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**CONTENT ANALYSIS OF
THE ADDRESSES OF THE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN BETWEEN
STRATEGY-2030 AND STRATEGY-2050**

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ABSTRACT

The authors have supplied their quantitative content analysis of the Addresses of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan delivered between the adoption of the two documents: Strategy-2030 (1997) and Strategy-2050 (2012). The basis for the research was the analysis of the fifteen Presidential Addresses, identifying political priorities of the state. The research led to con-

clude that under the same President, strategic priorities of state policies remain the same irrespective of internal and external contexts. Another conclusion is that the President was and remains the main initiator of reforms and modernization in the political, social and economic arenas; this means that the form of governance in Kazakhstan may be described as super-presidential.

KEYWORDS: *Addresses of the President, Kazakhstan, content analysis, development strategies.*

Introduction

Here we will analyze the annual Addresses of the President of the RK, Nursultan Nazarbaev, made between 1998 and 2012, that is, in the period when Strategy-2030 and Strategy-2050 were being adopted. Today, it is highly important to trace the priorities of the country's development and the way they changed from one Address to another; it is highly interesting, since all of them were delivered by the same president and, therefore, revealed the dynamics of the country's state policies during these fifteen years.

Research Methodology

We have relied on the following scholarly methods: content analysis, historical and comparative analysis, and systemic approach. The basic method used was the quantitative content analysis of the selected (most frequently mentioned) words in the Addresses of the President of the RK, Nursultan Nazarbaev, to the people of Kazakhstan. The yearly Addresses, delivered between 1998 and 2012, were selected as objects of research.

To analyze the quantitative index of nouns, adjectives and derivatives of certain pronouns, we turned to the functional utilities of the QDA Miner and WordStat programs. The keywords of similar meanings were combined into groups.

We limited our analysis to those words/groups of words that were mentioned in all of the annual Presidential Addresses we have studied at least 45 times with an average frequency of one word in any of the Addresses being repeated not less than three times.

The Main Part of Our Studies

According to Art 40 of the Constitution of Kazakhstan, “the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan shall be the head of state, its highest official determining the main directions of domestic and foreign policies of the state and representing Kazakhstan within the country and in international relations.”¹ Art 44 of the Fundamental Law states: “The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan shall annually address the people of Kazakhstan with a message on the state of the country and main directions of the domestic and foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.”² This means that the annual Addresses determine the main directions of the country’s domestic and foreign policies for the next year and the mid-term ahead.

Nursultan Nazarbaev, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the KazSSR (appointed in 1989 when the republic was still a part of the Soviet Union) remained the top official (President) throughout the entire period of independence. Starting in 1997, he has been delivering annual Addresses to the people.

Table 1

Presidential Addresses for 1998-2012

Year	Titles of the Presidential Addresses
1998	Democratization of Society, Economic and Political Reform in the New Century
1999	The Country’s Stability and Security in the New Century
2000	To Free, Effective and Secure Society
2001	On the Situation in the Country and the Main Trends of Domestic and Foreign Policies for the Year 2002
2002	On the Main Trends of Domestic and Foreign Policies for 2003
2003	The Main Trends of Domestic and Foreign Policies in 2004
2004	Toward Competitive Kazakhstan, Competitive Economics, and Competitive Nation
2005	Kazakhstan on the Road to Accelerated Economic, Social and Political Modernization
2006	The Strategy of Joining the World’s 50 Most Competitive Countries. Kazakhstan on the Threshold of a New Expansion in Development
2007	New Kazakhstan in the New World
2008	Increase in the Wellbeing of Citizens of Kazakhstan as the Main Aim of State Politics
2009	Through the Crisis to Renovation and Development
2010	A New Decade-New Economic Growth-New Chances for Kazakhstan
2011	Let Us Build the Future Together!
2012	Social and Economic Modernization as the Main Development Vector of Kazakhstan

¹ [<http://www.asianparliament.org/uploads/Country/Members/Kazakhstan/KazakhstanConstitution.pdf>].

² Ibidem.

The words “democratization” and “political reform” were used by the President in his 1998 Address, and were later, in 2005, replaced with a more neutral “political modernization.” It should be said that the word “reform” suggests more cardinal changes than those implied by the term “modernization”, which means gradual, not radical changes in and readjustments of the selected course.

The titles of the Addresses of 1999 and 2000 contain the words “security” and “secure,” prompted by the threat of an invasion by terrorist groups from Afghanistan. In 2001-2003 the Addresses did not focus on any specific problems. The titles of the 2004, 2006-2012 Addresses concentrate on the economic component, while the political aspect was not mentioned at all. The Addresses of the 2008 and 2012 pay a lot of attention to the social sphere.

