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THE IMPORTANCE OF LEXICAL MEANS IN THE FORMATION OF MEDIA NEWS DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Media news discourse, as one of the main communicative domains that conveys information to society, is characterized by specific linguistic features. Lexical means play a significant role in the formation of this discourse. The choice of words used in news texts, including terminology, socio-political vocabulary, evaluative expressions, and emotionally colored words, determines how information is presented to the audience. Through lexical means, events can be described more clearly, accurately, and effectively, while also shaping whether the news is delivered in a more objective or subjective manner. Lexical units employed in media discourse not only ensure the clarity and promptness of information but also serve to attract the audience's attention and contribute to the formation of public opinion. In particular, when covering current socio-political events, journalists widely use terminological vocabulary, metaphorical expressions, and evaluative lexical elements. These linguistic devices enrich the semantic content of the news and enhance its communicative impact.

Keywords: *media discourse, news text, lexical means, socio-political vocabulary, communicative impact*

Introduction

The media environment constitutes one of the central spheres of communication in contemporary society, playing a significant role in the production, circulation, and interpretation of information. News discourse is not limited to reporting events; it also contributes to the formation of public opinion and the social interpretation of political, economic, and cultural realities. Within this process, lexical choice is particularly important, as words, terms, expressions, and lexical constructions shape both the infor-

mational content of news and its evaluative dimension.

Lexical units in media discourse operate in close interaction with social, political, and cultural contexts. Habibova (2019b) emphasizes the relationship between linguistic choice and the sociopolitical context of communication, demonstrating that language in political communication functions not merely as a means of transmitting information but also as an instrument of communicative influence. From this perspective, terminology, metaphors, evaluative vocabulary, and other

lexical resources may contribute to particular representations and interpretations of political and social events.

The complexity of these processes requires an interdisciplinary approach to media language. As Tuktayeva (2023) notes, contemporary media-text analysis draws on cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, critical linguistics, functional stylistics, pragmatics, rhetorical criticism, and linguoculturology. The integration of these approaches makes it possible to examine media discourse at several interconnected levels, including its semantic structure, communicative functions, ideological dimensions, and sociocultural context. Such methodological diversity is particularly relevant because media texts simultaneously reflect linguistic choices and broader social processes.

Within this interdisciplinary framework, the present study focuses specifically on the lexical dimension of media news discourse. Particular attention is given to word choice, international vocabulary, terminology, evaluative and expressive lexis, metaphors, and recurrent lexical combinations. These resources perform more than an informative function: they contribute to framing events, constructing evaluative meanings, and shaping the communicative and ideological orientation of news. Investigating their functional and semantic characteristics is therefore essential for understanding how contemporary media discourse constructs and communicates representations of social and political reality.

Research Methods

Several complementary methods are employed in this study. Discourse analysis is used to examine how lexical choices function in news texts and contribute to their communicative and ideological meanings. Lexical-semantic analysis focuses on the meanings and contextual functions of words and expressions, particularly international vocabulary, terminology, and stable word combinations. The comparative method is applied to identify similarities and differences in lexical choices across newspapers and online news platforms, especially in reports covering the same or similar events. Finally, the descriptive method is used to classify the observed lexical patterns and present the findings sys-

tematically. Together, these methods provide a comprehensive framework for examining the functional and semantic characteristics of lexical units in media news discourse.

Results

The impact of news is closely related to the linguistic choices through which events are represented. Bell (1991) emphasizes the importance of lexical and grammatical selection in the construction of news discourse, suggesting that linguistic form is integral to the representation and interpretation of events. From this perspective, word choice, syntactic structure, and evaluative language are not merely stylistic features but important components of media framing. The same event may therefore acquire different semantic and evaluative dimensions depending on how it is linguistically constructed.

