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ORCID: 0000-0002-2511-4800 Email: aiman.suyuberdiyeva@mail.ru**PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF EVALUATIVE STYLISTIC DEVICES
IN MEDIA DISCOURSE**

Abstract. In media communication stylistic devices function not only as expressive or descriptive elements of discourse but also as mechanisms of implicit evaluation and ideological framing. Therefore, this study aims to identify the pragmatic functions of stylistic devices in the verbalization of evaluative meaning in Kazakh- and English-language media discourse. It demonstrates how different stylistic devices shape interpretive frameworks and influence the recipient's perception. The research is based on functional-pragmatic and cognitive-discursive approaches. Its scientific and practical significance lies in expanding the theoretical understanding of evaluative language and identifying the role of stylistic mechanisms in constructing social reality through mass media. The empirical data consist of a comparative corpus of 340 evaluative fragments taken from 100 articles published between 2020 and 2026 on Kazakh and English-language online news platforms. The methodology combines comparative qualitative discourse analysis, contextual-interpretive analysis and discursive frame analysis. The results show that metaphor structures the interpretation of socio-political processes through conceptual transfer and framing, irony creates implicit critical evaluation through the discrepancy between expected meaning and contextual reality and metonymy shifts agency from individual actors to institutional or abstract entities. Epithets establish presuppositional evaluation, whereas hyperbole and simile intensify the perceived significance and emotional salience of represented events. Comparative analysis shows that English-language texts contain relatively more cases of irony, while Kazakh-language texts contain relatively more epithets and hyperboles. Qualitative analysis also reveals recurrent vertical metaphors in the Kazakh-language data. These patterns are interpreted as tendencies within the selected corpus. The study contributes to the development of media linguistics and critical discourse analysis by offering an analytical model that relates the formal realization of stylistic devices to the mechanisms of evaluative construction and their pragmatic functions. The findings can be applied to research on media communication, discourse analysis and ideological framing in contemporary media texts.

Keywords: media discourse; evaluative meaning; implicit evaluation; stylistic device; pragmatic functions.**For citation:** Ybyraiym, A., Yessenbayeva, A., Suyuberdiyeva, A. Pragmatic Functions of Evaluative Stylistic Devices in Media Discourse. *Tiltany*, 2026. No.3 (103). Pp. 143-157.DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55491/2411-6076-2026-3-143-157>**Әзімхан Оразбайұлы Ыбырайым¹, Айжан Ералханқызы Есенбаева^{2*},
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ORCID: 0000-0002-2511-4800 Email: aiman.suyuberdiyeva@mail.ru**МЕДИАДИСКУРСТАҒЫ БАҒАЛАУЫШ СТИЛИСТИКАЛЫҚ ТІЛДІК ҚҰРАЛДАРДЫҢ
ПРАГМАТИКАЛЫҚ ҚЫЗМЕТТЕРІ**

Аңдатпа. Медиакommуникацияда стилистикалық құралдар мәтіннің тек экспрессивті немесе сипаттаушы құралы ретінде ғана емес, сонымен қатар олар мәтіннің бағалаушылық және идеологиялық мағынасын жеткізуші механизмдер ретінде де қолданылады. Осыған орай бұл зерттеу жұмысы қазақ және ағылшын тілдеріндегі медиадискурста бағалау мағынасын вербалдаушы стилистикалық құралдардың прагматикалық функцияларын анықтауға бағытталады. Зерттеу жұмысы түрлі стилистикалық құралдар арқылы шынайылықты интерпретациялау механизмдерін және оны аудиторияның қабылдауына қалай әсер ететінін айқындауды мақсат етеді. Бұл жұмыс функционалды-прагматикалық және когнитивті-дискурсивтік тәсілдерге негізделген. Зерттеудің ғылыми және практикалық маңызы бағалау тілін теориялық тұрғыдан түсініп, БАҚ арқылы әлеуметтік шындықты қалыптастыруда стилистикалық құралдардың рөлін анықтау болып табылады. Зерттеу жұмысының эмпирикалық дерекқорын 2020 – 2026 жылдар аралығында қазақ және ағылшын тілдеріндегі онлайн жаңалық платформаларында жарияланған 100 мақаладан іріктелген 340 бағалау мағынасы бар мысалдардан тұратын корпус құрайды. Зерттеу әдіснамасы салыстырмалы сапалық дискурс анализі, контекстуалды-интерпретациялық анализ және дискурстық фреймдер анализін қамтиды. Зерттеу нәтижелері метафораның әлеуметтік-саяси үдерістердің концептуалдық модельдерін құрылымдайтынын, ал ирония күтілетін мағына мен шындық арасындағы сәйкессіздік негізінде имплицитті сыни бағалауды қалыптастыратынын және метонимия іс-әрекет субъектісін жекелеген субъектілерден институционалдық немесе абстрактілі құрылымдарға ауыстыратынын көрсетеді. Эпитеттер көбіне пресуппозициялық бағалау қызметін атқарса, ал гипербола мен теңеу сипатталған оқиғалардың қабылдану маңыздылығы мен эмоциялық әсерін күшейтеді. Зерттеу корпусын салыстырмалы талдау барысында ағылшын медиа мәтіндерде ирониямен берілген бағалаушы фрагменттерінің көбірек кездесетіні, ал қазақ медиа мәтіндерінде эпитеттер мен гиперболалардың салыстырмалы түрде көбірек қолданылатыны анықталды. Сапалық талдау барысында қазақ тіліндегі мәтіндерде билікті вертикалды кеңістік арқылы бейнелейтін метафоралар да кездесті. Бұл заңдылықтар зерттеу барысында жиналған корпус аясында анықталған тенденциялар ретінде қарастырылады. Зерттеу жұмысы бағалаудың жүзеге асу механизмдері мен олардың прагматикалық қызметін байланыстыратын аналитикалық модель ұсына отырып, медиалингвистика мен сыни дискурс талдауының дамуына үлес қосады. Зерттеу барысында алынған нәтижелер медиакommуникация, дискурстық талдау және сондай-ақ қазіргі медиамәтіндердегі идеологиялық фреймингті зерттеулерде қолданылуы мүмкін.

