

# Use of Gender Oriented Lexicon in Advertising as a Factor of Influence on Identity Formation

Anna Malomoshnova

Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan

Gulmira Musinova

Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan

Kuralai Tulebayeva

Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan

Shynar Seitova

Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan

Bakhyt Kokebayeva

Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan

**Abstract**—Given the controversy surrounding the issue of gender equality, interest in gender stereotypes in advertising is currently very relevant. The purpose of the study is to analyse the vocabulary in advertising texts to identify gendered words, phrases or stylistic devices. Methods - content analysis was conducted on the basis of a sample of advertising materials on media boards, on the Internet, and in advertisements. To analyse the frequency of use and context, lexical items were coded based on their gender marking (masculine, feminine, gender-neutral). The results of the study revealed the communicative and stylistic features of Kazakh advertising. It has been determined that the main function of advertising is to influence users, forming a holistic image of society and uniting them with a single ideology. The linguistic features of Kazakh advertising texts have pragmatic, psychological and purely linguistic aspects. The general picture of the use of gender-oriented vocabulary in advertising is as follows: almost a quarter of advertisements are gender imbalanced, and about ten per cent spread gender stereotypes. In particular, women are often portrayed as housewives and men are presented as successful professionals or leaders. **Conclusions** - Given the country's aspirations for globalisation, the use of statements and images in advertising that emphasise the superiority of one gender over the other or reinforce stereotypical roles for men and women should be reconsidered in the future.

**Index Terms**—media text, advertising language, gender marking, stylistic devices

## I. INTRODUCTION

Along with the development of the market, advertising has emerged as a means of informing about the features of the goods and services offered, familiarising people with their benefits, increasing demand for these goods and services, and becoming a mechanism of society that operates in a positive way. Today, advertising is a means of communication in the graphic space of society. Although advertising is perceived negatively by society, it has become a determining factor and develops public and social relations (Malomoshnova & Musinova, 2023).

The issue of gender in advertising is most often raised because of sexism. The different treatment of men and women in commercial messages is accused of reflecting and reproducing unequal perceptions of both sexes, as well as of harming women's dignity. Due to today's trends that protect women's rights, this issue is constantly becoming the subject of special attention of scholars (Mutalieva et al., 2020). Despite the fact that the issue of gender in Kazakh advertising still has a significant social visibility, contemporary media texts demonstrate neutrality by directing attention to consumption and commercial communications (Zharkynbekova & Aimoldina, 2022). Despite the fact that the issue of gender in advertising is being actively researched, there are still gaps that characterise this paradoxical situation. There is still a small number of related works and publications, especially in comparison to the number of English-language publications.

The rapid growth and development of Kazakh cultural studies allowed for a very early focus on the phenomenon of mass culture, in particular as a tool of socialisation, including in terms of images and gender roles (Igissinova et al., 2023). In general, gender studies have emerged as a full-fledged branch of social sciences with its own specialists, journals and universities. In the case of advertising, it is studied as a fundamental dimension of “consumer culture”, a field that attempts to think sociologically about the emergence of consumer society, the power of the modern

commercial system and its connections to culture and identity (Gey & Becan, 2024). Therefore, at the intersection of gender studies and consumer sociology, the topic of gender and advertising occupies a special place.

Gender studies on advertising are mostly based on a critical perspective. Osmonova et al. (2023) consider the development of the advertising phenomenon to be characteristic of a new phase of the country's development and political perspectives on globalisation. Contemporary authors who continue to advocate for condemnation of inequalities in the treatment of genders in messages do not link them to heavy hypotheses about large social systems of domination, such as capitalism or patriarchy (Igissinova et al., 2024). Rather, they are interested in local cultural factors and are part of the pragmatic logic of controlling media representation of women.