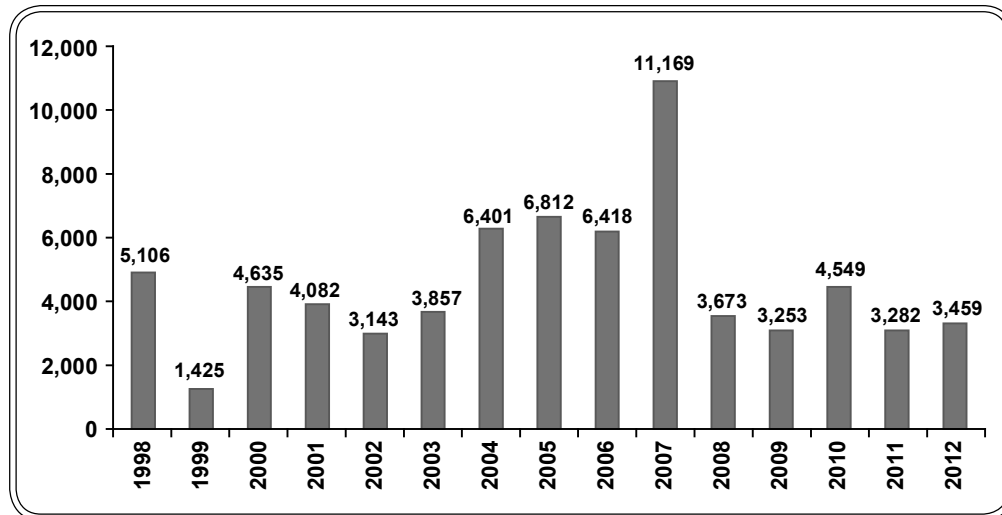
The word “new” and its derivatives were most frequently used in the Addresses of 1999, 1998, 2006, 2007, 2009, and 2010 probably because people associated it with possible renovation measures and changes for the better. Let us also consider that the present political elite and the President’s closest circle had lived in the Soviet Union and watched it crumble down and finally disappear partly due to political and economic stagnation. This explains why the head of state frequently uses the word “new” to plant hopes in people’s minds for a better future and progress in their quality of life. This word can be found in each and every Address: on the whole, it was mentioned 139 times.

It should be said that amid economic and political problems, the President tends to avoid words with negative connotations so as not to destabilize the existing situation.

On the whole, the analyzed annual Addresses contain 71,264 words; the analyzed words were used 4,422 times or 6.2% of the total number of words in the analyzed Addresses.

Figure 1

The Number of Words in Presidential Addresses by Year



It should be said that only 10 words were used in each of the fifteen Addresses at least once: infrastructure, new, society, security, future, economics, we, stability, state, development.

We have established that the most frequently used words (in descending order) in the annual Presidential Addresses were: development, 501 times; state, 480 times; government, 328 times; economics, 292 times; I, 184 times; democracy, 174 times; we, 157 times; education, 150 times; infrastructure, 142 times; new, 139 times; business, 135 times; society, 121 times; parliament, 116 times;

Table 2

**The Greatest Number of the Most Frequently Used Words
in the President's Annual Addresses**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
I	41	0	9	5	13	13	10	27	6	11	7	8	9	16	9
Parliament	32	0	6	6	6	11	5	16	2	12	6	2	4	3	5
Future	16	5	9	1	1	1	5	6	1	2	2	3	7	1	2
President	10	1	1	2	3	2	2	7	3	5	4	0	3	4	3
Society	12	2	24	10	5	8	4	13	12	16	4	4	4	1	2
Security	3	12	26	8	2	2	3	5	13	10	8	4	13	1	4
Innovation	0	1	0	0	0	10	7	6	2	10	1	0	7	7	10
Housing	0	0	0	2	1	0	38	8	7	14	9	3	13	6	1
Agriculture	0	0	1	2	5	2	6	0	0	5	5	4	5	5	6
Democracy	26	2	23	11	10	19	6	6	11	16	4	0	2	3	1
Reforms	8	0	4	6	1	3	5	6	6	7	7	1	5	1	0
State authorities	6	1	3	6	6	4	3	6	2	8	0	0	1	3	0
Stability	4	2	4	2	3	4	2	6	5	6	3	1	6	6	1
Business	3	0	2	4	4	2	7	16	6	21	14	5	15	11	8
Social	1	0	6	9	5	6	10	10	6	13	6	1	7	6	3
Development	3	1	8	19	17	36	56	40	80	127	23	18	34	20	19
State	27	9	26	24	28	36	52	55	43	70	35	19	21	15	20
Government	29	0	13	24	21	20	25	16	18	70	21	9	22	15	25
Economics	20	2	10	21	13	20	20	25	25	68	17	18	18	6	9
We	23	1	7	8	6	7	13	16	7	29	6	8	10	11	5
Education	4	0	1	3	3	2	22	13	21	33		1	12	19	16
Infrastructure	6	2	7	9	4	7	18	6	7	37	10	10	7	6	6
New	12	3	6	4	4	9	11	8	9	18	10	9	18	11	7
Growth	6	0	4	5	4	15	13	4	6	26	7	3	16	4	2
Competitiveness	3	0	2	3	0	3	23	5	14	39	5	2	7	2	1
Production	0	0	4	6	2	6	13	4	10	29	7	7	5	5	3
Responsibility	12	0	1	1	3	3	4	6	13	14	5	3	5	3	3
Modernization	0	0	2	2		2	5	8	9	14	6	4	5	8	10
Science	0	0	0	0	1	8	4	1	6	25	1	1	4	4	6
Technologies	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	3	7	23	4	0	4	0	4

