



Terminology In Political Discourse as A Means of Language Representation of The Image of The Country

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Abstract

A political discourse would comprise terminology related to economic development, social welfare, national identity, international relations, and security. The purpose of this study was to determine the function of political discourse and study its role as a mass media that shapes public opinion, and to prove through discourse that political terminology plays a key role in shaping the country's image. Through a qualitative analysis of speeches, official documents, media coverage, and public statements, a dialectical approach was adopted to enhance understanding of the role of language in shaping perceptions of nations in the contemporary global context. The data mainly comprised secondary data, speeches of political leaders, official documents and media reports. Political archives, media reports and newspaper editorials also supplemented the data about Kazakhstan and its historical evolution. The research findings identified patterns, trends, and differences in the portrayal of a country's image and the strategies used to promote or

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defend it. It also found the nuanced interplay between political terminology, discourse, and the construction of a country's image. The findings would contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of language in shaping perceptions of nations in the contemporary global context.

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Introduction

Political discourse plays a pivotal role in shaping the image and identity of a nation both domestically and internationally (Chadwick, 2000; Chilton, 2023; Connolly, 1993; Wilson, 2015). In the contemporary global landscape, the representation of a country's image holds paramount importance in shaping its socio-political standing and international relations (Fetzer & Weizman, 2006; Okulska & Cap, 2010). Central to this representation is the utilization of political terminology within discourse, serving as a powerful language tool to represent the country's image (Van Dijk, 1997, 2002). Political terminology encompasses a vast array of terms, phrases, and narratives used by political actors to articulate their values, ideologies, and policy agendas. The selection and deployment of political terminology are not merely linguistic exercises but strategic maneuvers aimed at shaping public perceptions, influencing policy outcomes, and projecting a desired image of the country (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2013; Fetzer, 2023).

Discourse, both verbal and written, serves as a primary medium through which political terminology is communicated and disseminated to various audiences (Connolly, 1993; Wilson, 2015). Through discourse, political actors construct narratives, frame issues, and convey messages that contribute to the formation and perpetuation of the country's image (Chilton, 2023). They seek to cultivate a positive image of the country, enhance its soft power, and bolster its diplomatic influence on the global stage, by strategically deploying language. However, the image of a country is multifaceted, encompassing economic, cultural, social, and political dimensions. Political terminology plays a crucial role in framing these dimensions and shaping public perceptions (Blommaert, 2020; Butler, 2024).

The role of political terminology in discourse cannot be overstated when it comes to shaping a country's image. In the case of Kazakhstan, as in any other nation, the language used by political leaders, the media, and other influential voices has a profound impact on how the country is perceived both domestically and internationally (Burkhanov, 2020; Sagadiyeva et al., 2021). Certain terms or phrases can evoke specific connotations and perceptions. For instance, the choice between describing Kazakhstan as a modernizing nation versus a traditional society can have vastly different implications for how the country is viewed on the global stage. Similarly, the framing of political issues, such as economic development, human rights, or environmental policies, can shape outsiders' perceptions of Kazakhstan's priorities and values (Laruelle, 2014; Omelicheva, 2016).

Moreover, political discourse does not just reflect the current state of affairs; it also plays a role in constructing national identity and shaping aspirations for the future (Chadwick, 2000; Chilton, 2023). By strategically using language to highlight Kazakhstan's strengths, achievements, and vision for progress, policymakers and communicators can help foster a positive image that attracts investment, tourism, and partnerships with other nations. However, it is important to recognize that the impact of political terminology goes beyond mere perception management (Sharipova, 2020). Language shapes reality to some extent, influencing public attitudes, policy decisions, and even social dynamics within the country. Therefore, efforts to analyze and understand the role of political discourse in shaping Kazakhstan's image are not just about optics; they are about influencing the trajectory of the nation's development (Dubuisson, 2022).

In summary, leveraging political terminology in discourse as a tool for shaping Kazakhstan's image is not only a commendable initiative but also a strategic imperative for the country's long-term growth and prosperity. By carefully crafting messages, engaging in dialogue with diverse stakeholders, and promoting narratives that align with Kazakhstan's values and aspirations, policymakers and communicators can help cultivate a positive and dynamic national image that resonates both at home and abroad.