Advertising in Kazakhstan takes place in a cultural context that has seen an unprecedented evolution of social gender roles over the past thirty years. However, the media space still creates a variety of images that do not correspond to a fixed vision of social gender roles. Research on gender issues in advertising still suffers from a double illegitimacy. Firstly, due to the division of work on “gender” between “feminist” works and classical humanities disciplines, approaching gender at different levels and with different problems (Alimzhanova, 2019). Secondly, various aspects of gender studies (stereotypes of gender roles and attitudes, couple sociology, distribution of household tasks, human sexuality, etc.) are studied in sociology and anthropology, while the analysis of vocabulary in advertising texts to identify gendered words, phrases or stylistic devices is an innovation. Linguistic phenomena in advertising are inferior to the phenomena of consumption and commercial communication. Advertising is still mostly viewed from the perspective of sociology. This paper therefore aims to annul these distinctions in academic policy and research tradition and to direct a gendered approach to advertising research.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The use of special vocabulary in advertising is intended to influence a wide audience. It is a particularly manipulative element, in particular, due to the combination of verbal and non-verbal means of communication (Vainola, 2024). Despite the active involvement of scientists in this issue, the pragmatic aspect of advertising is an important area of research (Malomoshnova & Khizhnyak, 2022). In the world of advertising, direct influence on the minds of consumers is a real art. Advertising not only shapes economic processes, it also calculates the ideological dimension of consumers (Montano et al., 2024). Therefore, advertising is one of the key instruments of mass influence.

Today, in the light of global transformations, scholars' attention is focused on the issues of gendered vocabulary in advertising (Montés, 2019). This type of vocabulary plays a leading role as it shapes social identity. In this context, (Deng, 2024) notes that depending on the type of advertising content, attention should always be paid to its pragmatic aspect. Globalisation is changing traditions, borders and cultures, uniting different nations into a single information space. Of course, globalisation has its own impact on Kazakhstani advertising discourse. More and more often, the advertising discourse is influenced by foreign trends. This, in turn, contradicts national values (Nam, 2023).

Research on the sociological aspects of modernity demonstrates the dominance of borrowed concepts and language constructs. Much of the content is focused on products that are popular in the world (Orazbekova et al., 2020). There is a tendency to create an advertising message based on a simple translation, which leads to the emergence of elements that may be alien to the Kazakh worldview (Kapasova & Yelikpaev, 2017). At the same time, advertising is a means of manipulating public attention and plays a social role.

Among the works on the Kazakhstani advertising space, the perception of advertising largely depends on the age characteristics of the audience (Zhumanbayeva & Yespekova, 2024). In addition, O'Neil (2020) emphasises that the process of creating advertising content is complex and financially expensive. In Kazakhstan, mechanical translation is predominantly used, which sometimes distorts the natural structure of the Kazakh language and its grammatical features (Seidenova & Nurkhanov, 2023).

Thus, research into the use of gender-oriented vocabulary in advertising is a relevant area. The presented work will allow us to study linguistic features and assess their impact on social identity.

Advertising discourse and media texts reveal how social identity and gender perceptions are formed. In the vocabulary of advertising discourse, language forms range from traditional to modified (graphic highlighting of words, playing with sounds, audio amplification of the message) (Shariq, 2020).

Expressive means are actively used in advertising. The most common stylistic devices are metaphor, personification and hyperbole, which reinforce certain stereotypes. From the perspective of gender, in Kazakhstani advertising, the image of women is often metaphorised and depicted as the keeper of the home, while men are symbols of power and success (Kasanova & Ibraeva, 2024).

Kazakh advertising tends to adapt to foreign models. This strongly influences the language norms and gender perceptions of Kazakhs. Headlines and imperative sentences are actively used. They are a powerful tool of influence, attracting attention and shaping attitudes towards the product. The use of emotional appeals and superlatives creates a sense of urgency, especially in advertising targeting women (Seidenova & Nurkhanov, 2023).

Gender-oriented advertising has a powerful impact on consumer habits. Advertising shapes social stereotypes, so advertising should promote equality and change traditional perceptions of the role of men and women.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research method was content analysis, which aimed to analyse the vocabulary in advertising texts to identify gendered words, phrases or stylistic devices. The sample was collected on the basis of advertising materials (texts, videos, audio, banners), i.e. from advertisements aimed at promoting various products or services. The lexical items were coded based on their gender marking (masculine, feminine, gender-neutral).