Тірек сөздер: медиадискурс; бағалаушы мағына; имплицитті бағалау; стилистикалық құрал; прагматикалық қызметтер.

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ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКИЕ ФУНКЦИИ ОЦЕНОЧНЫХ СТИЛИСТИЧЕСКИХ СРЕДСТВ В МЕДИАДИСКУРСЕ

Аннотация. В современной медиакommуникации стилистические средства реализуются не только как элементы передачи эмоционально-выразительных характеристик текста, но и выступают механизмами скрытой оценки и формирования идеологической рамки высказывания. В связи с этим целью данной исследовательской работы является определение прагматических функций стилистических языковых средств в процессе вербализации оценочного значения в казахоязычном и англоязычном медиадискурсе. В основу данной работы положены функционально-прагматический и когнитивно-дискурсивный подходы исследования языка. Исследование направлено на выявление того, каким образом различные стилистические средства языка формируют интерпретационные рамки реальности и влияют на восприятие реципиента. Значимость исследования с научной и практической стороны заключается в расширении теоретического осмысления понятий оценочности и оценочной лексики, а также в демонстрации роли стилистических оценочных механизмов в конструировании реальности посредством массмедиа. Материалом исследования послужили 340 примеров с оценочными значениями, которые были отобраны из 100 казахоязычных и англоязычных статей онлайн-новостных платформ за период с 2020 по 2026 годы. Методологическую основу составляют качественный дискурс-анализ, контекстуально-интерпретационный

анализ и анализ дискурсивных фреймов. Результаты исследования показывают, что метафора в медиатексте структурирует интерпретацию социально-политических процессов посредством концептуального переноса и фрейминга, ирония формирует скрытую критическую оценку вследствие расхождения между ожидаемым значением и контекстуальной реальностью, а метонимия переносит агентность с индивидуальных субъектов на абстрактные или институциональные образования. Эпитеты формируют пресуппозиционную оценку, а гипербола и сравнение усиливают воспринимаемую значимость и эмоциональную выразительность событий. Сопоставительный анализ корпусов показывает, что в англоязычных текстах относительно чаще встречается ирония, тогда как в казахоязычном корпусе чаще всего встречаются эмоционально усиленные эпитеты и гиперболы. Качественный анализ показал также использование вертикальных метафор в казахоязычном материале. Данные закономерности рассматриваются как тенденции, выявленные в рамках отобранного корпуса. Исследование вносит вклад в развитие медиалингвистики и критического дискурса-анализа, предлагая аналитическую модель, которая связывает формальную реализацию стилистических средств с механизмами конструирования оценочного значения и их прагматическими функциями. Полученные результаты данного исследования могут быть использованы в исследованиях медиакommunikации, дискурса-анализа и идеологического фрейминга в современных медиатекстах.

Ключевые слова: медиадискурс; оценочное значение; имплицитная оценка; стилистическое средство; прагматические функции.

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Introduction

Contemporary media discourse plays a central role in shaping public opinion. Media language not only informs the audience but also influences how events in society are interpreted, as mass media actively participate in forming social reality through evaluative meaning and discursive strategies. In the context of an increasingly diverse and competitive media environment, great attention is being paid to implicit mechanisms of evaluation that influence audience perception without explicit authorial judgement.

In linguistics, the category of evaluation is examined within the frameworks of pragmalinguistics, cognitive stylistics and critical discourse analysis. Research on linguistic issues increasingly moves beyond the study of isolated language units and focuses on how they function within discourse and broader processes of social communication (Van Dijk, 2006; Fairclough, 2010; Wodak, 2006). According to a cognitive-discursive approach, metaphorical constructions and evaluative nomination act as discursive regulators, shaping interpretive frames and thereby guiding the audience's interpretation of reality (Lakoff et al., 1990; Charteris-Black, 2004). Despite considerable research on evaluation and evaluative meaning in media discourse, stylistic devices are often studied as elements of expressiveness of the text, whereas the pragmatic functions of stylistic devices in the expression of evaluation within comparative media discourse remain less systematically explored (Bednarek, 2006). Comparative studies of the pragmatic functions of stylistic devices in Kazakh- and English-language media discourse remain limited, which underscores the relevance of further research in this area.

The relevance of our study is determined by the need for a comprehensive study of stylistic mechanisms as means of shaping the semantic framework of media messages and as tools of implicit axiological influence. A comparison of the selected Kazakh- and English-language media texts makes it possible to identify common and context-specific patterns of evaluation, thereby broadening the understanding of the role of language in the construction of social reality.

The main aim of our study is to identify and compare the pragmatic functions of stylistic devices as mechanisms for conveying evaluation and discursive framing in selected Kazakh- and English-language media texts. In order to achieve this aim, the following research objectives were defined:

- to compile a comparative corpus of Kazakh- and English-language media texts and select fragments that verbalize evaluation;
- to identify and classify stylistic devices involved in the verbalization of evaluation;
- to analyze semantic, pragmatic and discursive functions of stylistic devices in media communication;
- to compare how evaluation is realized in selected Kazakh- and English-language media texts;
- to examine context-specific patterns in the functioning of stylistic devices as mechanisms of evaluative framing.