This tendency is particularly evident in international coverage of political and economic events. Expressions such as “*Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has reshaped the geopolitical landscape of Europe and intensified global security concerns*” (The Washington Post, 2022) and “*Western allies imposed new sanctions as geopolitical tensions continued to escalate*” (The Guardian, 2022) illustrate how lexical units such as *geopolitical landscape*, *sanctions*, and *security concerns* situate events within broader political and security frameworks. Such choices perform not only an informative but also an interpretative function by foregrounding particular dimensions of the reported events.

Corpus-based research provides further support for this argument. Hameed et al. (2020) demonstrate that recurrent lexical patterns in media discourse contribute to particular representations of political and social realities. Habibova (2025), from a related perspective, examines the manipulative potential of linguistic units in political discourse and shows how strategically selected expressions may acquire persuasive and evaluative functions in specific communicative contexts. Although political and news discourse are not identical, both demonstrate the capacity of lexical choice to frame events and influence their interpretation. Lexical selection can therefore be regarded as a significant mechanism through which media

discourse constructs, evaluates, and communicates social and political realities.

Terms such as *sanctions*, *geopolitical tensions*, *economic crisis*, and *diplomatic efforts* contribute to the political and ideological framing of news rather than merely describing events. This can be observed in expressions such as “*Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has reshaped the geopolitical landscape of Europe*” (The Washington Post, 2022), “*Western allies have imposed sweeping sanctions on Russia in response to the invasion*” (BBC News, 2023), and “*European leaders warned that rising geopolitical tensions could threaten global security*” (The Guardian, 2022). Lexical units such as *geopolitical landscape*, *sanctions*, and *global security* place the reported events within broader political and security frameworks, illustrating how recurrent lexical strategies contribute to the discursive construction of news.

Lexical framing may also interact with intertextuality in constructing ideological meaning. Zhang (2019) argues that intertextual relations in media discourse contribute to the formation of ideological positions and may influence readers’ interpretations of events. References to official statements, previous reports, quotations, and other texts establish connections between current news and already existing discourses. These connections provide readers with a broader interpretative framework while simultaneously foregrounding particular perspectives. Intertextuality can therefore be regarded as an important discursive mechanism through which media texts construct meaning, reproduce ideological positions, and potentially influence public perception.

Boyko (2023) associates lexical innovation in contemporary media discourse with changing political, social, and technological realities. Global events such as armed conflicts, pandemics, economic crises, and technological developments introduce new concepts into public communication and may also increase the frequency or modify the contextual meanings of existing lexical units. As one of the principal channels of public communication, the media plays an important role in disseminating such vocabulary and integrating it into broader public discourse. The international coverage of the

Russia–Ukraine war provides a relevant example. Expressions such as *geopolitical tensions*, *energy crisis*, and *information warfare* have become particularly prominent in reporting on the conflict. In the statement “*Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has triggered a global energy crisis and intensified geopolitical tensions*” (The Guardian, 2022), the expressions *energy crisis* and *geopolitical tensions* connect the military conflict with its wider economic and political consequences. Similarly, *information warfare* conceptualizes information and communication as integral dimensions of contemporary conflict. These expressions should not necessarily be regarded as newly created lexical units; rather, their increased frequency and context-specific meanings demonstrate how existing vocabulary can acquire renewed relevance in response to major global events. Media discourse therefore functions not only as a space in which lexical innovations emerge and circulate but also as an environment in which established lexical units undergo semantic actualization and become associated with new political and social realities.

According to Ozyumenko (2017), in the context of information warfare, media discourse functions as an important means of ideological influence and public opinion formation. The selection of facts and lexical resources, the formulation of headlines, and the organization of commentary may all contribute to particular representations of political realities. From this perspective, media discourse functions not merely as a channel of information but also as a mechanism of ideological framing.