#### *A. Participants*

The proposed study focuses on information collected from advertising materials. The data included both vocabulary and images. Since the materials were collected from visualised advertising, which is usually based on slogans, the ladies also have a subjective perception of the semiotic codes of advertising images. The materials were collected from various media platforms. The selection criteria were gender-specific and gender-differentiated, so they included advertisements for cosmetics, cars, household goods, and jobs. This methodology was used to ensure that the sample was representative of the use of gendered vocabulary in advertising.

#### *B. Procedure*

To analyse gendered vocabulary in advertising, data was collected from various sources: media boards, the Internet, and media texts.

##### *(a). Data Collection*

Data was selected based on its accessibility and relevance to gender representation in advertising. Slogans, media texts and multimedia content were coded and classified according to the advertised product or gender targeting.

##### *(b). Data Analysis*

The content analysis approach was used to analyse gendered vocabulary in advertising. The methodology included lexical coding and interpretation of certain semiotic codes of the visualised adverts according to the subjective perception of the authors. The advertising vocabulary and slogans were systematically coded and divided into gender categories: masculine, feminine and gender neutral. To interpret the results of gender representation in advertising, the data were interpreted by generalisation.

### IV. RESULTS

As part of the proposed work, a content analysis of advertising messages was conducted, which were analysed during 2022-2024. This study aimed primarily to deepen knowledge about the practices of creating advertising, given that they relate to the strategies of social actors who are advertising designers and the social logic that structures the advertising field. Gendered advertising images are subject to a whole series of communication, organisational and commercial strategies that are implemented by different types of actors pursuing different, sometimes contradictory interests. Banner ads that did not contain slogans, but were only visualised in the paper, were evaluated and commented on in terms of the authors' subjective perception.

Thus, the advertising interpretation of gender roles was to measure the distribution and origin of different gendered social models by comparing traditional and alternative models. The former corresponded to a clear specification of roles according to sex and a higher value attached to male characters and activities. The latter, on the other hand, corresponded to the exchange of roles between men and women, and to relationships that are either egalitarian or invert the relationship of dominance by reversing the attribution of power to the feminine. The overall picture shows the persistence of symbolic asymmetry between men and women. But within this, there is a movement to reconfigure gender models towards greater diversity. First of all, this allows us to clarify the functioning of advertising expression in the field of gender equality, which Kazakhstan is striving for, and to update the point of view on the evidence of advertising in relation to gender inequality.

However, at the first level of description, Kazakh advertising continues to predominantly associate certain places and activities with one or the other gender. Thus, almost three quarters of the characters presented correspond to the traditional model. The remaining alternative images consist mostly of mixed roles, with less than ten per cent of role reversals. Of all the media banners analysed, women's roles are most often associated with beauty, family and motherhood, followed by social relationships and the domestic world. On the contrary, male characters are most often represented in business roles. The second most frequent are traditional male roles: father, manager and various professionals (craftsman, athlete, driver, etc.), and finally, male roles also related to beauty and body care.

To determine the constants in the interpretation of gender roles, we can compare the actions associated with each genre, the places in which they take place, and the characters with whom they are associated (Figure 1):

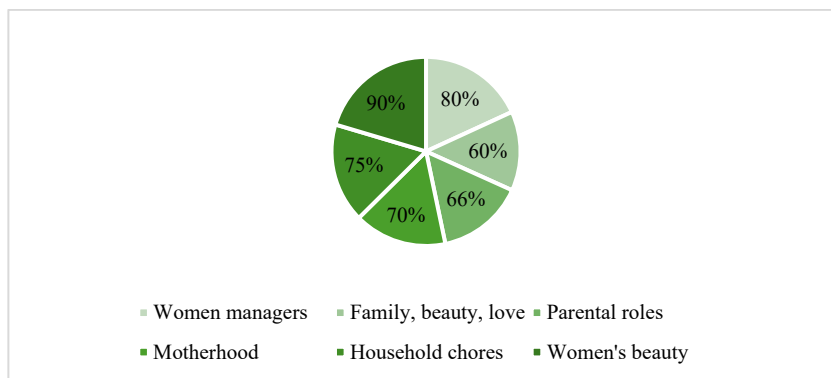


Figure 1. Indicators of the Main Trends in Women's Advertising in Kazakhstan  
Source: authors' own development

The following figure shows the male gender representation in Kazakh advertising (Figure 2):

