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## IV ХАЛЫҚАРАЛЫҚ ФАРАБИ ОҚУЛАРЫ

Алматы, Қазақстан, 4-21 сәуір, 2017 жыл

**«ТҰРАҚТЫ ДАМУ МАҚСАТЫНДАҒЫ ХАЛЫҚАРАЛЫҚ  
ЖУРНАЛИСТИКАНЫ ОҚЫТУ МОДЕЛЬДЕРІ (II МТИЈ)» атты  
II Халықаралық ғылыми-тәжірибелік конференцияның  
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## IV МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ФАРАБИЕВСКИЕ ЧТЕНИЯ

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МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ РЕСПУБЛИКИ КАЗАХСТАН  
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## ARE WE LIVING THROUGH A 'GOLDEN AGE' OF TABLOID JOURNALISM IN KAZAKHSTAN?

The word 'tabloid' in journalism has been open to interpretation. Some associate it with a compact-sized newspaper that can inform and entertain which, in turn, may generate a substantial profit. Others consider tabloids a potential threat to core journalistic principles, which "represents the deterioration of serious news gathering, reporting and analysis" (Franklin, 1997; Sparks and Tulloch, 2000). Indeed, the notion of 'tabloidization' has been keenly debated for years. In essence, the term is used to describe the perceived tendency on the part of journalism and media in general, to become more like tabloid journalism (ibid). Today, it is quite difficult to imagine public discourse without popular news, or indeed the news media without entertaining narratives. Certainly, audiences seem to be turning away from 'quality' information, and there is a massive swing toward a more tabloid style of news (Harrington, 2008). Many might agree that today the elements of emotionalism, scandal, sex and sensationalism are increasingly mirrored in journalistic practices. Broadsheets have been moving more toward a tabloid format, and there have been dramatic changes to newspaper content, form and style. Furthermore, tabloid journalism seems to no longer be limited to the medium of its origin, and today television appears to act as the prime medium for tabloid journalism. A trend exists of blending entertainment with information on television news programs, and also, much talk about aspects of tabloid journalism which "have the ability to broaden the public, giving access to groups that have not been targeted by the prestige press" (Ornebring and Johnson, 2007). In Kazakhstan the tabloid journalism is relatively new, historically it only appeared after country gain independence in 1991. Since then it already went through various stages and respectively concurred their place in local media sphere. During soviet era Kazakhstani people only had opportunity to read communist papers and magazines such as "Pravda", "Leninskaya Smena", "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda" and many more. Some of them had a little part of entertainment inside but they were mostly regarding international events outside of Soviet Union. But no reports on scandal, sex or gossips. When "Perestroika" at the second half of 80's started the new media was born that was so different from official media that very quickly it became popular. After 1991 a lot of official papers changed the direction of their policy and content. For example the Kazakhstani paper called "Leninskaya Smena" became "Express-K". A big number of new TV channels and radio stations were opened. It was a time of freedom and experience with new media formats.

Thus, such a wide spread phenomenon is clearly emerging in contemporary media practices. This essay will generate an in-depth discussion about the recent tendencies in the current media landscape that have been developed by the impacting and distinguishing characteristics of tabloid journalism. In doing so, it will offer convincing evidence that the 'Golden age' of tabloid journalism is underway.

### **The key characteristics of tabloid journalism**

First and foremost, it is worth noting that the 'tabloidization' of news plays a central role in the declining standards and quality of journalism. As noted by Turner (2004, p.76) "it is a description for what is regarded as the trivialization of media content in general" (cited in Rowe, 2011). Regardless of its merits, increasing tabloid journalism is a result of increasing competition among different media and of a hunt for profits (Barnet, 1998; McManus, 1994 cited in Skovsgaard,



2014). Arguably, this raises a question of economic viability as well as possibly forcing a media organisation to focus on tabloid strategies in order to enhance profitability.