The scientific novelty of this research lies in the development and application of an analytical

model that links the formal realization of evaluative stylistic devices to the mechanisms through which evaluative meaning is constructed and to the pragmatic functions these devices perform in context. The model distinguishes several interrelated mechanisms, including conceptual framing, inferential discrepancy, redistribution of agency, presuppositional categorization, intensity amplification and sensory concretization.

Materials and methods

The empirical basis of our study consists of a comparative corpus of Kazakh- and English-language media texts, including 340 fragments of evaluative expressions identified in 100 articles (50 in Kazakh and 50 in English) published between 2020 and 2026. The corpus was compiled using purposive sampling to ensure thematic comparability across both linguistic contexts. The selection procedure took into account the chronological period, type of media source, genre and communicative orientation of publications. Articles were selected according to three criteria: 1) publication on widely recognized online news platforms with national or international audiences; 2) relevance to socio-political and economic issues characterized by a high density of evaluative expressions; 3) publication within the selected chronological period. The preference was given to texts serving primarily informative or analytical-interpretive communicative goals. The material was organized into socio-political and economic categories to ensure coverage of the main areas of public communication.

The Kazakh-language corpus was created from online publications of *ZhasAlash*, *Tengrinews.kz*, *Ulysmidia.kz*, *Egemen Qazaqstan* while English-language data was gathered from *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, *TIME*. The selection was guided by thematically relevant keywords (*crisis/дағдарыс*, *reform/реформа*, *conflict/қақтығыс*, *war/соғыс*, *development/даму*, *social issues/қоғамдық проблемалар*, etc.), which supported the thematic comparability of two corpora. The genre composition of the corpus was also considered in the comparative design. The English-language corpus included 20 news articles (40%) and 30 opinion and analytical publications (60%), whereas the Kazakh-language corpus included 16 news articles (32%) and 34 (68%) analytical publications. Although the genre composition was not identical, the proportions were relatively close across two corpora. This distribution was taken into account when interpreting differences in the use and pragmatic realization of evaluative stylistic devices.

The methodological framework of the research is based on qualitative comparative discourse analysis grounded in functional-pragmatic and cognitive-discursive approaches. Within this framework, stylistic devices are viewed as discursive tools for shaping the interpretation of events and exerting pragmatic influence on the recipient. Accordingly, the comparative analysis was focused not only on the formal occurrence of stylistic devices but also on their contextual and pragmatic realization within the selected media texts.

To ensure methodological transparency, a coding scheme was developed for the identification and classification of stylistic devices. The corpus was coded manually by the second author according to the following three parameters: a) the type of stylistic device; b) its evaluative function; c) its pragmatic role in shaping discursive meaning. The identification and classification of stylistic devices were based on their communicative and pragmatic functions as well as their linguistic realization. Potentially ambiguous cases were re-examined in their broader discursive context and checked against the established coding criteria to maintain coding consistency.

The analysis was conducted in three stages: 1) identifying examples of stylistic devices conveying evaluative meaning; 2) providing a contextual and interpretive description of these stylistic devices, taking into account the communicative situation and genre-specific features of media discourse; 3) identifying the pragmatic function of stylistic devices, including evaluative categorization, ideological framing, redistribution of agency and emotional intensification.

The study employed contextual-interpretive, comparative-contrastive and discursive frame analysis methods. Although the research is predominantly qualitative, it is complemented by descriptive quantitative analysis to identify recurrent patterns in the distribution of stylistic devices across both corpora. The quantitative analysis was used to identify distributional patterns within the selected corpus rather than to establish statistically significant differences between two corpora. The 340 fragments were treated as analytical units identified within the 100 selected articles, not as a statistically

representative sample of Kazakh- and English-language media discourse as a whole. Illustrative examples were selected according to the principle of analytical relevance. Quotations are presented with the original spelling and punctuation preserved, where necessary, translations were provided by the authors. The differences between two corpora were interpreted with consideration of thematic, genre and editorial characteristics of the selected media sources, while linguistic and cultural factors were considered as possible explanatory dimensions.

Literature review

The expansion of the research scope in contemporary linguistics and the establishment of the anthropocentric paradigm have contributed to the development of axiological linguistics, which focuses on the study of values and the ways they are expressed through language. Its central concept is the category of evaluation, reflecting the speaker's value-based attitude towards objects, events and different phenomena of reality. Evaluation goes beyond the neutral description of facts and involves their interpretation through socially and culturally shaped norms and values. Unlike purely descriptive meaning, evaluative meaning reflects a degree of subjectivity and expresses the speaker's axiological perspective (Volf, 2002). As N.D. Arutyunova (1999) argues, evaluation emerges at the intersection of semantics and pragmatics and reflects the speaker's position, communicative intentions and orientation towards the recipient. Its semantic foundation is connected with its binary and gradable nature, expressed through opposing categories such as “*good/bad*” or “*acceptable/unacceptable*”. E.M. Volf (2002) notes that such oppositional categories appear in language through stable lexico-grammatical and syntactic patterns. At the same time, evaluation is closely connected with the system of cultural and ideological values characteristic of a particular linguistic community (Karasik, 2002). From a cognitive perspective, evaluation forms part of a value-based worldview in which objects and events are interpreted in relation to normative or ideal models.