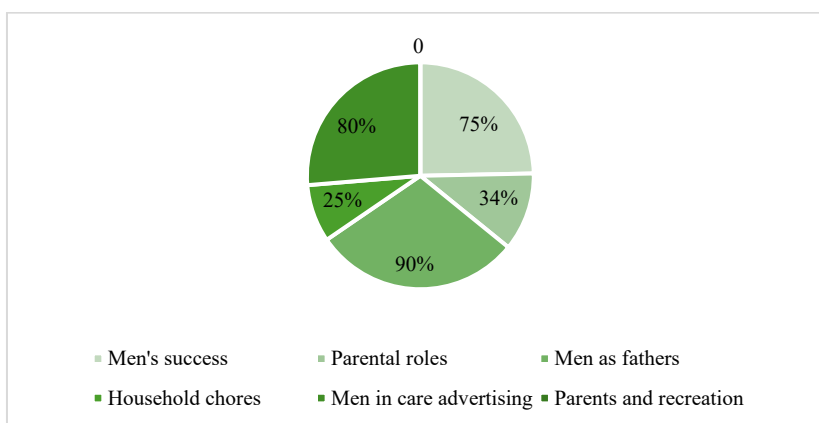


Figure 2. Indicators of the Main Trends in Men's Advertising in Kazakhstan  
Source: authors' own development

Thus, the diagrams demonstrate that the leading characters are more often men than women, who tend to appear outside of professional life or in managerial positions. Male characters are more often associated with their professional identity and assert it in different types of territories. On the contrary, female managers appear only in the work context and change their identity along with their territory. Thus, constructing one's own identity at work remains a male characteristic.

The areas of success differ for each gender. While men's success is often related to work, it is more diverse for women, remaining most often related to their traditional areas of competence: love, seduction, beauty treatments, leisure, family. Roles of parenthood still dominate. However, in advertising, male characters are characterised as fathers only because they are associated with the whole family and mother, while female characters can be characterised as mothers regardless of the presence of the family environment. Finally, mothers are more likely to be alone with their children and are more often associated with educational activities and household chores. The image of a father is more often associated with recreation.

Gender structural differences are particularly pronounced in the field of care and beauty. In fact, beauty remains a female characteristic in advertising. Among men, advertising specialises in the care sector. Among women, gendered models include leisure, family and home. Female models have a more general use, i.e. beauty is a more general quality for women than for men. In addition, in this sector, female characters still strongly conform to the traditional beauty/passivity image. When women appear in the context of care, it is usually their only activity. Conversely, male characters in men's hygiene and beauty products are active and defined by their external activities (security guards, divers, sports coaches, rescuers, pilots, etc.).

At the lexical level, the preliminary results revealed that advertising for women can be divided into three main categories: beauty products, products for housewives and mothers, and products for children. Women's advertising is dominated by informative texts and headlines, where the brand is mentioned first, followed by a motivational slogan (Table 1):