This study seeks to analyze the role of political terminology in discourse as a means of language representation of the image of the country. By examining specific examples of political discourse and terminology, the study aims to elucidate how language is employed to construct, reinforce, or challenge the image of a country. Furthermore, the study examines the implications of image representation through political discourse for domestic politics, international relations, and public diplomacy. The study adopts a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on insights from linguistics, political science, discourse analysis, and

cultural studies. In essence, this study lays the groundwork for a comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationship between political terminology, discourse, and the representation of a country's image. By investigating these dynamics, the study would contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of language in shaping perceptions of nations in the contemporary global context. This study also conducts a comparative analysis of political discourse in Central Asian countries to examine how it reflects and constructs the image of each country on the global stage.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, an image is often perceived as a socio-cultural phenomenon since it stands out within the social paradigm of human society at all stages of its development. The concept of image in the theories of ancient philosophers, thinkers of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, scientists of the 19th and early 20th century, is not explicated as an independent phenomenon but as a latent form along with global philosophical issues such as harmony of soul and body, sensory perception, and relationship between man and society revolve. The concept of image was introduced into scientific circulation by the American economist Kenneth Boulding, who is known for his work in the field of international relations, in particular for his contributions to the development of the theory of the international system and the understanding of conflicts and cooperation between nations (Boulding, 1956).

The theoretical and practical perspective of image has been developed by Western scientists, particularly by L. Brown who emphasizes that creating a positive self-image plays an important role in achieving goals. Brown (1996) emphasizes that visualizing success, asserting oneself, and working to improve one's image can help one overcome obstacles and achieve the desired results. Davis (1998), in this perspective, argues that people influence others, and are judged by them, through their appearance, voice, environment and manner more than by what they say. Spillane (1996) defines image as the process of defining and shaping one's personal brand that reflects one's uniqueness, values and goals. Spiegel (2017) discusses flirting as a path to success using flirting or similar social skills to achieve personal and professional goals. Gladkova (2021), with a more modern perspective, urges that effective self-marketing is the ability to promote oneself, one's skills, and one's experience in a way that attracts the attention of employers, customers, or partners.

The image of Kazakhstan as a country is influenced by various global factors such as geopolitical significance, economic growth and diversification, resource wealth, cultural heritage and identity, diplomatic engagement, migration labour, investment and business opportunities, and challenges and reforms. Kazakhstan's geopolitical significance is due to its strategic location in Central Asia which positions it as a key player in regional geopolitics and global trade routes. As a landlocked country with vast energy resources, Kazakhstan is seen as a crucial transit hub for oil and natural gas pipelines connecting energy-rich regions in Central Asia to global markets (Insebayeva & Insebayeva, 2022). Likewise, Kazakhstan's rapid economic growth and efforts to diversify its economy have also garnered attention on the global stage. The country's ambitious infrastructure projects, investment in sectors such as mining, agriculture, and technology, and commitment to economic reform have contributed to its image as an emerging market with significant growth potential. Its abundant resource wealth, particularly oil, gas, and minerals, has shaped its image as an energy powerhouse in the global economy. The country's role as a major producer and exporter of commodities has attracted foreign investment and positioned it as a significant player in global energy markets (Dubuisson, 2022; Insebayeva & Insebayeva, 2022).

On the other hand, at socio-cultural levels, Kazakhstan's rich cultural heritage, including its nomadic traditions, Turkic roots, and multiethnic society, have contributed to its unique identity on the global stage. The promotion of Kazakh culture, language, and traditions both domestically and internationally enhances the country's soft power and cultural diplomacy efforts. Kazakhstan's proactive diplomacy and engagement in international affairs have also elevated its profile as a responsible global actor. The country's initiatives in nuclear non-proliferation, conflict resolution, and regional cooperation, including hosting the Astana peace talks on Syria, have earned it recognition and respect on the global stage. The migrant labor issue has also strongly influenced the ethnic-demographic, social and language situation in Kazakhstan. Many people from various populations come to Kazakhstan to work in factories, state and municipal administrations, and other fields.

Kazakhstan's openness to foreign investment and business opportunities has attracted multinational corporations and investors seeking to capitalize on its growing market and favorable business environment. The government's efforts to improve regulatory frameworks, promote entrepreneurship, and facilitate foreign investment contribute to its image as an attractive destination for business and investment in the region. In midst of these opportunities are challenges related to governance, human rights, and political freedoms, which can impact its perception in the global community. Efforts to address these challenges through reforms in areas such as rule of law, anti-corruption measures, and civil society engagement are closely scrutinized by international observers and may influence perceptions of the country (Bayekeyeva et

al., 2021). Overall, Kazakhstan's image as a country is shaped by a combination of its economic development, cultural identity, diplomatic engagement, and response to domestic and global challenges. As the country continues to navigate the complexities of globalization, its image on the global stage can be shaped by its ability to leverage its strengths, address its weaknesses, and contribute positively to regional and global affairs.

