбритания азаматы Аманжолдың қарындасы мен інісінің де есімдері қазақша, Жандос, Тоғжан атты бауырлары бар* [inform.kz 10.01.25].

It is further noted that the young man and his siblings have both Kazakh and English names. The fact that this young man, who has Kazakh roots, came to visit Kazakhstan and get acquainted with his relatives conveys implicit encouragement of the author.

The triumph of the Chinese athlete in the cross-country skiing championship is also presented to the Kazakh reader using the lexeme «қандас», thereby emphasizing the athlete's ethnicity.

– «Қандасымыз шаңғы жарысынан Қытай чемпионы атанды» [tengrinews.kz 22.10.24].

Although the athlete competes under the flag of a different nation, the author of the media text expresses a profound sense of pride for the ethnic Kazakh and her achievements. This illustrates that, in certain instances, ethnic identity may take precedence over national identity.

Frequently, Kazakhstani news outlets feature extensive articles on prominent historical figures. One of them is Zhanabil Smagulov, a prominent state and public figure in the People's Republic of China. The article's title indicates that during his time, there were 733 Kazakh schools in Xinjiang. In this manner, the author conveys his sentiments regarding the public figure, demonstrating respect and commending him for his strong bond with his community.

– *Жанәбіл Сымағұлұлы тұсында Шыңжаңда 733 қазақ мектебі болған. Қытайдың белгілі мемлекет және қоғам қайраткері, қазақ халқының қадірлі азаматы Жанәбіл Сымағұлұлы өз заманында Қытай елінде үлкен лауазымды қызметтер атқарған, беделді, танымал тұлға болды. Ғұмырының соңына дейін туған халқымен етене араласып, келелі ой, кесімді сөзімен ұлты үшін ұлағатты істер атқарды* [tengrinews.kz 21.10.24].

The usage of the expressions «қазақ халқының қадірлі азаматы» (honorary citizen of the Kazakh people) and «ұлты үшін» (for the sake of his people) serves to augment the emotional resonance of the text and distinctly articulate the author's stance through the selected lexical units. This illustrates that, for the Kazakh-speaking segment of the population, ethnic identity dominates national identity.

### Conclusion

In contemporary scientific discourse, the phenomenon of national identity is recognized as a subject of interdisciplinary interest, garnering attention from scholars across various fields, including linguistics. However, despite the extensive body of literature addressing this topic, numerous aspects of the self-identification process of individuals remain underexplored. The current globalized context, characterized by unprecedented population mobility and rapid cultural exchange, significantly complicates the landscape of national identity, giving rise to new hybrid identities and challenging traditional models of national consciousness.

Investigating national identity through the lens of media discourse represents a promising avenue of research, facilitating the analysis of not only the presentation of identity but also its formation and reproduction. Mass media serve as a powerful tool reflecting and influencing socio-cultural processes. Analyzing media texts across different linguistic cultures enables the identification of distinctive characteristics of national identity within each context, the assessment of the impact of globalization and mediatization on its transformation, and the exploration of how various media platforms cultivate and convey diverse national identity narratives.

The authors of this study scrutinized approximately fifty media texts to examine the mechanisms of national identity representation. This analysis focused on identifying the linguistic and communicative strategies employed in the discourse. Authors isolated key thematic elements prevalent within the media discourse such as the history of Kazakhstan, national heroes, cultural traditions, relations with neighboring nations, economic challenges, and achievements in sports.

The authors contend that national identity within Kazakhstani media discourse frequently manifests implicitly, through nuanced and subtextual messages that rely on a cultural code comprehensible only to audiences familiar with the Kazakhstani context. The subjectivity, value orientations, and political perspectives of the authors significantly influence the portrayal of national identity. The research indicates that ethnicity remains an important, albeit not exclusive, marker of self-identification. Materials published in the state language (Kazakh) exhibit a more pronounced and representative portrayal of national identity, reflecting specific cultural and historical dimensions.

Modern Kazakhstan is engaged in the construction of its national identity upon a complex and multifaceted historical backdrop, encompassing its Soviet legacy, diverse population, and geopolitical standing. This situation presents both challenges and opportunities for the development of a distinct and sustainable nation-



al identity. It is crucial to underline that national identity is in a state of continual evolution, influenced by both internal and external factors. Further research is warranted to consider the variety of media platforms and to incorporate qualitative analysis of the interactions among different ethnic groups in forging a cohesive Kazakhstani self-awareness. An integrated approach is essential for a comprehensive understanding and elucidation of this significant phenomenon. Specifically, the role of new media, social networks, and bloggers in the shaping and reconfiguration of national identity in contemporary Kazakhstan necessitates thorough investigation.

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## Қазақстандық масс-медиадағы ұлттық бірегейлік феноменінің тілдік репрезентациясы

Мақалада қоғамдық құндылықтар мен нормаларды таратудың маңызды арнасы ретінде қазақстандық медиа дискурс контексіндегі ұлттық бірегейлік феноменін вербализациялау қарастырылған. Зерттеу нысаны Қазақстандағы қоғамдық пікірді қалыптастыратын екі танымал интернет-ресурс. Әдістемелік база ұлттық бірегейлік туралы ойларды құруға ықпал ететін лингвистикалық және стилистикалық

ерекшеліктерді анықтауға мүмкіндік беретін дискурстық талдауға негізделген. Автордың оқырманға әсер ету стратегиялары, сөздік қорын таңдауы және ұлттық өзіндік сананы көрсететін немесе қалыптастыратын тұрақты стереотиптерді құру тетіктері талданған. Автордың медиа дискурстың белсенді субъектісі ретіндегі рөліне және әлеуметтік-саяси контекстің жеке тұлғаны қабылдау әсеріне ерекше назар аударылған. Зерттеу нәтижелері қазіргі Қазақстандағы ұжымдық бірегейлік пен қоғамдық көңіл-күйді қалыптастыру процесінде медиа дискурстың маңыздылығын атап көрсетеді.

*Кілт сөздер:* ұлттық бірегейлік, этнос, ұлт, медиадискурс, медиамәтін, вербализация.

Т.Е. Лянова, Г.И. Исына, А.А. Билялова

## Языковая репрезентация феномена национальной идентичности в казахстанских масс-медиа

В статье рассматривается вербализация феномена национальной идентичности в контексте казахстанского медиадискурса как важного канала трансляции общественных ценностей и норм. Объектом исследования стали два популярных новостных интернет-ресурса, формирующих общественное мнение в Казахстане. Методологическая база опирается на дискурсивный анализ, позволяющий выявить лингвистические и стилистические особенности, способствующие конструированию представлений о национальной принадлежности. Анализируются авторские стратегии воздействия на читателя, выбор лексики и механизмов создания устойчивых стереотипов, отражающих или формирующих национальное самосознание. Особое внимание уделено роли автора как активного субъекта медиадискурса и влиянию социально-политического контекста на восприятие идентичности. Результаты исследования подчеркивают значимость медиадискурса в процессе формирования коллективной идентичности и общественных настроений в современном Казахстане.

*Ключевые слова:* национальная идентичность, этнос, нация, медиадискурс, медиатекст, вербализация.

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