TABLE 1  
 LEXICAL AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC ELEMENTS OF WOMEN'S ADVERTISING

Advertisements with company and product names	perfumes «Chopard. Happy Spirit», «Jadore. Dior», «Jeanne. Lanvin» годиници «Calvin Klein», «Swiss made»
Provocative headlines	«Әр адам бір әңгіме айтады, сенікі керемет» (Кларинс) «Сіздің бейнеңіз - сіздің қаруыңыз!» (Феур) «Жібектің жеңілдігі. Қызықты түс» (Oriflame) «Онымен бәрі бірегей» (Эсте Лаудер) «Келли Калече. «Қызықты саяхат» (Гермес) «Үйлесімділік бәрі емес, азғыру тым күшті» (Hugo Boss)
Headlines with useful product properties	«Жасты жеңу теріні тазартудан басталады!» (L'Oreal) «Тырнақ пилинг проблемасын жояды!» (Салли Хансен)
Questioning headings	«Сіз ақылды немесе әдемі адамдарды ұнатасыз ба?» «Мен тандауым керек пе?» (Орифлэйм) «Мінсіз жас?» (Джевенши)
Slogans emphasising the benefits of a company or product	«ӘНШІ – уақыт сынынан өткен» «Сіз оған лайықсыз» (L'Oreal) «Faberlic – косметика, оттегі сияқты қажет!»
Slogans with a direct appeal to the buyer	«Spotlight - сіздің жұлдызды уақытыңыз» (Avon) «Мэри Кэй – сіздің сүйікті өніміңіз және тұрақты табысыңыз» «Өзіңе қамқор бол» (Гарниер)
Epithets in advertising	сезімтал тері, серпімді құрылым, жарқыраған жылтыр тамаша макияж, күшті шаш, біркелкі түс, айқын сызықтар керемет көрініс, мінсіз көрініс, ұзақ әсер ету, барқыт тері
Metaphors and similes in advertising	сәнді жасару, қызықты түс, жібек поцелу текстураның әуе жеңілдігі, терінің жарқырауы, жылтыр мен түстің ойыны сұлулық концентраттары, жібектей тегіс, барқыттай жұмсақ, алмастай күшті
Verbs that give dynamics	қалпына келтіреді, азайтады, арттырады, қалпына келтіреді, қатайтады белсендіру, ынталандыру, үлгі ету, жасау
Imperative forms of verbs in advertising	«Өмірден ләззат ал, әжім туралы ойлама!» «Болашаққа қош келдіңіз!» «Бірегей бол!» «Целлюлиттен құтылыңыз!»
Expressive syntactic constructions	«Revitalift Laser x3 күндізгі кремді қартаюға қарсы процедураларға батыл қарсы тұра алады!» «Сіз көп жылдар бойы жас қалғыңыз келе ме? Сонда сізге тек антиоксиданттар қажет!» «Екі білдіреді». Бір пакет. Бір шешім» «Қартаюға қарсы хирургия» «Әжімдерге қарсы инновация»

Source: authors' own development

At the phonetic level, the main characteristic of women's advertising is the dominance of consonant sounds, which makes the texts sound more attractive. The lexical content constructs a sensual image of a Kazakh beauty. The syntax in the advert is expressed in simple constructions. The imperative mood and adjectives dominate.

Thus, the use of gender-specific vocabulary in advertising has a great impact on identity formation. The selection of gendered vocabulary in advertising is determined by psychophysiological aspects: analytical style of thinking in men and imaginative style in women. The results demonstrate that the selection of lexical and stylistic means in advertising proportionally depends on gender stereotypes. Advertisements for women usually contain informative headlines, details, emotionally charged vocabulary, as well as questioning and motivating sentences that emphasise the emotional value of the product.

## V. DISCUSSION

The competition between the sexes is seen from an egalitarian point of view, namely through the manifestations of male dominance in the world (Whitehouse, 2022). However, today there is a trend towards changing roles between men and women. Such changes express the end of the evidence of male dominance and the problematic tensions that

characterise the current experience of gender roles (Ade, 2021). In the world of advertising, messages present a truncated vision of reality. They are also full of stereotypes and clichés.

In a tangent to the research presented here, Durbin et al. (2020) argue that the ultimate goal of advertising is to sell a brand, product or service. To do this, advertisers must make them desirable. To do this, advertising taps into the consumers' deepest desires. Relying on our own stereotypes, including gender stereotypes, advertising manipulates without seeking to revolutionise society. Thus, the stereotype, in this case gender, is closely linked to the advertising model, and is, so to speak, an obvious characteristic that is treated differentially in the hyperbolic portrayal of female and male characters against the background of what Leaf et al. (2022) call advertising hyperstereotypy. According to Sandhu (2019), the portrayal of women in advertising is a very sensitive topic that reflects the innovations of the era. Images of women reveal the questions that society raises about femininity.

Andzik et al. (2022) compare advertising images with social reality. Bronstein and Lambiase (2018) establish the parallel that while the former represent an ideal conception of the two sexes and their structural relationship, real expressions of femininity and masculinity also come from artificial poses. Advertising visualisation is a ritualisation of social ideals, such that everything that prevents the ideal from manifesting itself has been cut off, removed. In the same context, Klimek (2022) argues that the standardisation, exaggeration and simplification that characterise rituals in general are found in advertising poses, but taken to a higher level. Thus, if femininity and masculinity are ritualised in reality, they are hyper-ritualised in advertising visualisation. Advertising moves situations and characters away from reality by several degrees. An authentic representation of an ordinary scene with ordinary people is not of great interest to the consumer.