The cultural dimension of evaluation is particularly relevant to the Kazakh-language material examined in this study. In the intellectual heritage of Abai Qunanbayev, the concept of «*толық адам*» (“*the holistic person*”) denotes an axiological ideal based on the harmony of reason, will and heart. The recent studies relate this concept to cultural norms and ethical guidelines relevant to the interpretation of social reality and the evaluative understanding of the world (Sartayeva, 2021; Syzdykova et al., 2021). «*Толық адам*» represents a person striving for spiritual perfection, knowledge and social responsibility and can be viewed as one element of the axiological worldview represented in Kazakh intellectual tradition. In turn, in the works of Akhmet Baitursynuly, language is conceptualized as a national value and an instrument for preserving the cultural identity of the people (Baitursynuly, 1992). These perspectives provide a cultural and axiological background for interpreting evaluative meanings in Kazakh-language discourse.

The pragmatic aspect of evaluation is closely connected to its orientation toward the recipient and the communicative context in which it is used. As emphasized by V.N. Teliya (1986) and N.D. Arutyunova (1999), evaluative expressions convey the speaker's attitude toward events and perform pragmatic and regulatory functions by shaping their interpretation. Within the pragmatic approach, evaluation is viewed not only as a means of expressing a speaker's position but also as an instrument of persuasion, legitimization and other forms of discursive influence. Similar ideas are developed in the works of V.I. Karasik (2002), Z.K. Temirgazina (2020), A. Ashirova (2017), D. Alkebayeva (2020), where the category of evaluation is analyzed in the context of speech interaction and pragmatically conditioned meaning.

Studies of Kazakhstani newspaper discourse also demonstrate that the linguistic means of media texts perform not only an informative but also an evaluative and pragmatic function. Seidamat (2022) shows that the expressive and evaluative marked headlines attract attention while establishing a specific axiological perspective for interpreting information (Seidamat, 2022). This finding indicates that stylistic devices may contribute to implicit evaluation even before the recipient engages with the main content of a publication.

Evaluative meaning is particularly important in media discourse, because the media not only report events of social reality but also participate in their interpretation through the selection, nomination and framing of information. Media authors express their perspectives through evaluative

linguistic resources that can guide the recipient's interpretation of described events. This conceptual position correlates with M.M. Bakhtin's idea that the author acts as the "sole active form-shaping energy" whose activity is manifested primarily as the "activity of expressed evaluation" (Bakhtin, 1979). From a critical discourse perspective, evaluative strategies may also contribute to ideological framing and the organization of social meanings (Van Dijk, 2006). The pragmatic potential of media texts is manifested through linguistic means characterized by expressiveness, emotiveness and evaluative orientation. In this context, lexical and stylistic mechanisms are particularly relevant to the implicit evaluation. According to A. Absattar et al. (2022), emotive vocabulary contributes to the cognitive processing and interpretation of events and reinforces the evaluative orientation of media messages.

Most previous research has focused largely on the lexical level of evaluation, while stylistic devices have received comparatively less systematic attention from a functional-pragmatic perspective. Such devices can be approached not simply as formal techniques but in terms of the mechanisms through which they construct evaluative meaning in context. Within this framework, cognitive-discursive studies demonstrate that metaphor shapes the perception of events by constructing evaluative linguistic frames and guiding the recipient's interpretation (Lakoff et al., 1990). Irony functions as a pragmatically driven mechanism of implicit evaluation, where meaning emerges from incongruity between expressed and intended content, enabling authors to maintain discursive distance while subtly directing recipients' evaluation (Attardo, 2000). These examples show that stylistic devices may construct evaluative meaning through different interpretive mechanisms.

Despite the considerable body of research on evaluation, media discourse and individual stylistic devices, their pragmatic functions in constructing evaluative meaning have not been systematically related within a single analytical framework. Present studies describe the evaluative potential of particular stylistic devices, but less attention has been paid to how their linguistic realization relates to mechanisms of evaluation and to the pragmatic functions they perform in context. Moreover, comparative research on these functions in Kazakh- and English-language media texts also remains limited. The present study addresses this gap by relating the realization of stylistic devices to the mechanisms through which evaluative meaning is constructed and to their pragmatic functions in the selected media texts.

Results and discussions

Considering stylistic devices from a discursive and pragmatic perspective makes it possible to examine how evaluative meaning is constructed and communicated in the selected media texts. The analysis relates the formal realization of stylistic devices to the mechanisms through which evaluation is constructed and to their pragmatic functions in discourse. To provide empirical support for the qualitative findings, Table 1 presents a descriptive frequency summary of the stylistic devices identified in the corpus.

Table 1 – The frequency distribution of stylistic devices identified in the Kazakh- and English-language corpora

Кесте 1 – Қазақ және ағылшын тілдеріндегі корпустардан анықталған стилистикалық құралдардың жиілік бойынша таралуы

Таблица 1 – Частотное распределение стилистических средств, выявленных в казахско- и англоязычных корпусах

<i>Stylistic device</i>	<i>English-language corpus</i>	<i>Kazakh-language corpus</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Distribution %</i>
Metaphor	48	46	94	27.6
Irony	41	28	69	20.3
Metonymy	18	23	41	12.1
Epithet	33	42	75	22.1
Hyperbole	17	28	45	13.2
Simile	10	6	16	4.7
Total	167	173	340	100

Table 1 demonstrates that metaphor is the most frequently used stylistic device in both corpora (27.6%), followed by the epithet (22.1%) and irony (20.3%). Together, these three stylistic devices account for the largest proportion of evaluative stylistic devices in the analyzed sample. Metonymy accounts for 12.1% of the cases, while hyperbole represents 13.2% and simile 4.7%. The English-language corpus has relatively more instances of irony (41 vs. 28), whereas the Kazakh-language corpus contains more epithets (42 vs. 33) and hyperboles (28 vs. 17). These findings are treated as distributional patterns within the selected corpus rather than as statistically established characteristics of two media discourses. The following qualitative analysis examines how these devices construct evaluative meaning through different pragmatic mechanisms.

