

Literary Language Norms in Karakalpakstan Online Media: An Exploratory Medialinguistic Case Study

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Abstract. This exploratory study examines how literary-language norms are observed and transformed in Karakalpakstan online media. Its purpose is to identify recurrent lexical, morphosyntactic, graphic, and pragmatic tensions in a small corpus of publicly accessible digital posts and to explain their implications for Karakalpak language culture. The empirical corpus comprises three purposively selected posts published between October 2024 and May 2026 by a private Telegram channel, the Karakalpakstan News Agency, and the Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Qualitative medialinguistic analysis was conducted at four levels: orthographic and graphic form, lexical choice and code-switching, morphosyntactic transfer, and stylistic-pragmatic function. The findings show three different pressures on the literary norm: the insertion of Russian or English items for informality and attention, literal transfer from Uzbek that produces lexical and syntactic calques, and inconsistent representation of Karakalpak Latin characters on digital platforms. The selected cases also indicate that institutional status alone does not guarantee normative accuracy, because errors occur in both private and official channels. The article interprets these tendencies through media language, code-switching, and communicative-rationality frameworks. It proposes editorial language guides, institutionalized linguistic review, standardized digital input tools, and practice-oriented medialinguistics education. Because the corpus is limited, the results establish analytical patterns rather than population-level prevalence.

Keywords: Karakalpak language, online media, literary norm, medialinguistics, code-switching, calque, digital orthography

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Received: 13 February 2026; Accepted: 9 June 2026; Published online: 28 August 2026

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Qaraqalpaqıstan onlayn mediasında ədəbi dil normaları: eksplorativ medialinqvistik tədqiqat

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Xülasə. Bu eksplorativ tədqiqat Qaraqalpaqıstanın onlayn mediasında ədəbi dil normalarına necə əməl olunduğunu və həmin normaların rəqəmsal kommunikasiya şəraitində necə dəyişdiyini araşdırır. Məqsəd açıq rəqəmsal paylaşımardan ibarət kiçik korpusda leksik, morfosintaktik, qrafik və pragmatik gərginlikləri müəyyənləşdirmək, onların qaraqalpaq dil mədəniyyəti üçün nəticələrini izah etməkdir.

Empirik korpusa 2024-cü ilin oktyabrından 2026-cı ilin mayınadək özəl Telegram kanalı, Qaraqalpaqistan Xəbər Agentliyi və Qaraqalpaqistan Respublikası Məktəbəqədər və Məktəb Təhsili Nazirliyi tərəfindən yayımlanmış üç məqsədli seçilmiş paylaşım daxildir. Keyfiyyət yönümlü medialinqvistik təhlil dörd səviyyədə aparılmışdır: orfoqrafik və qrafik forma, leksik seçim və kod dəyişməsi, morfosintaktik köçürmə, üslubi-praqmatik funksiya. Nəticələr ədəbi normaya üç təzyiqi göstərir: qeyri-rəsmilik və diqqət yaratmaq üçün rus və ingilis sözlərinin daxil edilməsi, özbək dilindən hərfi tərcümənin leksik-sintaktik kalkalar yaratması və rəqəmsal platformalarda qaraqalpaq latın işarələrinin qeyri-sabit təqdimatı. Seçilmiş nümunələr normativ dəqiqliyin təkcə qurumun rəsmi statusu ilə təmin olunmadığını göstərir. Məqalədə redaksiya dil bələdçiləri, lingvistik yoxlama, standartlaşdırılmış rəqəmsal klaviatura və praktik medialinqvistika təhsili təklif olunur. Korpusun məhdudluğu səbəbindən nəticələr yayılma tezliyini deyil, analitik nümunələri müəyyənləşdirir.