This tendency can be observed in international news coverage of the war in Ukraine. For example, the statement “*Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has reshaped the geopolitical landscape of Europe and intensified global security concerns*” (The Washington Post, 2022) frames the conflict within a broader geopolitical and security context. Similarly, the expression “*Western allies increased sanctions against Russia amid escalating geopolitical tensions*” (The Guardian, 2022) employs politically marked lexical units such as *Western allies*, *sanctions*, and *geopolitical tensions*. Such lexical choices extend the representation of the conflict beyond its military

dimension and situate it within a wider political and ideological framework. In this way, lexical selection contributes to the framing of events and may influence how readers interpret their significance.

It is evident that media discourse in the context of information warfare performs not only an informative function but also ideological and communicative functions. The lexical resources used in news language, particularly international terminology and evaluative expressions, may influence public opinion and contribute to the interpretation of events within particular ideological frameworks. As Habibova (2019b) demonstrates in her analysis of political communication, linguistic choices are closely related to the social and political context in which communication takes place. This relationship becomes particularly significant in media discourse, where lexical choices may affect how political events and actors are represented. International vocabulary occupies an important place among the lexical resources of contemporary media discourse. In the context of globalization, political, economic, and social developments increasingly cross-national boundaries, which encourages the frequent use of internationally recognizable terms in news reporting. Words such as *policy*, *strategy*, *diplomacy*, *conflict*, *sanctions*, *cooperation*, and *integration* are regularly encountered in reports dealing with international affairs. Similarly, combinations such as *geopolitical tensions*, *political landscape*, *economic crisis*, and *security policy* contribute to the terminological representation of global political and economic processes.

At the same time, media language is not limited to neutral terminology. Evaluative vocabulary, emotionally marked expressions, and metaphors are also widely employed to emphasize particular aspects of an event. Expressions such as *major breakthrough*, *serious threat*, and *dramatic escalation* introduce an evaluative dimension into news reporting, while metaphorical combinations such as *political storm* and *economic pressure* may intensify the effect of the message. This observation is consistent with Habibova's (2025) study of the manipulative potential of phraseological units in political discourse, which draws attention to the per-

suasive and evaluative functions that linguistic expressions may acquire in a particular communicative context. In media discourse, such lexical choices can similarly contribute to framing events and guiding their interpretation by the audience.

The selection of lexical units in media texts serves both informational and communicative purposes. Journalists employ terminology, international vocabulary, and politically marked expressions to represent social and political events within particular semantic frameworks. Terms such as *geopolitical position*, *humanitarian crisis*, and *diplomatic relations*, for instance, contribute to the terminological precision of news discourse.

A more explicitly evaluative use of language can be observed in the headline "*Təxribat cəhdləri və xəyanət ssenariləri iflasa məhkumdur*" ("Attempts at provocation and scenarios of betrayal are doomed to fail") (Azərbaycan, 2026). The expressions *təxribat cəhdləri* ("attempts at provocation") and *xəyanət ssenariləri* ("scenarios of betrayal") carry strong negative connotations, framing the actions as deliberate and threatening. The expression *iflasa məhkumdur* ("doomed to fail"), in turn, conveys a categorical evaluation rather than a neutral description of events. The headline therefore illustrates how lexical choices can combine informative, evaluative, and persuasive functions. By employing negatively marked and ideologically loaded vocabulary, the text not only reports on an event but also frames its interpretation, potentially shaping the audience's perception and emotional response.

Another example is the headline "*Erməni məkrinin şantajı*" ("Blackmail of Armenian Treachery") (Azərbaycan, 2026). The lexical units *məkr* ("treachery") and *şantaj* ("blackmail") are strongly evaluative and carry distinctly negative connotations. While *məkr* evokes notions of deceit, concealed intentions, and deliberate hostility, *şantaj* implies coercion through pressure or threats. Their combination therefore constructs an explicitly critical and accusatory representation of the event. Such lexical choices demonstrate that media language may function beyond the transmission of factual information. By foregrounding negatively marked meanings, the headline frames the event within a par-

ticular evaluative and ideological perspective and may influence the reader's interpretation of the subject. Thus, emotionally charged lexical units function as important framing devices in media news discourse, contributing to both its persuasive force and ideological orientation.