The analysis of two corpora shows that, within the selected sample, metaphor functions not merely as a figurative device but as an important tool for shaping the semantic and evaluative framing of social reality. According to the framing theory, metaphoric constructions offer a particular angle through which socio-economic processes are perceived and interpreted within a specific axiological orientation (Entman, 1993). In the analyzed material, this evaluative effect is achieved through a sequence in which metaphorical transfer activates a particular conceptual image, structures the interpretation of the represented situation and thereby performs a specific pragmatic function. For example, consider the following fragment from *The Guardian*: “...as wealth shifts inexorably upwards, basic universal services are outsourced-disability support, early education, aged and health care-shifting shareholders into the role of primary beneficiaries, and the corporatization of not-for-profits has social services providers placing increased market share higher in their priority list than improving the lives of the Australians doing it toughest” (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/dec/24/christmas-peace-a-more-equal-australia-cost-of-living-wealth>). Here, the evaluative meaning is conveyed through a cluster of metaphors that frame economic processes in moral and ideological terms. Thus, the metaphor “wealth shifts inexorably upwards” activates a vertical spatial scheme typically associated with power and privilege, representing inequality as a systematic movement of resources towards those positioned “above”. This spatial conceptualization makes inequality more salient and supports the pragmatic function of ideological framing. Other metaphorical constructions here, such as “shifting shareholders into the role of primary beneficiaries” and “the corporatization of not-for-profits”, reinforce this critical frame by presenting market logic as incompatible with social care. Together, these metaphors guide the reader toward a critical interpretation of the described socio-economic transformations without requiring an explicit evaluative statement.

A similar mechanism of evaluative framing can also be observed in selected Kazakh media texts, where social and political processes are often described through images of vertical space. Thus, in the article fragment: «Жиналған адамдардың алдына қала әкімі шыққан. Ол «талапты қағазға түсіруді» сұрап, оны «жоғарыға жеткізуге» уәде берді» (“The akim of the city came out to address the gathered people. He asked them to put their demands in writing and promised to “deliver them upwards”)” (<https://qaz.ulysmedia.kz/saraptama/3556-zhanaozennen-zhana-kazakistan-zhaily-uranga-deiin-kantar-okigasynyn-khronologiiasy>) the vertical metaphor «жоғарыға жеткізу» (“to deliver upwards”) represents power as being located “above” and inaccessible to direct interaction. Unlike the English example metaphor “wealth shifts inexorably upwards”, where vertical movement illustrates the redistribution of resources as a systemic and inevitable process, the Kazakh media text uses verticality within the pragmatics of symbolic access to power. From a cognitive-discursive perspective, this metaphor activates an “up-down” spatial model that conceptualizes authority as hierarchical, distant and institutionally mediated. In this case, the conceptual spatialization of authority makes institutional distance salient and provides the basis for the subsequent redistribution of agency. The city akim’s promise “to deliver upwards” («жоғарыға жеткізу») the citizens’ demands constructs a presuppositional evaluative frame in which the very possibility of solving the problem is transferred beyond the local level, thereby shifting responsibility away from the immediate actor. Thus, the metaphor operates through the sequence of spatial conceptualization to perceived institutional distance and then to redistribution of agency, with the latter constituting its central pragmatic effect in this context.

In addition to spatial metaphors, metaphors of violence, physical force and war also play a significant role in both media corpora. Social and political processes are frequently conceptualized through images of coercion, destruction and bodily harm, which lends the described events a distinctly negative axiological orientation. For example, in the expression “...ruled Belarus with an iron fist”, from *The Guardian*, power is depicted through the image of physical pressure, framing political governance as authoritarian coercion rather than as a legitimate institutional process. A similar pragmatic function is performed by the metaphor “*elimination of challengers*” from the same publication, which constructs an image of power as a repressive force aimed at suppressing opposition (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/04/belarusian-president-alexander-lukashenko-signs-law-granting-him-lifelong-immunity-from-prosecution>). Metaphors of destruction and bodily damage, such as “*gutting of a key watchdog*” (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/nov/30/us-watchdog-human-rights-department-homeland-security>), present institutional reforms through the imagery of physical violence. The transfer from physical harm to institutional processes makes abstract political actions perceptually concrete. This negative conceptualization then provides the basis for the pragmatic function of delegitimization, as political actors and their actions are represented through a frame of harm rather than through institutional justification.

A similar mechanism can be observed in the Kazakh-language corpus. The figurative expressions grounded in images of weapons and physical destruction, including the metaphor «*жүйе қылышынан қан тамып тұрған кез*» (“*a time when the system ruled with a blood-soaked sword*”) (<https://qaz.ulyssmedia.kz/saraptama/35760-urei-bilegen-zhuie-kazakstanda-nege-li-kunge-deiin-kozhamzharov-pen-onym-komekshilerinen-olerdei-korkady/>) and the event labeled as «*Қанды қаңтар*» (“*Bloody January*”) (<https://zhasalash.kz/news/-8ba5d9/?ysclid=mm1r31kenz516921036>), used in media coverage of the January 2022 events in Kazakhstan, frame political reality through imagery of violence and crisis. Such expressions represent power and social conflict through images of threat, intensifying their negative axiological interpretation. The anthropomorphic metaphor «*үрей билеген жүйе*» (“*a system consumed by fear*”) represents political institutions as a living entity acting under the influence of fear, which contributes to their indirect delegitimization without explicit evaluative statements. In these examples, the transfer from physical harm to political reality makes abstract processes emotionally salient, intensifies negative evaluation and supports the pragmatic function of implicit delegitimization.