Açar sözlər: qaraqalpaq dili, onlayn media, ədəbi norma, medialinqvistika, kod dəyişməsi, kalka, rəqəmsal orfoqrafiya

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Daxil oldu: 13 Fevral 2026; Qəbul edildi: 9 İyun 2026; Onlayn dərc edildi: 28 August 2026

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Introduction

The rapid development of internet technologies has changed how information is produced, distributed, and interpreted. Online news sites, Telegram channels, blogs, and social-network pages now compete with traditional newspapers, radio, and television in speed, reach, and interactivity. In Karakalpakstan, these platforms have expanded the circulation of Karakalpak-language content, but they have also moved editorial production into an environment shaped by immediacy, multilingual contact, platform conventions, and attention-driven metrics. The resulting language cannot be evaluated only as a neutral carrier of information; it is also a site where the contemporary literary norm is reproduced, negotiated, and sometimes weakened. A literary language provides a normalized lexical, grammatical, orthographic, and stylistic system for public communication. Historically, literary works were treated as the principal repository of aesthetic expression and national vocabulary. The rise of mass communication widened this domain. Media language now distributes terminology, conventionalizes new meanings, and exposes large audiences to recurring linguistic models. Solganik (2007) therefore locates media language within the broader development of the literary language, while Volodina (2008) emphasizes its role in shaping mass consciousness. These approaches make normative accuracy in online journalism a public-cultural issue rather than a narrow matter of proofreading.

Digital media add pressures that earlier editorial systems encountered less intensely. Speed encourages literal translation and incomplete revision; platform interfaces can complicate the input of language-specific characters; multilingual audiences normalize code-switching; and competition for attention encourages colloquialism, emotional intensification, and clickbait. Dobrosklonskaya (2008) shows that media discourse is a major route through which foreign lexical items enter national languages. Gumperz's (1982) interactional account of code-switching further demonstrates that language alternation may perform contextual and identity-related functions. Accordingly, the presence of a Russian or English item is not automatically an error. The analytical question is whether the switch fills a communicative need or displaces an available Karakalpak form without a clear functional gain.

The ethical dimension of media language is equally important. Habermas (1984) distinguishes communicative action oriented toward mutual understanding from strategic action oriented primarily toward instrumental success. Applied to online media, this distinction directs attention to clarity, truthfulness, normative appropriateness, and opportunities for reasoned response. Sensational headlines, deliberately incomplete constructions, or linguistically opaque translations may increase clicks while reducing comprehension and trust. Artamonova (2008) similarly treats media texts as cultural forms whose institutional purposes and persuasive techniques require philosophical scrutiny. Previous regional and Uzbek-language scholarship has described media language as a socially influential functional variety and has emphasized the need to connect linguistic analysis with audience reception (Israil, 2024; Teshabayeva & Qodirova, 2023). The source manuscript, however, did not define an empirical corpus or distinguish evidence-based findings from broader observations. The present article corrects that weakness by limiting its claims to three documented online posts. It asks: (1) which lexical, morphosyntactic, graphic, and pragmatic deviations appear in the selected posts; (2) how multilingual contact and platform conditions contribute to them; and (3) which editorial measures can improve normative consistency without suppressing the functional flexibility of online communication?

Methods

The study uses an exploratory qualitative case-study design. The unit of analysis is a publicly accessible Karakalpak-language online post. Three posts were purposively selected because each displays a distinct normative problem and because the original document preserved both the publication reference and a screenshot. The corpus is not a probability sample and does not support claims about the statistical frequency of errors across all Karakalpakstan media. Its purpose is analytical: to identify mechanisms and construct categories that can guide a larger corpus study.

The cases represent different institutional settings. Case 1 is a 14 October 2024 post from the private Telegram channel "Ne janaliq?" containing the hybrid label "Paydalı layfxak" ("useful lifehack") (Ne janaliq?, 2024). Case 2 is a 27 May 2026 post associated with the Karakalpakstan News Agency containing lexical and syntactic transfer from Uzbek (Karakalpakstan News Agency, 2026). Case 3 is a 25 May 2026 post from the official Telegram channel of the Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan containing the mixed expression "Pitkeriwshi party" (Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, 2026). The source dates and addresses are reported in Table 1 and in the References section.

Table 1
Empirical corpus and selection rationale

Case	Source and date	Institutional type	Primary analytical issue
1	"Ne janaliq?" Telegram channel, 14 October 2024	Private media channel	Russian-derived slang and audience-oriented informality
2	Karakalpakstan News Agency, 27 May 2026	Official news agency	Uzbek lexical and syntactic calque
3	Education Ministry Telegram channel, 25 May 2026	Official institutional channel	English insertion and stylistic mixing

Each post was analyzed at four levels. The graphic-orthographic level examined the representation of Karakalpak Latin characters and spelling consistency. The lexical level identified foreign insertions, barbarisms, colloquialisms, and the availability of Karakalpak equivalents. The morphosyntactic level examined literal transfer and sentence patterns reproduced from another language. The stylistic-

pragmatic level assessed register, compression, emotional intensification, and attention-seeking function. A form was classified as a problematic deviation only when an established Karakalpak alternative was available and the foreign or transferred form reduced clarity, normative consistency, or appropriateness for an official register.