Scholarship on tabloid journalism primarily looks at the economic foundation and aspects of an issue. For example, Sparks (2000) stresses the importance of economic pressure in the media business, while Esser (1999) states that “a blind chase for profits being favoured over the three professional norms of journalists.” A second key aspect in tracking tabloid trends within the field of journalism is perhaps the integration of two words: information and entertainment. The term ‘infotainment’ has been employed by some to describe broadcast material that is intended to both entertain and inform. This development may seem to be a natural evolutionary process in the mainstream media. However, deliberate replacement of ‘hard’ news on television by ‘soft’infotainment is probably caused by the increasingly widespread media tabloidization. There are numerous media scholars such as Winch (1997, p.21) and Franklin (1997, p.4) who argue that the contemporary news programs state that “they are often just giving audiences what they want rather than what they need” or “news media become part of the entertainment industry.” It appears that tabloid journalism, by giving priority to public interests, illustrates a change in news consumption patterns. In this regard, the role of popular culture in evolving tabloid news values is often considered crucial. One of the central focuses on tracking the developments of tabloid journalism is its outstanding quality of carrying light-hearted and entertaining elements, loosely blended with different news media. In this case, Bromley (1998, p.25) and McNair (1999, p.44) point out that the emergence of indistinguishable journalism, in many ways a confusion of broadsheet and tabloid subjects, or described as the ‘dumbing down’ effect (Franklin et al, 2005). As a consequence, “complex issues are simplified to excess, with it all boiling down to an issue or event being portrayed as either wrong or right and very little in the way of analysis being offered” (Donn, 2003).

Considering the nature of all tendencies of the tabloid genre, Sparks and Tulloch, (2000, p.160) point out that: *‘they exaggerated because the process is not restricted to the tabloid newspaper but is connected to a more complex set of changes, a ‘dynamic structural transformation’ within the whole media sector from new technology to general social changes’*

Clearly, tabloid journalism is capable of providing the public with a wide range of information products. In the American press, a more common term is ‘supermarket tabloids’, whilst their British counterparts are traditionally seen as down-market and disparagingly referred to as ‘red tops’ although there are now more upmarket or more prestigious ‘compact tabloids’. It now seems that broadcast television, much like the print media, may present the identical news discourse. Thus, the term ‘tabloid’ appears to be used as a concept in reference to its physical size rather than its newspaper format. It could be argued that the changing nature of journalism is greatly responsible for the global prosperity of tabloid-style media. It has been suggested that the issues of tabloid journalism deserve particular attention, since they debate a wide range of aspects. Journalistic values, media culture, news consumption patterns and economic conditions of media organisation can all be regarded as the subjects of tabloid journalism. In the same vein, Conboy (2006, p.207) emphasises that “the shift toward tabloid genres in the news is seen to affect tastes and preferences regarding form, content and presentation as well as journalistic priorities, boundaries, ethics and techniques.”

#### **Television news as a driving force of tabloidization**

At first glance, the concepts of television and tabloid are different media forms; the former transmits images and sound, while the latter refers to a periodical publication. However, the contemporary news media are able to show a remarkable correlation between the two genres, and a new paradigm in journalism seems to be shifting from print format to broadcasting. Considering the current prospects and condition of broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, an increasing competition between different media and an enormous challenge posed by the Internet, television news perhaps can be interpreted as the main driving force of the phenomenon of tabloidization. As pointed out by

Franklin (1997, p.4), the main distinctive features of tabloid news values in broadcast media are devoting “relatively little attention to politics economics and society and relatively much to diversions like sports, scandal and popular entertainment” (Sparks and Tulloch, 2000, p.10). Broadcast television bulletins are perhaps an adequate approach to analysing characteristics and the extent of the recent trends of tabloid journalism. It must be noted that attitudes towards tabloidization tends to vary with regard to countries which have significant differences in broadcasting systems. For instance, “in the American debate, tabloidization is routinely associated to the falling quality of television news” (Skovsgaard, 2014). As emphasised by Conboy (2006, p.7), if the British press was the pioneer in the format and regularity of tabloid newspapers, US news professionals would be a key player in prioritising tabloid values to television news. Looking at the example of Australia, Harrington (2008) points out a heavy reliance on the tabloid stories of crime and human interest type, emphasising that there is limited space for news and current affairs anywhere in Australian television. According to the reports of the Glasgow Media group, compared to American and Australian counterparts, UK television news between the years of 1975 and 2001, generally showed evidence of a slight movement towards ‘tabloidization’. However, the coverage of entertainment was more dominant, as the crime and human interest stories were not as prominent as they were in the British red masthead tabloids (Winston, 2012). Once again, this shows that the dynamics of ‘tabloidization’ of television news could be understood in a different context and condition since one country has a dominating public broadcasting system, whereas others are incompatible with it.