According to the corpus analysis, irony emerges as a consistent pragmatic tool of implicit evaluation, enabling media authors to critically reflect on social and political processes without making direct accusations. In the analyzed corpus, ironic meaning is primarily constructed through a discrepancy between an expected or explicitly stated value and the contextual reality in which it is presented. In the English-language corpus, this mechanism can be observed in the contrast between apparently legitimate statements and the context in which they are used. For example, in the following extract from the article, the biblical phrase “*Peace on Earth and goodwill to all*” is reinterpreted ironically through its juxtaposition with the expression “*goodwill to those like us and “please stay peaceful” to those who aren’t*”, where the supposedly universal value of goodwill is presented as selective and reserved for “insiders” (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/dec/24/christmas-peace-a-more-equal-australia-cost-of-living-wealth>). The gap between the proclaimed moral ideal and the social reality described, including rising inequality and the commercialization of social services, generates an implicit negative evaluation of the existing system. The evaluative effect does not arise from an explicitly negative lexical item but from the recipient’s recognition of the discrepancy between the proclaimed ideal and the reality represented in the text. Irony therefore functions through a sequence in which contextual discrepancy leads to an inferred negative evaluation and subsequently to critical framing. Its pragmatic function in this example is implicit criticism without direct expression of the author’s position.

A comparable evaluative pattern can be observed in the Kazakh-language corpus, where irony frequently emerges through the framing of unrealistic promises and the mismatch between declared ambitions and real-life conditions. For example, statements such as «*Кедейлер үш жылдан кейін бай болады*» (“*In just three years, the poor will all be rich*”) (<https://qaz.ulyssmedia.kz/saraptama/32731->

kedeiler-ush-zhyldan-keiin-bai-bolady-deputattar-men-ministrdin-talkysy/) take on an ironic resonance in contexts of socio-economic instability, implicitly expressing skepticism toward official rhetoric. Here, the evaluative mechanism is based on the contrast between the categorical promise expressed in the statement and the contextual conditions against which it is interpreted. The ironic effect here arises from the inferential gap between what is presented as achievable and what the surrounding context makes difficult to accept as realistic. This discrepancy creates a critical evaluative frame in which institutional communication is represented as disconnected from everyday reality. These findings are consistent with the understanding of irony as a pragmatic mechanism of implicit evaluation (Attardo, 2000), while the analyzed examples indicate how this mechanism operates in both corpora through contextual discrepancy and the subsequent inference of critical evaluation.

The analysis of the Kazakh- and English-language corpora shows that metonymy functions as a recurrent stylistic mechanism of evaluation in the analyzed texts. While metaphor reshapes the conceptual understanding of social reality by linking different cognitive domains, metonymy operates through the redistribution of agency and responsibility within discourse. Through metonymic substitution, an individual actor is replaced by an institutional or abstract entity, which changes the way agency and responsibility are represented and may present political and economic processes as impersonal or systematic (Tokmakov, 2000). The evaluative effect is therefore produced not primarily through explicit evaluation but through a shift in the representation of who acts and who is held responsible. A clear example of this can be found in the headline from the news portal *TIME*: “*Buckingham Palace ready to support police if contacted over Andrew allegations amid Epstein row*” (<https://time.com/7373053/prince-william-kate-middleton-address-epstein-files-andrew-scandal>), where the institutional name “*Buckingham Palace*” functions as a metonymy and serves as a framing device that backgrounds individual agency while distancing the monarchy as an institution from personal accusations against Prince Andrew. Similar metonymic patterns appear in conventional media expressions such as “*the White House has decided...*”, “*the Kremlin responded...*” or “*the markets reacted nervously*”. In such constructions, actions are attributed to institutions rather than to particular individuals, reducing the salience of personal agency and representing events as outcomes of broader institutional processes. Metonymic substitution thus displaces individual agency, reduces the visibility of personal responsibility and contributes to the institutional framing of the event.

In the Kazakh-language corpus, political authority is also represented through metonymic nominations such as *Ақорда* (*Akorda is an official residence of the President of RK*), *үкімет* (“*the government*”), *билік* (“*the authority*”), *жүйе* (“*system*”), *орталық* (“*the center*”), *жоғары* (“*the top*”, “*above*”). In the analyzed examples, these nominations may replace concrete decision-makers with institutional or abstract representations of authority or central power. For example, in the statement «*Билік пен бұқара арасындағы диалогты дамытады*» (“*Dialogue between the authorities and the public is developing*”) (<http://egemen.kz./article/205380-bilik-pen-buqara-arasyndagy-dialogty-damytydy>), the focus shifts from individual actors to an institutional entity «*билік*» (“*the authorities*”). This shift produces two related effects i.e. it foregrounds institutional authority while backgrounding individual agency. In expressions involving «*жоғары*» (“*above/the top*”), the spatial representation may also make hierarchical distance more salient by positioning decision-making at a higher institutional level. In these cases, metonymy constructs evaluation through the reorganization of agency i.e. institutional authority becomes more visible, while the individual actors responsible for particular decisions remain less explicit.