In addition, expressive lexis plays an important role in media news discourse. Expressive words and phrases determine the emotional tone of news and attract the reader's attention. These lexical tools are particularly used in social and political news to highlight the dramatic or tense nature of events (Habibova, 2019a). Expressions such as "*intense confrontation, sharp reaction, important decision, and historic event*" strengthen the semantic weight of news and facilitate a more impactful presentation of information.

Metaphors and other figurative expressions are also key components of lexical resources in media discourse. Metaphorical expressions help explain complex political and social processes in a simpler and more comprehensible form. For example, phrases such as "*political arena*", "*information warfare*", "*economic pressure*", "*diplomatic bridges*" not only enrich semantics but also increase the impact of the news. These lexical units in media texts perform not only an informative but also an interpretive function.

In the headline "*Dəmir yumruq yerindədir, gücümüzü sınağa çəkməyin*" (*The iron fist is in place, do not test our strength*) (Azərbaycan, 2026), the lexical units carry metaphorical meaning and serve to convey the political message more effectively. The phrase "*The iron fist*" does not have a literal physical meaning but metaphorically represents the state's power, decisiveness, and military-political strength. Such metaphorical expressions help present complex political and social processes in a simpler and more understandable form. Through these figurative expressions, readers grasp the intended message more easily and understand the essence of the events more clearly.

Another important feature of lexical resources in media news discourse is their ideological and pragmatic function. Lexical choice is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a communicative strategy through which particular aspects of an event may be foreground-

ed or backgrounded. Consequently, the same event can be represented differently across media outlets, producing distinct interpretative frameworks. This can be observed in the statement: "*European leaders have expressed concern over rising geopolitical tensions in the region, emphasizing the need for diplomatic dialogue and international cooperation*" (BBC News, 2023). The expressions *geopolitical tensions*, *diplomatic dialogue*, and *international cooperation* belong to the conventional terminology of political and diplomatic discourse. While they contribute to the formal and relatively restrained register of the report, their function is not entirely descriptive. The combination of *tensions* with *dialogue* and *cooperation* constructs a problem-solution frame in which diplomatic engagement is foregrounded as an appropriate response to political instability. A different lexical configuration appears in *The Washington Post*: "*The United States has already deployed a number of economic measures to hurt Russia, including imposing sanctions on its central bank and on oligarchs close to Putin*" (The Washington Post, 2022). Here, *economic measures*, *sanctions*, *central bank*, and *oligarchs* situate the event within political and economic discourse. Particularly significant is the combination of the relatively institutional term *economic measures* with the verb *hurt*, which explicitly foregrounds the intended effect of these measures on Russia. Thus, the passage combines specialized terminology with evaluatively relevant lexical choices, presenting economic policy as an instrument of political pressure. These examples demonstrate that political and economic terminology in media discourse does more than ensure precision. Through contextual combination and lexical framing, such units contribute to the construction of particular interpretations of events. Their ideological and pragmatic potential therefore emerges not only from the meanings of individual words but also from the semantic relations established between them within the news text.

Conclusion

Lexical resources play a central role in shaping media news discourse, performing not only informative but also interpretative, evaluative, and ideological functions. The analysis demonstrates that lexical choice, terminology,

international vocabulary, metaphors, and emotionally marked expressions influence both the semantic structure of news and the way events are represented and perceived by the audience.

The growing use of international terms such as *policy*, *strategy*, *sanctions*, *cooperation*, *geopolitical tensions*, and *information warfare* reflects the increasingly global nature of contemporary political, economic, and social processes. While terminological vocabulary contributes to precision and an-

alytical clarity, metaphorical and evaluative expressions enhance the interpretative and persuasive potential of media texts.

Thus, lexical resources constitute an essential component of media news discourse, shaping its semantic, stylistic, and communicative dimensions. Their purposeful use contributes not only to effective information transmission but also to the framing and interpretation of events within the contemporary media environment.

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