The caricature aspect in the world of advertising for women is very interesting, but it does not always correspond to reality. According to Błaż (2022), the specifics of the female advertising model have long been known: gentle, if not submissive, then seductive, if not mischievous, dependent, unreasonable, responsible, domestic. Advertisers have always presented this universe in different ways. Today, advertisers are partially changing this model. They still combine advertising of a successful woman, a mirror of men's values, and the crystallisation of society itself in evolution, while men, sometimes called “new fathers”, follow the opposite path.

However, in many countries with a long-established tradition, it is still difficult to deviate from the traditional image of women. In such countries, advertising constantly reproduces the duality between the female object and the housewife (Smagulova & Zharkynbekova, 2024). Despite the longevity of the archetypes, this topic is highly controversial. In some commercials, women construct their identity and claim the right to pleasure in the same way as men. If these images may seem new, they lock femininity into another old cliché, the erotic woman, certainly liberated but dependent on how men look at her. As Baskynbayeva et al. (2024) point out, for those who deny that many women today have broken norms and traditional forms of containment, and who see the place they give to controlled body display as a sign of “liberation”, it is enough to point out that this use of their own bodies remains quite obviously subordinated to a male point of view.

Weckend (2024) adds that in addition to erotic or pornographic images of women, hypersexualisation and sexual allusions are proliferating in the world of advertising, at the risk of being censored.

In addition to erotic or pornographic images of women, hypersexualisation and sexual allusions are rampant in the world of advertising, risking censorship. But sexism is not limited to this.

Apart from the sexual aspect, the most popular image is that of a housewife. At the level of this image, gender stereotypes transmit and reproduce very unequal social norms between men and women (Ndiritu et al., 2024). For women, the home, the private sphere, to which one can add explicit traits of seductress or sexual object. For men, the outside world, freedom, adventure, money, work. Women are regularly portrayed as an intermediary between the product and the consumer: her role as a hostess is emphasised (Pérez et al., 2022).

Thus, with the over-representation of the housewife or the seductress, advertising basically only reproduces and ritualises patriarchal society. Advertising rarely dares to present men and women in a balanced way, where they are engaged in, for example, non-traditional professions or are valued for their intellectual qualities. In terms of the professions practised, Birau et al. (2024) note a differential trend.

This distribution of advertising roles illustrates the greatest gender differentiation, where men, like women, do not necessarily want to be locked into the traditional roles assigned to them by advertising. In this context, Handforth (2022) notes that most advertisements featuring men and women more or less explicitly refer to the traditional division and hierarchy between the sexes. Thus, women often find themselves in subordinate or supporting roles.

Differentialism is manifested not only in the imagery of women, but also in neutrality and universality. Clarity continues to refer to the masculine, and difference to the feminine. Some scholars see this as gender discrimination (Shu & Huang, 2019).

Thus, we can see that the behaviour of men and women through images or text is still imbued with dependence and subordination.

Advertising promotes female sexuality, extreme standards of beauty or thinness, and women are simply assimilated into texts written exclusively in the masculine gender.

As we can see, advertising provides a deterministic reading of the relationship between men and women, even a reductionist one. Advertising discourse reduces people to standardised characteristics of the same group. Thus,

advertising provides a stigmatising stereotypical system, a real or imaginary attribute that discredits the person who possesses it.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The results of the content analysis of the use of gender-specific vocabulary in advertising have shown that advertising vocabulary and visualisation are direct factors influencing the formation of gendered identity in Kazakhstan's advertising. Advertising slogans contain a large number of stylistic devices that have a manipulative effect on gender. Advertising vocabulary and strategic focus can influence the formation of public perceptions of gender roles. The analysis of advertising visualisation showed that about ten per cent of advertisements spread gender stereotypes, and almost twenty-five per cent remain gender imbalanced. In Kazakhstan's advertising, women are still represented in traditional roles of housewives. Men are portrayed as successful executives and family fathers.

Given Kazakhstan's trend towards globalisation and gender equality, there is a need to review the use of statements and images in advertising that emphasise the superiority of one gender over the other. The perpetuation of stereotypical roles inhibits the development of gender equality.