Overall, within the analyzed corpus, metonymy functions as a mechanism of implicit evaluative framing through the redistribution of agency. Its evaluative potential lies not necessarily in explicit positive or negative characterization of an event. By shifting attention from individuals to institutions or abstract entities, metonymic constructions can reduce the salience of individual responsibility and frame political or social processes as part of broader institutional dynamics.

The next stylistic linguistic device identified across both media corpora is the epithet. In media discourse, epithets typically function at the presuppositional level. They introduce an axiological perspective in which the evaluation of the described object is treated as already established and therefore does not require further explanation. The evaluative mechanism of the epithet lies in

embedding the author's judgement directly into the description of the referent, so that evaluation is presented as an attribute, but not as a separate proposition requiring justification. In the English-language corpus, epithets are frequently realized as evaluative attributes accompanying the names of social actors, political decisions and institutional practices. This is illustrated by combinations such as *controversial reform*, *deeply flawed policy*, *brutal crackdown*, *sham election*, *toxic political climate*, *toxic society*, *toxic culture* and *grave abuse*, which can be embedded in otherwise informational narratives and introduce evaluation without separate argumentation. In these examples, the evaluative element is not argued but presented as an already established characteristic. For example, in the statement: "*A Republican-led congressional committee has subpoenaed documents from the estate of the disgraced late financier Jeffrey Epstein*" (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/aug/25/jeffrey-epstein-documents-subpoena-congress>) where the epithet *disgraced* functions as a presuppositional marker of moral evaluation, framing a negative interpretation of the person even before factual information is presented. In this case, the epithet performs moral categorization and directs the reader toward a particular evaluative perspective. It combines evaluative categorization with condensation, i.e. a complex judgement is incorporated into a single descriptive attribute, reducing the need for explicit argumentative evaluation.

In the analyzed Kazakh-language corpus, epithets show a somewhat different pragmatic realization. Whereas the English-language examples tend to rely on presuppositionally loaded evaluative attributes, the Kazakh-language examples more frequently employ emotionally coloured and journalistically expressive epithets, such as «*шұлы іс*» ("*a high-profile case*"), «*қайынми үрдіс*» ("*a dangerous trend*"), «*әділетсіз жүйе*» ("*an unjust system*"), «*қатал саясат*» ("*a harsh policy*") and «*қайынми шешім*» ("*a dangerous decision*"). Such epithets not only characterize the described object but also intensify its emotional evaluation. Here, the evaluative mechanism shifts from presuppositional condensation towards more explicit emotional intensification, creating the effect of an evaluative stance shared with the audience and also reducing the communicative distance between author and recipient.

Thus, epithets in both media corpora convey evaluative meaning by incorporating judgement into the description of the referent. In the English-language media texts, they more often operate through the presuppositional categorization and evaluative condensation, whereas in the Kazakh-language texts analyzed here, they more often intensify emotional evaluation and create an effect of alignment with the audience. The comparison therefore suggests that the same stylistic device can construct evaluative meaning through different realizations of the underlying mechanism. Thus, epithet functions as a mechanism of implicit evaluative framing within the analyzed corpus.

According to analysis of our data, hyperbole and simile emerge as comparatively less frequent but at the same time significant stylistic devices for conveying implicit evaluative meaning in both corpora. In the English-language corpus, hyperbole is often realized through high-intensity vocabulary that amplifies the perceived significance of events and creates a sense of urgency, threat or public importance. For example, in the statement: "*A Trump endorsement, though, would be a seismic event—one that Trump might see as too tempting to skip*" (<https://time.com/7373241/james-talarico-jasmine-crockett-ken-paxton-john-cornyn-texas-senate-polls/>), hyperbole is expressed through the phrase "*a seismic event*" which presents the potential political endorsement of Donald Trump as an occurrence of an almost catastrophic scale. The lexeme *seismic*, borrowed from the geological domain, transfers political action into the sphere of physical intensity and increases the evaluative force of the statement. Such hyperbole dramatizes the situation, frames the endorsement as a turning point and guides the recipient toward perceiving the event as critically significant without the author's explicit evaluation. In this example, the mechanism operates through intensity amplification, which heightens the perceived significance of the event and then contributes to its interpretive framing.

The analysis of the Kazakh-language corpus demonstrates that hyperbole is more frequently employed as a means of emotional-evaluative intensification and crisis framing. The hyperbolic examples identified in this corpus tend to rely on vocabulary of extreme scale, such as «*қайынми фазаға жетті*» ("*has reached a dangerous phase*"), «*мәдени бум*» ("*a cultural boom*"), «*өлердей қорқады*» ("*are terrified to death*") and «*тұмас ауылдарды шайып кетеді*» ("*it washes away entire villages*"), where evaluative meaning is conveyed through imagery of threat, massiveness or existential risk. Thus,

in the statement: «Қазақстанда неге әлі күнге дейін Қ. пен оның көмекшілерінен өлердей қорқады» (the name is given in abbreviated form – Қ.) (“*Why in Kazakhstan people are still terrified to death of Q. and his associates*”) (<https://qaz.ulyssmedia.kz/saraptama/35760-urei-bilegen-zhuie-kazakstanda-nege-li-kunge-deiin-kozhamzharov-pen-onyn-komekshilerinen-olerdei-korkady/>), the hyperbolic phrase «өлердей қорқады» conveys the negative axiological frame by shifting the description of emotion from ordinary fear to existential threat. This amplification of fear dramatizes the political situation and contributes to the delegitimization of actors in power by framing fear as an outcome of presumed repression. The evaluative mechanism therefore proceeds through intensity amplification, the construction of an extreme threat image and subsequent emotional-evaluative intensification.