Moreover, it is also required to draw on theories of discourse analysis and political communication, and exploring the language, rhetoric, symbols, and narratives employed by political leaders and institutions to convey national identity, values, and aspirations. Studying political discourse as a reflection of the country's image serves several important purposes, such as understanding public perception; assessing policy priorities; evaluating national identity; analyzing diplomatic relations; informing public diplomacy; promoting transparency and accountability; and facilitating cross-cultural understanding. Understanding public perception through political discourse helps to understand a country both domestically and internationally. By analyzing political discourse, one can gain insights into how governments and political actors present their country to the world and how these representations influence public opinion (Van Dijk, 1997, 2002). Political discourse is often reflected in the policy priorities and agendas of a country's leadership. By studying political discourse, researchers can identify the issues and themes that are emphasized by political leaders, providing valuable insights into the direction of government policies and initiatives (Butler, 2024; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2013). Similarly, political discourse can also contribute to the construction and reinforcement of national identity. By examining the language, symbols, and narratives used in political discourse, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how national identity is constructed, maintained, and contested within a country (Blommaert, 2020).

At the international level, political discourse plays a key role in shaping diplomatic relations between countries (Connolly, 1993; Wilson, 2015). By studying the relevant political discourse, researchers can analyze how countries portray themselves and others in international relations, as well as how diplomatic tensions and conflicts are communicated and managed (Chadwick, 2000; Chilton, 2023). The political discourse also informs what public diplomacy efforts are being used to promote a country's image and interests abroad. By studying political discourse, policymakers and diplomats can assess the effectiveness of their communication strategies and identify opportunities to enhance their country's reputation and influence on the global stage (Blommaert, 2020; Butler, 2024). Studying political discourse can also promote transparency and accountability in governance. By analyzing the language and rhetoric used by political leaders, researchers can assess the extent to which governments are transparent about their actions and accountable to their citizens. Lastly, political discourse also reflects cultural values, norms, and perspectives. By studying political discourse, researchers can promote cross-cultural understanding and dialogue, helping to bridge differences and foster cooperation between countries and cultures (Fetzer & Weizman, 2006; Okulska & Cap, 2010).

Literature Review

Political Terminology in Discourse

Political terminology in discourse plays a crucial role in shaping the image of a country. It serves as a means of language representation that reflects the political landscape, values, and priorities of a nation (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 2002). There are various ways in which political terminology influences the image of a country such as its national identity, policy priorities, international relations, leadership style, media representation, and cultural values. The national identity as a political terminology often encapsulates the values and ideals that a nation aspires to uphold. Phrases like freedom and democracy, equality and justice, convey the foundational principles of a country and contribute to its national identity. The policy priorities are reflected in the use of specific political terms like economic growth, social welfare, national security or environmental sustainability, each indicating the areas where a government focuses its efforts and resources. The international relations, too, had its political terminology which shapes how a country is perceived on the global stage. Terms like diplomacy, alliance, soft power, and foreign aid signal a nation's approach to international relations and its role in the global community (Butler, 2024; Van Dijk, 1997).

The language used by political leaders and officials often reflects their leadership style and political ideology. Terms like authoritarianism, populism, progressivism or conservatism convey different approaches to governance and influence how the leadership of a country is perceived domestically and internationally (Kurmanova et al., 2021). Public discourse in political terminology helps in shaping public opinion. Terms like fake news, alternative facts or social justice can polarize public opinion and contribute to the formation of political identities within a society. The media representation in political terminology is seen in events and issues that are framed and interpreted by the media for public. Media outlets may use terms like crisis, reform, scandal or victory to shape the narrative around political events and shape public perceptions of government actions. Finally, cultural values in political terminology reflects the cultural values and norms

of a society. Terms like individualism, collectivism, liberty or tradition highlight the underlying values that shape political discourse and policy decisions. Overall, political terminology serves as a powerful tool for representing the image of a country, shaping public discourse, and influencing both domestic and international perceptions of its governance, values, and priorities (Van Dijk, 2002).

Hybrid Images and Political Discourse

There exists a hybridity in political leadership and the resulting political discourse. For example, the first type of political leadership exists as an individual image of a political leader, and a public figure (Egorov et al., 1999; Ivannikova, 2000; Laptev, 2004; Potemkin, 2006; Shepel, 2002; Zazykin, 2003). The second image is that of political movements, organizations, political systems, and the state as a whole (Zazykin & Zakharova, 2018). The third image reveals the relationship between the first two types, that is between the individual political leader and the political movement or system that it represents (Zazykin & Zakharova, 2018).

The hybridity is also due to the multiplicity of images of political leaders, representatives of various professions, corporate, political organizations, and the state as a whole. Slinko & Strogaya (2017) argue that such hybridity in political images is helpful in carrying out a special mission and a radical change to save the nation. Eatwell (2003) believed that political leaders can choose between making promises and compromising, but they are guided by a certain form of messianic destiny, which is provided by their political system they belong to Gardner (2011), regarding leadership, believes that leaders and the audience overlap in many stories, but Marland (2013) argues that the main story deals with identity issues. The charismatic image of a leader in the era of information technology is formed by creating a political image.