Table 2 (continued)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Control	5	0	4	0	1	3	3	4	3	12	2	3	4	2	1
Crisis	6	1	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	28	5	0	3
Employment	2	0	0	3	0	1	6	0	2	2	2	15	4	6	6
People of Kazakhstan	3	1	0	1	0	3	5	9	6	5	1	5	4	11	4

growth, 115 times; security, 114 times; competitiveness, 109 times; housing, 102 times; production, 101 times; social, 100 times; responsibility, 76 times; modernization, 75 times; reforms, 63 times; future, 62 times; science, 61 times; innovations, 61 times; people of Kazakhstan, 58 times; state authorities, 58 times; stability, 55 times; technologies, 51 times; crisis, 50 times; president, 50 times; employment, 49 times; control, 47 times; agriculture, 46 times.

Conventionally, these words can be divided into the following groups:

Table 3

Conventional Division of the Most Frequently Used Words into Groups

Conventional Title of the Group	Typical Words	Total Frequency
POWER	I, president, state, government, control, parliament, state authorities	1,263 times
ECONOMICS	Economics, business, investments, infrastructure, competitiveness, production, agriculture, technologies, crisis, modernization	1,062 times
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	Development, reform, future, new, growth	880 times
SOCIAL NEED	Social, housing, security, stability, employment, education, science	631 times
SOCIETY	We, people of Kazakhstan, society	336 times
DEMOCRATIC VALUES	Democracy, responsibility	250 times

Table 3 shows that the state—represented by the regime and governing structures—predominates. It is the state (bodies of power) that determines the development trend and the economic model, while the main requirements of any society and the development of democratic values are relegated to the margins. It seems that the words, which belonged to the last two categories, were frequently used merely to pay tribute and confirm the devotion of people in power to the ideals of democracy and the social state. This means that there is no civil society in Kazakhstan (as a society in transition) able to formulate its own initiatives and insist that people in power pay attention to and realize them. This also means that there are no platforms, which the ruling regime and other members of society can use to communicate with each other and exchange views and opinions.

The frequent use of pronouns “I” and “mine” says that Kazakhstan was and remains a super-presidential republic, in which the President, rather than the majority party in the parliament, sets the

Table 4

The Most Frequently Used Words
in the President's Annual Addresses by Year

1998	I—41	Parliament—32	Government—29	State—27	Democracy—26
1999	Security—12	State—9	Threat—5	Future—5	Central Asia—4
2000	State—26	Security—26	Society—24	Democracy—23	Government—13
2001	State—24	Government—24	Economics—21	Development—19	Democracy—11
2002	State—28	Government—21	Development—17	Economics—13	I—13
2003	Development—36	State—36	Government—20	Economics—20	Democracy—19
2004	Development—56	State—52	Housing—38	Government—25	Competitiveness—23
2005	State—55	Development—40	Democracy—40	I—27	Economics—25
2006	Development—80	State—43	Economics—25	Business—23	Education—21
2007	Development—127	State—70	Government—70	Economics—68	Competitiveness—39
2008	State—35	Development—23	Government—21	Economics—17	Business—14
2009	Crisis—28	State—19	Development—18	Economics—18	Employment—15
2010	Development—34	Government—22	State—21	New—18	Economics—18
2011	Development—20	Education—19	I—16	Government—15	State—15
2012	Government—25	State—20	Development—19	Education—16	Innovations—10

pace and determines the economic, social and political trends. Indeed, in his annual Addresses the President used the pronoun “I” 184 times vs. the pronoun “we” (used 157 times), and the word “parliament” (116 times).