In addition to hyperbole, simile also functions as an important stylistic mechanism of implicit evaluation, contributing to emotional dramatization and interpretative framing. In the Kazakh-language corpus, simile is used to intensify crisis perception and construct imagery of large-scale destruction. For example, in the analytical article «Соғыс Ресейге емес, Путинге керек немесе саяси амбиция мүңкіген режим» from the Kazakh corpus, the following expression «әскердің қынадай қырылуы» (“*the army was cut down like grass*”) (<https://qaz.ulyssmedia.kz/saraptama/12930-sogys-reseige-emes-putinge-kerek-nemese-saiasi-ambitsiia-munkigen-rezhim/>) presents military losses through an explicit comparative image. The comparison with grass converts the abstract description of military losses into a concrete and visually accessible image of mass destruction. It emphasizes the scale and inevitability of destruction, reinforces a strongly negative evaluative frame and increases the recipient’s emotional engagement, guiding the reader toward perceiving the event as catastrophic rather than routine.

A similar function of simile can be seen in the English-language corpus. In the following article from *The Guardian* about resurgence of measles in the UK, the statement: “*Importations of measles found unvaccinated pockets and took off like wildfire*” (<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2026/feb/15/life-threatening-rise-of-measles-in-the-uk>) uses the simile “*took off like wildfire*” to represent the spread of the disease not merely as rapid but as dangerous, unpredictable and difficult to control. The comparison with wildfire adds a threat frame to an otherwise factual description of disease spread and makes its speed and uncontrollability more perceptually salient. Thus, the mechanism moves from sensory comparison to the concretization of threat, which intensifies evaluation and contributes to interpretive framing.

The differences observed between the Kazakh- and English- language corpora may be partially associated with socio-cultural factors that shape communicative traditions and evaluative practices. However, the present corpus does not allow this difference to be attributed exclusively to national-cultural factors. Within the analyzed sample, the English-language corpus contains relatively more instances of irony, whereas the Kazakh-language corpus contains relatively more epithets and hyperboles. The qualitative analysis also reveals recurrent vertical metaphors in the Kazakh-language material and instances of institutional metonymy in both corpora. These patterns may reflect differences in communicative priorities, journalistic practices and ways of representing authority and social relations. Expressions such as «*жоғарыға жеткізу*», «*жоғарыдағылар*» and «*биіктегі*» illustrate a vertical conceptualization of authority in the Kazakh-language material, where institutional distance is represented through spatial relations. In the English-language examples analyzed here, irony contributes to indirect criticism, while institutional metonymy provides a mechanism for the redistribution of agency. These patterns suggest different modes of constructing evaluation within the selected texts, i.e. emotional intensification and more explicit alignment with the audience in some Kazakh-language examples and implicit framing and indirect criticism in some English-language examples. These tendencies should be interpreted in relation to the genre, thematic and editorial characteristics of the selected articles, while socio-cultural factors remain a possible explanatory dimension rather than a direct causal explanation.

Conclusion

The results of the present study allow us to conclude that stylistic devices play a significant role in the formation of evaluative meaning in both analyzed Kazakh- and English-language media texts. The function of stylistic devices goes beyond textual expressiveness, as they operate as pragmatic mechanisms that shape the recipient’s interpretation and participate in evaluative and ideological

framing.

The findings of the study demonstrate that metaphor, irony, metonymy, epithet, hyperbole and simile function as means of implicit evaluation within the selected corpus. The analysis shows that metaphors structure the interpretation of social and political processes through conceptual transfer and framing, while irony constructs evaluation through a discrepancy between expected meaning and contextual reality. Metonymy redistributes discursive agency by shifting attention from individual actors to different institutional or abstract entities. Epithet functions as a marker of presuppositional evaluation, whereas hyperbole and simile intensify the perceived significance or emotional salience of represented events.

The comparative analysis of selected data also revealed differences in the distribution and pragmatic realization of stylistic devices. English-language texts in the analyzed sample contain relatively more examples of irony, while Kazakh-language texts contain relatively more epithets and hyperboles. Qualitative analysis additionally reveals recurrent vertical metaphors in the Kazakh-language material and instances of institutional metonymy in both corpora. These patterns show different tendencies in the construction of evaluation within the selected material. However, they should not be interpreted as stable or universal characteristics of English- or Kazakh-language media discourse, since the study is based on a limited corpus and the observed differences may also be related to genre, thematic focus, journalistic practices and editorial orientation. Therefore, the socio-cultural factors represent a possible explanatory dimension rather than a conclusively established causal relationship.

Thus, the main contribution of the study is the proposed analytical model that relates the formal realization of stylistic devices to the mechanisms of evaluative construction and their pragmatic functions. The analysis shows that the same stylistic device can realize evaluation through different mechanisms, such as conceptual framing, inferential discrepancy, redistribution of agency, presuppositional categorization, intensification of emotions and sensory concretization.

The study has several limitations. Firstly, the corpus is restricted to online media articles and does not include other media formats, such as social media pages, interviews or television programs, which may employ different evaluative patterns. In addition, the corpus size and its purposive sampling limit the extent to which the results of study can be generalized to Kazakh- and English-language media discourse as a whole. Therefore, the findings should be understood as tendencies identified in the selected corpus rather than as statistically established features of two media systems.

Future research may extend the corpus, include a more systematically balanced selection of genres and media formats and examine additional languages. Such research could further test whether the evaluative patterns identified in the present study are sustained across different communicative, genre-specific and socio-cultural contexts.

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