Such political images are subject to independent political assessment prior to drawing conclusions about their political discourse. This involves a quick and superficial assessment, and slower, detailed, and deeper one (Zajonc, 1980). It is essential to identify the class of politicians which pays close attention to reputation or public image, as it is a means to promote their agenda and win elections (Zebrowitz & Montepare, 2005). Newman (1999) draws attention to the marketing strategies that drive the political system. These strategies make the image more important than the essence, the personality more important than current policy issues, and the ability to dialogue.

Political discourse, in the current context, can be best understood with Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) principles, which made a significant contribution to the study of political discourse. Fairclough & Fairclough (2013) published extensively on the subject of political discourse, particularly in relation to power, ideology, and social change. Fairclough's line of study, also called *textually oriented discourse analysis* or TODA, distinguished itself from philosophical enquires not involving the use of linguistic methodology. It was especially concerned with the mutual effects of formally linguistic textual properties, sociolinguistic speech genres, and formally sociological practices. The main thrust of Fairclough's analysis was that, if – according to Foucauldian theory – practices are discursively shaped and enacted, the intrinsic properties of discourse, which are linguistically analyzable, are to constitute a key element of their interpretation. Fairclough was thus interested in how social practices are discursively shaped, as well as the subsequent discursive effects of social practices (Fairclough, 2023).

Ruth Wodak was also known for her work in critical discourse studies, particularly in relation to politics, nationalism, and identity (Wodak, 2020). Wodak discusses some of the most pressing issues associated with slogans, political discourse an education. She emphasizes the need to understand the functions of slogans they fulfil in the political field; and what the limitations of slogans are. Repeating slogans does not allow for differentiated opinions or debates; other written, visual and spoken genres should receive more attention, depending always on the respective context. Teaching critical literacy already in primary schools, teaching how to challenge critically what is said or written to children, adolescents and students would allow de-essentializing such messages. Understanding and deconstructing media and political communication should most certainly become an inherent and necessary part of school curricula (Sardoć & Wodak, 2023).

Political Discourse and Kazakhstan

One of the key means that forms the image of the country is political discourse. Political discourse is a type of discourse produced using agitation and persuasion tactics, that is aimed at forming the worldview and public opinion of a diverse audience. A political text is a verbalized result of processing relevant political information, including situational and socio-cultural context. In political discourse, information is interpreted explicitly or implicitly, evaluated rationally and emotionally. Research interest in political discourse is focused within the framework of semiological, culturological, hermeneutic, and cognitive approaches. The specific features of the political text determined by society and the individual allowed us to identify the types of political discourse in which the image of a nation is verbalized.

For instance, the image of Kazakhstan, is determined by its various political discourse terms that got associated with it during its historical evolution (Burkhanov, 2020). Such political terms that can be used to depict the image of Kazakhstan often emphasize themes of national unity, economic development, cultural

heritage, diplomatic engagement, and regional stability. Here are some examples: Unity: Unity (*Birlik*), Harmony (*Uilestiry*), Solidarity (*Yntymaqtastyq*); Development: Modernization (*Zhangyru*), Progress (*Uderis*), Innovation (*Zhanartu*), Growth (*Osu*); Cultural Heritage: Tradition (*Dastur*), Heritage (*Miras*), Identity (*Biregeilik*); Diplomatic Engagement: Diplomacy (*Diplomatiya*), Cooperation (*Ariptestik*), Partnership (*Seriktestik*); Regional Stability: Stability (*Turaktylyk*), Security (*Qauipsizdik*), Peace (*Beibitshilik*); Economic Prosperity: Prosperity (*Guldenu*), Investment (*Investisia*), Opportunities (*Mumkindik*); Global Engagement: Globalization (*Zhahandanu*), Integration (*Integrasiya*), Engagement (*Qatysymdyk*); Leadership: Leadership (*Koshbasshylyq*), Vision (*Tanym*), Direction (*Bagyt*). These words reflect Kazakhstan's aspirations and efforts to present itself as a stable, prosperous, and forward-looking nation in the global arena. They highlight the country's commitment to development, cooperation, and diplomacy, while also underscoring its cultural richness and historical significance (Laruelle, 2014).

The linguistic image-making of Kazakhstan, implemented in political discourse, forms its ambiguous image (Dubuisson, 2022; Insebayeva & Insebayeva, 2022; Sharipova, 2020). Under the influence of political texts, the recipient develops a complex and multidimensional picture of the socio-economic development of Kazakhstan. Our study of political discourse revealed that official political replicas, balancing between positive and negative assessments of aspects of Kazakhstan's reality, are more inclined than opposition ones to the positive pole of the axiological scale, while the opposition mass media demonstrate extremely negative views. Thus, a certain image of Kazakhstan is created, structured in the right direction according to the specified parameters, which are the opinions, views, values, and stereotypes of the authors of the publication that determine the linguistic representations of the described (Baygarina, 2013; Djuraeva, 2022; Mukhanova & Absattarov, 2020).

Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative research design with a dialectical approach was adopted in this study. A dialectical approach suited this subject as it helped to enhance understanding of the role of language in shaping perceptions of nations in the contemporary global context, offering insights into the complex relationship between political terminology, discourse, and the image of the country. By critically examining specific examples of political discourse and terminology, the study explored how linguistic framing shapes public perceptions and contributed to the cultivation of a positive or negative national image. Through qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis, the study shed light on the dynamics of image construction and the implications of image representation for domestic politics, international relations, and public diplomacy.

Data Collection

The data for the research was collected from secondary data, speeches of political leaders, official documents and media reports. Political archives, media reports and newspaper editorials also supplemented the data about Kazakhstan and its historical evolution.

Data Analysis

Through a content-based qualitative analysis of speeches, official documents, media coverage, and public statements, the research identified patterns, trends, and differences in the portrayal of each country's image and the strategies used to promote or defend it. This approach involved analyzing the linguistic structure, semantic content, and discursive strategies employed in political communication to understand how messages are constructed and interpreted. The estimation method was used to analyze the data.

Results

Linguistic Representation of Political Discourse

The linguistic representation of political discourse in Kazakhstan exhibits several distinctive features that reflect the country's cultural, historical, and socio-political context. The key characteristics include multilingualism, cultural references, historical narratives, identity politics, nation-building rhetoric, modernization discourse, international relations, and media control. The key characteristics of multilingualism is reflected in Kazakhstan as a linguistically diverse country, with Kazakh and Russian being two official languages (Koptleuova et al., 2022; Koptleuova et al., 2023). Consequently, political discourse often involves code-switching or bilingual communication, where politicians and officials may use both languages interchangeably to address different audiences and convey messages effectively. The cultural reference in political discourse refers to Kazakh history, literature, and traditions. Politicians may invoke symbols such as the yurt (traditional nomadic dwelling), eagle (national emblem), or dombra (musical instrument) to evoke national pride, identity, and unity among the population.

The key characteristic of historical narratives within political discourse refers to Kazakhstan's past, present, and future images. There are references to the country's nomadic heritage, Soviet legacy, and post-independence development, used to frame political messages and legitimize government policies. The identity politics, too, plays a significant role in Kazakhstan's multiethnic political discourse, reflected in notions of Kazakhstani citizenship, unity in diversity, and interethnic harmony as core values of the nation-building project, particularly in the context of maintaining social cohesion and stability. This leads to the characteristic of nation-building rhetoric, a political discourse which fosters a sense of national unity and cohesion among the Kazakhs. Leaders may use language emphasizing patriotism, territorial integrity, and shared values to promote loyalty to the state and allegiance to its institutions.

The key characteristic of modernization discourse is seen in Kazakhstan's efforts to modernize its economy and society, and revolves around themes of progress, innovation, and development. Leaders may use language highlighting infrastructure projects, economic diversification, and technological advancements to portray Kazakhstan as a forward-looking and dynamic nation. The political discourse for international relations in Kazakhstan further glorifies the country's role in regional and global affairs. Leaders may use diplomatic language to emphasize Kazakhstan's commitment to peace, stability, and cooperation with neighboring countries and international partners, particularly within the framework of organizations such as the Eurasian Economic Union and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Finally, the media control also dominates the political discourse, as Kazakhstan has made strides toward political liberalization and media pluralism in recent years. The political discourse is influenced by government control and censorship of the media. This may manifest in the use of official narratives, suppression of dissenting voices, and limited coverage of opposition viewpoints in mainstream media outlets.

Overall, the linguistic representation of political discourse in Kazakhstan reflects a complex interplay of cultural, historical, and political factors, shaping how the country's image is constructed and communicated to both domestic and international audiences.

Political Terminology and Political Discourse

The meaning of the word 'discourse' is the understanding of a statement or a living reality that is expressed through various strategies; the spoken word being one of these forms, but it also includes the unspoken word, symbolism, omissions and any action that reports a form of understanding of the world (Vega-Ramírez, 2023). With the increase in the modes of textual and spoken forms of communication, politicians use language and linguistic mechanisms to build up a 'discourse' that contributes significantly in building their relationship with people, especially in a multilingual country with many political parties with different ideologies (Solorio et al., 2021).

Using the descriptive and analytical method, an example can be cited of metaphors used to construct a political discourse (Satpayev, 2019). The following metaphors were found in a book: *foundation, door, room, brick, roof, block, monolithic, plot, entrance, exit and corridor*. Each word is a construction term, but used metaphorically in political discourse to build a certain political thought. For example, the word *foundation* is an important stage in the construction of a building. The use of the *foundation* metaphor by a politician emphasizes the need for a strong foundation on which the future of the country is built, as seen in these examples: "...the foundation for the emergence of the theory of interest groups; Power as a fundamental category of politics; ...the foundation of system analysis in relation to the whole society...", and so on.