The “I” group of words was most frequently used between 2002 and 2005 against the background of the republic’s impressive economic growth. It should be said that in the 2005 Address the President used the pronoun “I” 27 times. This is explained by the political reforms designed to widen democratization—wider powers for the parliament at the expense of the powers of the president—announced by the head of state. This is confirmed by the frequency of the words “democracy” (24 times), “reforms” (9 times), “power” (15 times) and “stability” (6 times) in the same Presidential Address. In addition, in December 2005, the country elected the President, which explains the most frequent use of pronoun “I”: Nazarbaev was talking about the successes achieved during his presidency. The “stable course” is one of his slogans; this means development without leaps and bounds and sudden unjustified changes. The slogan implicitly meant that the reforms would be realized from above; that is, they would be initiated by the President and carried out according to his wishes. This approach would ensure stability and continuity, something that the ruling elite also wants.

Table 3 demonstrates that economic terminology prevailed among the most frequently used words. This indirectly confirms that Nazarbaev was pursuing the policy “economics first, politics second.”

Table 4 shows that the words related to economics (economics, competitiveness, innovations and business) are among the five most frequently used words in the Presidential Addresses starting in 2001 (the year 2011 being the only exception). It was in 2007 that the problems of the country’s economic model, based on an industrial-innovational foundation, came to the fore; it was at the same time that the main factors conducive to greater economic competitiveness and joining the world’s 50 most competitive states became clearer. This task, formulated in 2006, was specified in the 2007 Address. It was expected that the processing and manufacturing industries, modernization of fixed assets, innovation of the production process and a more active business community would become the qualitative features of production activity in Kazakhstan. At the same time, the frequently used word “oil” demonstrated that the country’s economic growth was mostly based on fuel exports that ensured the flow of hard currency into the republic and its high general rating that, in turn, allowed Kazakhstan to borrow abroad.

Conclusion

The above reveals, firstly, that the state’s political priorities were changing from one Presidential Address to another delivered between Strategy-2030 and Strategy-2050; secondly, the number of subjects that received the President’s close attention increased. While in the earlier Addresses, he had used the fairly vague word “economics,” in his later Addresses the President selected more exact and much clearer terms “innovations” and “technologies.” Youth as the main subject that would realize the aims formulated by the President and as a population group, the problems of which should be treated as a priority, occupies one of the central places in Strategy-2050. This means that in this document, the state specified its aim of dealing with the problems clearly seen among the young people as those directly threatening the regime. These problems include the so-far inadequate quality of education and inadequate involvement of the young people in sciences, as well as employment; it should be noted that housing remains the most acute problem.

It should be said that in the period of the fast economic growth, declarations designed to promote the state power and the regime had predominated; little was said about the most urgent problems

and the ways they should be addressed. In 2000-2007, this was caused by the wrong conviction that the selected course was the right one and that the high oil prices would last forever. This policy failed, while the Presidential Addresses shrank from being long during the years of prosperity to shorter ones during crises. This means that people in power had to move away from “high sounding words” to “greater deeds.”

During the years of high oil prices, the state could insist that the chosen course was a correct one—economics first, politics second—yet the frequent economic crises (1998-2000, 2007-2009, 2014-2015) bared the truth: the country had not scored impressive victories in its economic development, while the time for political reforms (that might have triggered economic changes) had been lost. Consecutive devaluation of Kazakhstan’s national currency (tenge) in 2009 (by 25%), 2014 (18%) and 2015 (35%) demonstrated that the tenge depended, to a great extent, on oil prices that were the first to respond to the world crisis. The announced transfer of the state’s attention to processing and manufacturing industries proved to be a mere slogan, while the country’s economics was still geared to oil exports. According to CIA, the following sectors contributed to the GDP of Kazakhstan: agriculture, 4.9%; industry, 29.5%; services and trade, 65.6%.³ This means that during the years of independence, trade (due to the country’s closeness to China and its cheap products) and services were developing faster than other spheres of economy.

As far as the social sphere is concerned, the devalued tenge affected the common citizens, who had been saving money in national currency in hopes of buying housing. The fact that the national economics and trade depended on, to a great extent, the dollar, as well as frequent devaluations of the national currency, became a huge problem for those who wanted to buy housing (mainly young families).

It should be said that the words the President most frequently used in his Addresses resurface in Strategy-2030 and Strategy-2050. This means that under the same President the priorities do not change in the course of time.

Our content analysis revealed that the frequency of the words “reform” and “modernization” is closely associated with the President’s personal pronouns (“I”, “mine” and “myself”). This means that economic and political modernization (in his Addresses the President prefers “modernization” to “reforms”) is based only on the Presidential “say-so.” This also means that economic and political modernization is the prerogative of the head of state and that in the transitional period Kazakhstan has not become a civil society; that political parties and public organizations are weak and that there is no real opposition in the country. More than that: there exist no platforms, which the ruling regime and the populace could use to communicate with each other.

³ Official CIA site [<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/kz.html>], 31 October, 2016.