The interpretation combined medially linguistic and communicative perspectives. Media-language theory was used to situate the examples within mass communication (Dobrosklonskaya, 2008; Solganik, 2007; Volodina, 2008). Code-switching was treated as a potentially meaningful contextual practice rather than a priori corruption (Gumperz, 1982). Habermas's communicative criteria—comprehensibility, normative appropriateness, and sincerity—were used as evaluative principles for public communication (Habermas, 1984). The analysis also distinguished correction from purism: borrowings that meet a genuine terminological need were not equated with avoidable mixing.

Results

1. Lexical Mixing and the Boundary Between Borrowing and Avoidable Substitution

Case 1 uses the heading "Paydalı layfxak", combining the Karakalpak adjective *paydalı* ("useful") with a Russian-mediated form of the English word *lifehack*. The expression is immediately understandable to many multilingual users and functions as an informal genre label. Its communicative efficiency explains its attraction. Nevertheless, the post provides no contextual reason to prefer the imported item over a Karakalpak equivalent such as *paydalı keñes* ("useful advice") or *ámeliy usınıs* ("practical recommendation"). In this setting, the switch is better interpreted as attention-oriented stylistic marking than as terminological necessity. Israil (2024) similarly notes that media language frequently balances broad accessibility against literary-norm expectations.



Figure 1

Source. Hybrid lexical label in the "Ne janaliq?" Telegram channel (14 October 2024).

The example illustrates why every borrowed word should not be treated identically. A borrowing may be justified when it names a new object, has become conventionally integrated, or allows precision unavailable in an existing form. By contrast, avoidable substitution occurs when a highly visible foreign item displaces a clear national-language equivalent mainly to signal trendiness or informality. The selected post belongs closer to the second category. Repetition of such labels can normalize a hybrid editorial register and gradually weaken awareness of available Karakalpak vocabulary, although the present case alone cannot establish the scale of that effect.

2. Lexical and Syntactic Calque Under Conditions of Speed

Case 2 contains the sentence "Tovarda óndiristegi nuqsan aniqlansa, ol dárhal almastırıp beriledi". The forms óndiristegi and nuqsan reproduce Uzbek lexical choices more closely than established Karakalpak usage. A norm-oriented version would use islep shıǵarıw barısındaǵı kemshilik (or nasazlıq) for "a defect arising in production". The sentence structure also mirrors an Uzbek source pattern. A more natural Karakalpak formulation is: "Eger tovarda islep shıǵarıw barısında qanday da bir kemshilik (nasazlıq) aniqlansa, ol tez arada almastırıladı". The revision improves lexical fit, conditional structure, and economy by removing an unnecessary causative-passive sequence.

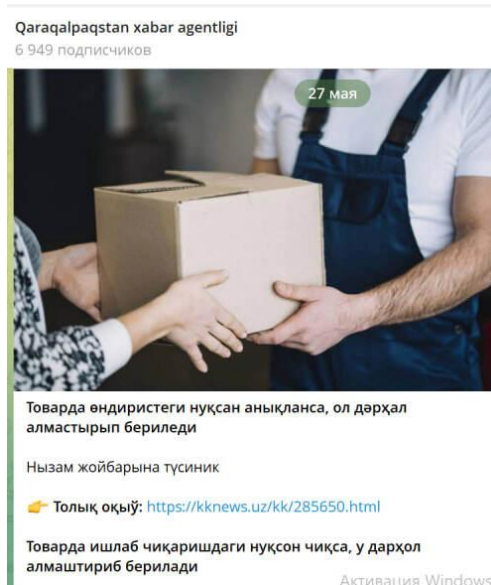


Figure 2

Source. Lexical and syntactic transfer in a Karakalpakstan News Agency post (27 May 2026).

This case is important because it comes from an official news source. The example demonstrates that institutional status does not by itself guarantee linguistic accuracy. Operational speed, reliance on Uzbek or Russian source material, and the absence of a dedicated language editor may produce calques even where formal editorial responsibility exists. Teshabayeva and Qodirova (2023) argue that media language should be studied together with reception; from that perspective, a calque is not merely a formal violation but a potential obstacle to fluent comprehension and a model that may be repeated by audiences.