Similarly, the metaphorical use of building components often refers to images of rooms, doors and windows. For example, the word, 'door' is often associated with the image of openness of the country: "But any transit is like a room...; But any transit is like a room with a lot of doors; ...due to the lack of 'doors' to the political system for incoming social impulses...", and so on. Another image is that of building materials such as 'brick' and 'stone': "... trying to dismantle the democratic foundations brick by brick; ... laid only the first brick in the foundation of the pluralistic theory of democracy..." Here the 'brick' for a building symbolizes the democratic foundation of a country in a democratic world. Like a huge building is built of individual bricks, the development of democracy also requires the efforts of each country.

In political discourse, the construction metaphor is always associated with the description of the future world and is also an important way of expressing the speaker's political intentions. For example, Gorbachev, as the leader of a great power, is able to demonstrate a vision of large-scale prospects, using construction metaphors not only as indications of such various components of national society that need to be reformed but also using the word 'home' as a metaphor for Europe, for the United States, for the whole world. To achieve the effect of persuasiveness, building metaphors are supplemented and clarified, as a result of which the entire discourse demonstrates a focus on the future.

Role of Political Discourse in Building Kazakhstan's Image

Nursultan Nazarbayev, the former President of Kazakhstan, played a significant role in shaping the country's image both domestically and internationally through his political speeches and initiatives (Burakanova, 2017). His political speeches have characteristics that contributed to the development of

Kazakhstan's image and affected people's perceptions. For instance, Nazarbayev's policy speeches emphasized Kazakhstan's commitment to modernization and development, positioning the country as an emerging market with significant growth potential. His vision for Kazakhstan as a hub of innovation, technology, and economic diversification definitely enhanced its image as a forward-looking and dynamic nation. In his speeches, Nazarbayev talks of diplomatic initiatives, such as hosting international forums and peace talks, taking Kazakhstan as a key player in regional and global affairs. His policy speeches on multilateral cooperation and conflict resolution bolstered Kazakhstan's image as a responsible and proactive actor on the world stage.

Nazarbayev's speeches also highlighted Kazakhstan's cultural heritage and identity as a source of national pride and unity. His promotion of Kazakh culture, language, and traditions contributed to a positive perception of Kazakhstan's rich cultural diversity and historical legacy. His policy speeches on economic reforms and investment promotion aimed to create a favorable business environment in Kazakhstan, attracting foreign investment and boosting economic growth. His commitments to improving infrastructure, reducing bureaucracy, and protecting investor rights enhanced perceptions of Kazakhstan as an attractive destination for business and investment. Nazarbayev's speeches on political stability and good governance reassured domestic and international audiences of Kazakhstan's commitment to democracy, rule of law, and social stability. His efforts to balance political continuity with gradual reforms built a perception of Kazakhstan as a politically stable and predictable environment for investment and development. Nazarbayev was a visionary and his political speeches projected Kazakhstan as a modern, dynamic, and forward-looking nation on the global stage. Nazarbayev's long tenure as president further provided a sense of stability and continuity in Kazakhstan's leadership, which could have positively influenced perceptions of the country as a reliable partner for investors, businesses, and international stakeholders.

Nazarbayev's speeches echo the traditional understanding of the state, which was expressed by the Kagan of the Second Turkic Khaganate Bilge-Kagan in a speech. Bilge Kagan started the speech addressing the chiefs and the people, listing them in hierarchical order, including all relatives of the Kagan, tribal chiefs and noble rulers, army and tax collection officials. In his speeches, Bilge-Kagan emphasized on qualities of rulers, their wisdom, masculinity and directness. Bilge Kagan believed that the people should live well and freely, otherwise they are slaves to foreigners, as seen in these words taken from the inscription of Kul-Tegin: "The whole mass of the Turkic people said so: I was one of the people who made up the tribal union, where is my tribal union now? Who am I mining tribal alliances for?" "... Where is my Kagan? To which Kagan do I give my labor and strength? They spoke, and, so to speak, became the enemy of the Kagan of the Tabgach people. Having become an enemy and not being able to make and create for himself, he again submitted to the state of Tabgach." This political discourse shows that Kagan had taken a large and multifaceted political task, which Bilge-Kagan formulated as follows, as seen in these words taken from the inscription of Kul-Tegin: "The nations inside are all under my control; I have arranged so many nations for everyone. If the Turkic khagan sits in the Otyuken rabble, who does not have the current corruption, then there is no constraint in the tribal union." These words made people remain loyal to Bilge-Kagan, not wander around foreign countries, not listen to instigators, not rebel and not fight with each other, thus contributed to building a peaceful nation's image of Kazakhstan.