Formulating such ‘tabloid strategies’ and adding ‘tabloid stories’ to television news, apparently has its explanations and rational justifications. One can argue that it is imperative for all media systems that concerns media owners most of which are financial. In this regard, Harrington (2008) maintains that the “capability of producing both news and money began to take hold in domain of television.” There are also prime examples of popular journalism in other aspects of broadcast media, as observed by Winston (2002), television news experienced a notable alteration regarding content, duration and presentational norms. As mentioned previously, switching from traditional news forms to tabloid style has generated a ‘value added’ news category, which is often weighted in favour of the dramatic, entertaining and spectacular (Meyer, 2003, p.12). It must be added that such new priorities and news values have not always been the subject of criticism of both media academics and practitioners. In this case, assumptions of Baum (2003) and Macdonald (1998) could be taken into account as a strong defence of tabloid journalism. They emphasise that “the tabloid style makes news less abstract, and more accessible and easier to comprehend.” (cited in Skovsgaard, 2014). Accordingly, the emergence of popular informational programs seems to satisfy both sides of the debate. In addition, a hybrid of serious, informative and lightweight coverage was seen as a considerable challenge to the normative standards and dimensions of tabloid journalism.

In sum, broadcast media has moved beyond a mere telecommunication medium, and it has become quite difficult to tie tabloid journalism with the tabloid press. The editorial policy of television newsrooms, in order to gain significant viewership and due to profit orientation and commercial pressure, have undergone popularisation, sensationalising and personalising of its journalistic style. For some it is the trivialisation of the news agenda and ignoring journalistic ethics and principles, is down to the prioritisation or pursuit of revenue from the television market. It is important, therefore, to consider modern popular news forms or the value of tabloids in television as a powerful action which can develop and energise tabloid journalism in a vigorous way.

#### **Professional identity of tabloid journalists**

The unclear border between popular and real journalism seems to influence the mindset and ambition of many within the trade. Despite what many believe, tabloid reporters follow the same principles and meet the set standard of the profession including its impartiality, morality and independence as their broadsheet counterparts (Deuze, 2005). He comes to this conclusion after a



number of interviews with reporters of the tabloid newspapers. He also maintains that both types of journalist adhere to the moral duties, public service, editorial independence and integrity to place themselves into a particular area of news. This possible 'homogenization' of popular and 'hard' journalisms can be seen as particularly impacting upon the occupational ideology of all journalists (ibid). Thus, it appears that the characteristics of tabloid journalism also display tendencies regarding journalistic skills and professionalism.

A second significant aspect is that journalists in the tabloid realm of the business have independence to choose and report in specific issue, something which is commonly restricted in mainstream news media. However, this impartiality and freedom is an essential element of popular journalism. Moreover, Deuze (2005) stresses that a tabloid article can be structured around traditional investigative reporting approaches. The idea of being able to write with creativity about discovered information is paramount to the role of the tabloid reporter. On balance, the journalistic ethos can accordingly be viewed as being purposefully built by professionals operating in the popular media subjects, applying a similar narrative but from varying standpoints. Rather than a professional mindset, a type of specific philosophical foundation is what forms the journalist. This can influence the activities of journalists, who make the distinction between aspiring to be either a popular or a so-called hard journalist. It could be argued that such a justification of tabloid journalist in the defense their occupation shows that the development of tabloid journalism is also taking place in professional ideology of the profession.

#### **Broadsheet and tabloid**

In the evolution of newspapers it is widely accepted that there has been a conscious step taken towards the tabloid approach, both in terms of material and ethos. At the same time, broadsheet newspapers started to write articles on the activities of tabloid rivals, and many times the two types of newspaper publish similar stories. Consequently, it is crucial to examine the alterations made to newspapers with regard to material and output, the spectrum of news items, the scale and appearance of articles, the application of headlines, the approach to reporting and how their readerships are treated (Rowe, 2011). Traditional broadsheets have increasingly been applying several of the business activities of their tabloid counterparts, which entails the use of publicity stunts, lowering prices and publicising their respective brands. Of late, the editor of the Guardian, a broadsheet paper, noted that this change of direction was inspired by the market which influences the progression of the newspaper industry as a whole. Responding to the imposing risks facing the industry, the Newcastle Herald, the longest-running Australian regional newspaper, saw the benefits of adopting a tabloid approach. In addition, the Independent made a surprising step to adopt a tabloid format in 2003 and the positive impact this had then inspired more than 20 similar newspapers to follow suit (ibid).