3. English Insertions and Register Inconsistency in Official Communication

Case 3 announces that a "Pitkeriwshi party" is continuing in a positive mood and distinctive atmosphere. The construction combines the Karakalpak pitkeriwshi ("graduate") with the English party. In an informal peer-to-peer post, this switch could signal youth identity or playful alignment. In an official ministry channel, however, the mixed phrase creates a register inconsistency because clear Karakalpak alternatives—pitkeriwshiler keshi, pitkeriwshiler bayramı, or saltanatlı kesh—are readily available. The second part of the caption also uses a broad internationalism equivalent to "atmosphere", where an expression based on ortalıq or ruwx could produce a more internally consistent Karakalpak sentence.



Figure 3

Source. English insertion in an official Education Ministry Telegram post (25 May 2026).

The linguistic problem is therefore not multilingualism itself but the relationship among function, audience, and institutional register. Gumperz (1982) shows that switches can contextualize participation and social identity. The ministry example may have been intended to address young audiences in a familiar style. Yet an official channel also performs a norm-setting function. When a stylistic effect can be achieved with a natural Karakalpak expression, the public institution has a stronger responsibility to model the literary standard.

4. Digital Orthography, Compression, and Attention-Oriented Style

The source material also identifies a broader graphic problem: Karakalpak-specific Latin characters such as q, ğ, ń, ó, á, ú, and w are not always entered consistently across devices and platforms. Bloggers may replace them with basic Latin characters to save time or avoid keyboard inconvenience. This reduction can slow reading, blur lexical distinctions, and create parallel "official" and "platform-local" writing practices. The three cases do not quantify this phenomenon, but they show that linguistic quality is partly infrastructural. Editorial instruction alone will remain insufficient if mobile keyboards, fonts, and input methods do not provide stable and convenient access to the official character set.

Online communication also accelerates linguistic economy: short clauses, incomplete constructions, abbreviations, symbols, emojis, and colloquial expressions compress information and attract attention. Compression is not inherently defective; it is a functional response to screen reading and rapid news consumption. The normative problem begins when ellipsis obscures meaning, sensational markers replace substantive information, or clickbait deliberately withholds the proposition required to evaluate a headline. Habermas's (1984) framework clarifies the distinction: communicative economy remains legitimate when comprehensibility and truthfulness are preserved, while strategic manipulation subordinates understanding to clicks.

Table 2
Linguistic diagnosis and norm-oriented alternatives

Observed form or pattern	Analytical category	Norm-oriented alternative	Editorial rationale
Paydalı layfxak	Avoidable lexical switching	Paydalı keñes / ámeliy usınıs	Retains clarity without an unnecessary imported genre label
óndiristegi nuqsan	Uzbek lexical calque	islep shıǵarıwdaǵı kemshilik / nasazlıq	Uses established Karakalpak lexical patterns
ol dárhal almasırıp beriledi	Transferred syntactic construction	ol tez arada almasırıladı	Produces a more economical and natural passive construction
Pitkeriwshi party	English insertion in official register	pitkeriwshiler keshi / saltanatlı kesh	Aligns the message with the norm-setting role of an official channel
Basic Latin substitutions for special characters	Graphic-orthographic reduction	Consistent official Karakalpak Latin characters	Protects word recognition and orthographic unity

Source. Table compiled by the author.

Discussion

The cases support a layered interpretation of online-media language. At the lexical level, Russian- and English-derived items may serve informality, novelty, or identity. At the morphosyntactic level, literal translation transfers source-language structures into Karakalpak. At the graphic level, platform constraints and keyboard inconvenience destabilize character use. At the pragmatic level, speed and attention metrics encourage compression and sensational presentation. These layers interact: a hurried translation published through a technically inconvenient interface and optimized for immediate engagement is more likely to depart from the literary norm than a text processed through a stable editorial workflow.

The findings do not justify a blanket rejection of code-switching. Multilingual speakers routinely alternate languages for social and contextual purposes, and digital discourse makes such practices highly visible (Gumperz, 1982). A defensible editorial policy must therefore distinguish functional borrowing from unnecessary substitution. The relevant tests are whether an established Karakalpak form exists, whether the imported form adds precision, whether it is appropriate to the institutional register, and whether it improves or reduces comprehension. This approach protects the literary norm without turning language policy into rigid purism.