Prospects for further research could focus on the impact of gender-labelled advertising on consumers' perceptions of social roles. For a better understanding of global trends, it is important to conduct a comparative analysis of Kazakhstani advertising with European models.

Despite the full disclosure of the topic presented, there are still limitations to the paper. The paper analyses only certain types of advertising, which do not reflect the whole picture of Kazakh advertising discourse. The subjective interpretation of advertising semiotic codes and media vocabulary may be subject to some variation.

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**Anna V. Malomoshnova.** Republic of Kazakhstan, October 5, 1976. Higher education: Qualification – Teacher of Russian Language and Literature, Semipalatinsk State Pedagogical Institute, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2006. Master of Philological Sciences, Kazakh Humanitarian-Legal Innovative University, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021. Senior Lecturer at the Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan. She has more than 15 years of teaching experience and currently works as a senior lecturer at the Department of Philology at Alikhan Bokeikhan University.



**Gulmira S. Musinova.** Republic of Kazakhstan, 04.11.1984 Higher education. Qualification “Teacher of the Kazakh language and literature” Semipalatinsk University named after M.O.Auezov, Semey. The Republic of Kazakhstan.

Master of Philology, Kazakh Humanitarian and Legal Innovation University, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2009. 6D020500 – “Philology” – Doctoral studies, Kazakh Humanitarian and Legal Innovation University, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021. Doctor of Philosophy PhD in the specialty 6D020500 – “Philology”. She has 15 years of teaching experience, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Philology, Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”. He is the author of more than 20 publications in peer-reviewed Kazakhstani and foreign journals. He has 4 monographs and 5 textbooks.



**Kuralai T. Tulebayeva.** Republic of Kazakhstan, 03/04/1982. Higher education. Qualification “Teacher of the Kazakh language and literature” Semipalatinsk State University Shakarim, Semey. Republic of Kazakhstan, 2003. Candidate of Philological Sciences. Al-Farabi National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2009. She has a teaching experience of 23 years, works as the Head of the Department of Philology of the Educational Institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”. He is the author of more than 50 publications in peer-reviewed Kazakhstani and foreign journals. He has 1 monograph and 3 textbooks. His research interest is focused on studying the history of Kazakh literature. He is a supervisor and mentor of young scientists (2 doctoral students have defended their dissertations). He has twice been awarded the title of “Best Teacher” (2013, 2024). He participates in scientific projects “Literary and cultural map of the Abai Region and digital integration (from folklore to the present day)” (2024-2026).



**Shynar B. Seitova.** Republic of Kazakhstan, 01.01.1960 Higher education. Qualification “Teacher of the Kazakh language and literature” Semipalatinsk Pedagogical Institute named after N.K. Krupskaya, Semey. Republic of Kazakhstan, 1980. Candidate of Philological Sciences. A. Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics. Almaty, Kazakhstan, 1999. Doctor of Philological Sciences. A. Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics. Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2009.

She has 35 years of teaching experience, works as a professor at the Department of Philology of the educational institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”. She held the positions of Head of the Department of Philology, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities. He is the author of more than 100 publications in peer-reviewed Kazakhstani and foreign journals. He has 4 monographs and 5 textbooks. Research interest is focused on the study of the toponymy of East Kazakhstan in the framework of onomastics. He is a supervisor and mentor of young scientists (3 doctoral students have defended their dissertations). He has twice been awarded the title of “Best Teacher” (2012, 2024). He participates in scientific projects “Onomastic space of the East Kazakhstan region as a form of reflection of spirituality and the national code” (2018-2021), “Onomastic space of East Kazakhstan” - the basis of the cultural and genetic code of the nation (2021-2024).



**Bakyt S. Kokebaeva.** Republic of Kazakhstan, March 30, 1982. Higher education. Qualification “Teacher of the Russian language and English literature” M. Auezov Semipalatinsk University, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2005. Master of Philology, M. Auezov Semipalatinsk University, Semey, Republic of Kazakhstan, 2008.

Teaching experience of more than 20 years works as a senior lecturer at the Department of Philology of the educational institution “Alikhan Bokeikhan University”.