With the past legacy, Kazakhstan has thus built up an image of a political system closer to the traditional Turkic political leadership, which made a great impact on the formation of Kazakhstan's political image, that of an independent state, believing in principles of peaceful coexistence with all countries of the world, strengthening peacekeeping activities and active cooperation in resolving international conflicts. [Gizdatov \(2019\)](#) believed that the concepts of power, ideology and history are defined within the framework of the theory of critical discourse analysis as basic concepts of Kazakh discourse, and their reflection in the associative consciousness of native speakers of Russian and Kazakh languages is also presented. The obtained results identify trends and cognitive strategies of official and mass discourse: from preserved Soviet stamps to emerging national identity.

Discussion

According to the semantics of the name Kazakhstan, the country is perceived as the country of the Kazakhs. At the same time, apart from some elements of Kazakh culture and language used in symbols, the formation of the national character of Kazakhstan is not progressing further. The official national policy does not provide for a titular nation and focuses on citizenship and equality of nations. This policy is the most effective in the modern conditions of Kazakhstan and the multinational nature of the country. However, the image of a multinational state cannot explain the semantics of the country's name, and here a separate development of the connection of the name Kazakhstan, with the Kazakhs and Kazakh history, is required. It is necessary to develop a detailed justification for this connection.

During the study, several strategies and tactics used in political discourses were recorded. However, their range varies depending on the nature of the political situation, nevertheless, the leading communicative strategies used in the Kazakh political discourse are visible. As a result of the study of the verbal image representation of Kazakhstan, we have established that it is especially clearly revealed when manipulative strategies, discrediting strategies, and information-interpretative and argumentative strategies are revealed. It should be noted that the manipulative strategy and the discrediting strategy, unlike others, are more subtle, implicit mechanisms of effect designed to awaken powerful destructive feelings.

Argumentative strategy is connected with the need to convince the addressee of the need to accept the thesis put forward. Pursuing the same goal as the manipulative one – to convince the addressee, the argumentative strategy opposes it, differing tactics type. Persuasion tactics are based on reasonable arguments, both rational and emotional. The argumentative strategy is expressed through reference to quantitative data through citations. Argumentativeness is reflected in the nomination of a position (thesis) and supporting evidence presented in different ways in media texts. If a controversial position is proven, argumentation can be as polemical as substantiated in case new information is inputted. Argumentative strategy is a way of reasoning in a process of which a thesis is put forward, the arguments in favor of its truth and possible opposing cases are considered, the basis and work are evaluated, the antithesis is refuted, and the thesis is proved. Argumentative influence is carried out with the help of logical inference, refutation of the opponent's arguments by opening contradictions, and rational justification of the assessment.

If one talks about the verbal implementation of argumentative tactics, then they are carried out, first of all, with the help of high-order communicative units (from expression to text), including direct nominations of objects, phenomena, and notions. The function of language means is to express such logical operations as judgment, conclusions, or a system of inferences. The positive image of Kazakhstan is formed with the help of argumentative strategy in press and media. For instance, the *Time* magazine writes, “Kazakhstan is currently the most prosperous country in the region, accounting for sixty percent of the gross domestic product of the entire Central Asia. To facilitate the attraction of money, Kazakhstan has established a single investment regime for both domestic and foreign investors, and over forty billion dollars in foreign direct investment have come to the country since 1993. Currently, the republic produces about 1.2 million barrels of oil daily, of which 80 percent are exported. The results are phenomenal.” (Biryukov, 2020). The use of digital media inspires trust in political discourse and convinces the audience of the favorable development of the economy of Kazakhstan, and forma public opinion. The persuasion tactics implemented in this media text also include the author's emotions through statements of this kind: “the most prosperous country in the region”, where results are phenomenal.

In Kazakhstani's political discourses, various linguistic and media techniques influence the mass consciousness. The creation of a positive or negative image of the country is facilitated by such linguistic and media techniques as context, quoting, quasi-quotation, presupposition, the initial assumption of the question, language play, image destruction, the introduction of true or false information, the use of contrast, which, within the framework of the above tactics, explicitly or implicitly form the necessary perception of the image. The creative potential of these techniques provides ample opportunities to use the full range of language tools to create the necessary connotation and appeal to the subconscious and emotions of the addressee in order to form the image of the country.

The development of political discourse as a reflection of the image of the country in Central Asia has been shaped by various historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors. The political discourse in the region evolved since the post-Soviet transition, when many central Asian countries, after gaining independence from the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, embarked on a process of nation-building and transition to democratic governance. Political discourse during this period often focused on promoting national identity, sovereignty, and independence, while also grappling with the challenges of transitioning from authoritarian rule to democracy. Their political discourses were resentment against authoritarianism and control and favoring democratic reforms. Many of these central Asian countries experienced a consolidation of power by ruling elites, leading to the establishment of authoritarian regimes, which was made possible mainly by political discourses of their leaders and due to limited space for dissenting voices and independent media.