#### **Tabloid journalism and the public sphere**

The characteristics of tabloid journalism displays a chaotic picture when it comes to issues such as the democratic function of journalism, or shaping the standards of public discourse and serving the public good. Since audiences consume news with elements of sensational crime stories, gossip and the personal lives of celebrities, one has to admit that tabloid journalism "downgrades the audience's attention to substance of politics" (Barnett and Gabor, 2001, p.34). The implication of such an assertion is quite profound, as there is no doubt it is seen as an assault on citizens' ability to take active part in democracy (Currah, 2009). These views are not concluding remarks on the debates of democratisation and the public sphere within the field of tabloid journalism. For instance, recent scholarship on tabloid journalistic practices focuses on positive aspects of popular news and seeks reassessment and revision of tabloid effects. For example, Lumby (1999) states that "tabloid media have allowed feminized discourses a place in public consciousness", thus, highlighting some of the merits of tabloid journalism with regards to feminist issues. However, particular attention can be devoted to the assertions of Ornebring and Johnson (2007) who note that "tabloid journalism managed to attract new publics, by speaking to them about issues previously ignored, in new and

clearly understandable ways.” It appears that ‘new’ news consumers who had previously ignored the mainstream media are being exposed to the public discourse. Arguably, tabloids are contributing to a widening of the public sphere by making news more accessible to more people. In this respect, Wasserman (2010, p.87) claims the emergence of an alternative public sphere is a result of the contribution of popular journalism. These views lead tabloid journalists to perform their democratic function of journalism, which is inviting citizens into the public debate (Baum, 2003). On this point, ‘a public mobilizer’ role of a tabloid journalist seems to be an essential component of “creating more open and more egalitarian public sphere” (Lumby, 1999, p.38). Therefore, as noted by Ornebring and Johnson (2004) “emotionalism, sensation and simplification are not necessarily opposed to serving good.”

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the distinguishing characteristics of tabloid journalism are widely and differently interpreted across many journalistic genres and forms. The elements of popularised, personalised and sensationalist journalistic style have entered into the news discourse of the mainstream news media. It could be argued that tabloid journalism, in contemporary media practices, is moving in the direction of money-making and there are a range of significant factors that are involved in this process. At first, broadsheets switch to tabloid format, change style and news content in order to increase their readership, enhance profitability and to ensure economic viability. There is a fragmentation of audiences, as readers of ‘quality’ and ‘soft’ news set clear boundaries. Some media scholars point out the new perspectives of tabloid journalism in relation to the public sphere, and the democratic function of journalism seems to take on a new interpretation. It is worth noting that broadcast media plays a central role in reinforcing tabloid tendencies and as a consequence, there is an emergence of factual popular television and entertainment-led news. Thus, it appears that the development of characteristics of tabloid journalism is at the forefront of market-driven and changing forms of journalism. Therefore, looking at the current trends in contemporary media landscape, it seems clear that ‘Golden age’ of tabloid journalism is indeed taking place.

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## **CONCEPTS OF REFORMING OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS WITHIN EDUCATION DIGITALIZATION**

By analogy with the thought, which has been expressed by Marshal McLuhan in the book «The Gutenberg' Galaxy», the Internet Galaxy took off thirty years ago. In case if the print invention has led to the democratization of knowledge and its transmission in terms of material welfare, the Internet has transformed the attitude to the Information in principle.

By the beginning of the XXI century, the world had changed out of all recognition. The dreams of such fantasy and anti-utopia authors as Ray Bradbury, Jules Verne and George Orwell had been discovered, invented and implemented. For instance, giant jetliners, cellular phones, IPADS and IPHONES, computer network. A fragile human and powerful, hyper-intelligent machines had started the close dialogue which has been lasting up to the present time.

The digital technologies substantially are changing the education structure and quality in Kazakhstan. Resulting from this the educational process might be researched following three directions: formal organizational processes; informative aspect of knowledge transfer within the system a tutor-student and mental concept, which involves the digital literacy, and background of the student.

The specialty – journalism within this theme is characterized by permanent contingency with information flows. Today students-journalists have stopped being audience. They have become members of the media sphere - bloggers, social network moderators. According to the data of the researchers, it is known that the thirds of the upper - course students in the department of journalism are keeping their own blogs and have 250 and more subscribers.

For a start there is need to define the essential notions, which were used in the research. *Digital Revolution*, which began in 1980-s and at the moment it is in progress and defined as fast moving and mass transmission from the analogue data processing, saving and transforming method to the digital one.

The digital revolution and youth concepts corresponding (overlapping) is the most interesting point to do the research because the learning students group is the most active and mobile social category and the existence of which is provided by the training which is organized following the definite programme and serves the aim to execute the highly professional and social role in material and cultural production. Being the most dynamic part of the society the students are sensitive to any changes in its structure, political and economical transformations and immediately respond to the new technological, cultural and educational trends. And the most vital thing is that the students are the powerful young people union who have socially important goals and tasks and possess the higher degree of psychological and behavior freedom than the representatives of older generation.

The digital revolution in our country is characterized by some transitivity moving media in the globalized world segment of the communication. Journalism in the Republic of Kazakhstan has