The comparison between the private channel and the two official sources also challenges a convenient assumption: formal ownership or governmental affiliation does not guarantee normative quality. The official cases contain the most consequential calque and register inconsistency in the corpus. The likely explanation is organizational rather than moral. Online editors work under time pressure, source

texts are often in Uzbek or Russian, and linguistic review may be absent or occur after publication. Volodina's (2008) account of media language as an influence on mass consciousness means these workflow problems deserve institutional attention, because recurring public forms can become perceived models.

From the perspective of communicative rationality, normative language is not valuable merely because it conforms to a rulebook. It supports intelligibility, trust, and equal participation. A citizen should not need to reconstruct a translated sentence from another language's syntax or decode a hybrid official caption to understand public information. Conversely, editorial correction should not erase audience voice or ban every colloquial element. The goal is a public discourse in which stylistic flexibility remains subordinate to clarity, accuracy, and sincerity (Habermas, 1984).

Four institutional responses follow from the analysis. First, major private and official online outlets should develop a corporate language and style guide based on the professional ethics of journalism and Karakalpak literary norms. This emphasis on professional capacity is consistent with Joraev's (2022) argument that the social vitality of the press depends on responsible and skilled journalistic practice. Second, editorial teams should institutionalize a media-language editor or linguo-stylist role, supported by searchable digital dictionaries. Third, developers and language planners should standardize convenient keyboard layouts and input interfaces for Karakalpak Latin characters across mobile operating systems. Fourth, journalism programs should strengthen the practical components of medialinguistics and media-communication ethics through exercises based on authentic posts. These measures address the editorial, technological, and educational causes of deviation rather than blaming individual writers alone.

Limitations

The empirical corpus consists of only three purposively selected posts. It cannot estimate how frequently each deviation occurs, compare outlets statistically, or establish change over time. The cases were selected because they clearly illustrated problems already identified in the source manuscript, which creates a risk of selection bias toward negative examples. Audience interpretation was inferred from linguistic form; no interviews, reception experiment, or engagement-data analysis was conducted. The screenshots document the analyzed texts, but deleted or edited platform content may complicate later replication.

Future Research

A subsequent study should construct a stratified corpus covering official agencies, private news channels, blogs, and comment sections across a defined period. Each item should be coded independently by at least two Karakalpak-language specialists for orthographic, lexical, morphosyntactic, and pragmatic features, with intercoder agreement reported. Frequency data could then test whether institutional type predicts normative accuracy. Interviews with editors and journalists should examine workflow, source-language dependence, correction practices, and keyboard constraints. Audience experiments could compare comprehension and trust across normative, calqued, and code-switched versions of the same message.

Conclusion

The exploratory analysis shows that online-media language in Karakalpakstan is shaped by the interaction of literary norms, multilingual practice, editorial speed, platform infrastructure, and competition for attention. The selected cases reveal avoidable foreign substitution, Uzbek-derived lexical and syntactic calques, and register inconsistency in both private and official channels. They also show why institutional status cannot be used as a proxy for linguistic quality.

The article's central distinction is between functional flexibility and norm-reducing transfer. Code-switching or borrowing may be communicatively justified when it adds precision, marks a relevant identity, or names a new phenomenon. It becomes problematic when it displaces an available Karakalpak form without functional benefit, reproduces another language's syntax, or undermines the clarity expected from official communication. Literary-norm protection should therefore be based on communicative function and editorial responsibility rather than indiscriminate purism.

Improvement requires coordinated measures: language and style guides, professional linguistic review, accessible digital dictionaries, standardized Karakalpak input tools, and practice-oriented mediallynguistics education. These recommendations are grounded in documented cases, but their broader effectiveness must be tested with a larger and systematically sampled corpus. The present study should be read as a methodological starting point for that work, not as a prevalence study of all Karakalpakstan online media.

Statement on the use of artificial intelligence

OpenAI ChatGPT was used for translation support, academic English editing, structural organization, reference-consistency checking, and document formatting. The author reviewed and approved the final manuscript and remains fully responsible for its arguments, sources, examples, and accuracy.

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