In some of these central Asian countries, political discourse was also characterized by the cultivation of a cult of personality around the ruling leader. Political leaders of these countries were portrayed as strong, visionary figures who embody the aspirations and values of the nation, while dissent or criticism is marginalized or suppressed. In addition, central Asia's strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East also influenced the political discourse of the region. The governments often used nationalist rhetoric or appeal to pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic sentiments to mobilize support and legitimize their rule, while also balancing relationships with neighboring powers and international actors. Political discourse in Central Asia also emphasized the importance of economic development and modernization as a means of enhancing the country's image and status on the global stage. Governments promoted narratives

of progress and prosperity, while also attracted foreign investment and promoted international trade and cooperation. There was also regional cooperation and integration among all central Asian countries as a means of advancing their shared interests and addressing common challenges. Political discourse promoted such narratives of regional solidarity and cooperation, while also emphasized the importance of national sovereignty and independence. With the rise of social media and digital communication, political discourse in Central Asia has also become increasingly dynamic and diverse. Young people, in particular, became active participants in shaping political discourse, using online platforms to express their views, mobilize support, and challenge official narratives.

To sum up, the development of political discourse as a reflection of the image of the country in Central Asia has been shaped by a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors. While some countries have sought to promote narratives of progress, stability, and prosperity, others have faced challenges related to authoritarianism, censorship, and political repression. The evolving landscape of political discourse in Central Asia will continue to be influenced by internal and external dynamics, including shifts in governance, social change, and global geopolitics.

Conclusion

In summary, political discourse serves important functions in society and plays a significant role as a mass media channel that shapes public opinion. Its influence on agenda setting, persuasion, opinion formation, mobilization, and polarization underscores the importance of critically evaluating media messages and promoting media literacy among the public. A comprehensive study of the linguistic representation of Kazakhstan's image in political discourse allowed us to come to a few conclusions. First and foremost, when developing the linguistic concept of the formation of the image of Kazakhstan, the starting point was the definition developed as a result of the study of this complex, multidimensional phenomenon: image is a system of signs of an object, consciously or unconsciously formed with the help of linguistic techniques and means to create the desired impression of the object.

Secondly, the role of political discourse has emerged as a powerful resource through which representation, identification, construction, and promotion of the country's image are carried out. Political discourses change the traditional paradigms, attitudes, and stereotypes, and not only reflect political consciousness and political situations but also qualitatively transform them, subjecting it to evaluation and developing the relations (positive or negative) of various groups of people to the events and processes of real life. Thirdly, it was also concluded that the external expression of the assessment of an object by political consciousness is its image, the formation of which occurs either purposefully, under the influence of mass consciousness, or spontaneously – under the direct influence of life circumstances, specific experiences, and traditions.

Last, but not the least, this was also evident that political terminology plays a pivotal role in shaping the image of a country through discourse, serving as a potent means of language representation. This study delved into the intricate interplay between political terminology, discourse, and the construction of a country's image, elucidating the mechanisms by which language influences perceptions and narratives. Through a multidisciplinary approach drawing on linguistics, political science, and cultural studies, the study analyzes how political actors strategically deploy language to articulate values, ideologies, and policy agendas. By examining specific examples of political discourse and terminology, the study explores how linguistic framing shapes public perceptions and contributes to the cultivation of a positive or negative national image. Through qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis, the study sheds light on the dynamics of image construction and the implications of image representation for domestic politics, international relations, and public diplomacy.

Ultimately, this study succeeded in understanding of the role of language in shaping perceptions of nations in the contemporary global context, offering insights into the complex relationship between political terminology, discourse, and the image of the country. Moreover, the study investigates the role of political discourse in shaping diplomatic relations, influencing public opinion, and informing public diplomacy efforts. The findings of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities of political communication and image construction in Central Asia. By shedding light on the relationship between political discourse and national image, the study offers insights into the dynamics of governance, diplomacy, and public opinion in the region, with implications for policy, diplomacy, and cross-cultural understanding.

To conclude, the future research prospects in this domain are determined by the fact that its results and materials can be in demand not only in the philological branch of science but also in other domains of humanities – history, sociology, political science, and may also be of interest to the correction of linguistic, and information and image policy. This study lays the groundwork for further interdisciplinary research, offering valuable insights into the complex interplay between language, politics, and national identity. Overall, national identity was seen as a multifaceted concept in the political discourse of Central Asian countries, encompassing historical, cultural, linguistic, religious, and geopolitical dimensions. It serves as a

unifying force that shapes perceptions of collective belonging and informs policies and actions aimed at preserving and promoting the unique identity of each country in the region.

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