

Comparative Analysis of Blog Journalism of Uzbekistan, China and Great Britain

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Abstract — This article presents a comprehensive analysis of the theories, approaches, and theoretical, fundamental, applied and content analysis methods of local researchers concerning the bloggers in Uzbekistan. It also provides analysts' information on the Uzbek bloggers' championship and features of the Uzbek blogs. Comparative analysis of blog journalism, blogger activity in the People's Republic of China and the UK in particular, is reflected in theoretical and practical aspects.

Keywords—Blog, Blogger, Beauty-Blogger, Bloggers Championship, Vanhun, [Www.24china.Com](http://www.24china.com), [Www.Blog.Feedspot.Com/Uk_Blogs](http://www.blog.feedspot.com/Uk_Blogs).

I. INTRODUCTION

The blogging activity in Uzbekistan is developing at a rapid pace. Since 2014, the term “blogger” has been legally recognized. Some bloggers have more than 100,000 followers [1].

In August 2019, a draft law was proposed to amend the Law on Informatization. According to a 2014 amendment to this law, the definition of term “blogger” was introduced. This definition will be further clarified in the proposed amendment. According to the previous definition, Blogger “is a subject, who has Internet website and/or a page in a website in the global information network, which is accessible to all users and contain information on social, political, socio-economic and other spheres, including the discussion of this information, and was regarded as a natural person, who is responsible for doing such activity”. According to the proposed definition, the blogger “is a subject, who is responsible for collecting, analyzing, editing, preparing and distributing messages and materials, and for discussing it with his/her followers, and is regarded as a natural person, who has his/her web site and/or a page on the world wide web”.

It should be noted that in international practice, “freelance journalists” are defined as individuals, who do not work in any

mass media company, and are regarded as a natural person, who collects, analyzes, edits, prepares, and distributes news and materials.

According to the law, a journalist, unlike a blogger, works in a specific mass media company. The Law “On the protection of journalism”, adopted on April 24, 1997, refers to journalist as “a person who collects, analyzes, edits, prepares and distributes news and materials for a mass media company on the basis of labor or other contractual relations” [2].

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The most popular bloggers in Uzbekistan today are Umid Gafurov, Mirakhad Egamediev, Timur Amanshikov, Sardor Boboev, Feruzhon Yakubhodzhaev, Sardor Alimov, Rustam Makhmadjonov, Khushnud Khudayberdiev, and Davronbek Tojialiev.

Prominent Uzbek blogger Umid Gafurov, founder of Socio.uz and troll.uz in this field, has revealed the difference between Uzbek and foreign bloggers in a broadcast on Mahalla TV “Fikrlar chorrahasi (crossroads of ideas)”. He said that foreign bloggers mainly deal with entertainment topics, while Uzbek bloggers cover most of the social and political issues. Umid Gafurov said that foreign bloggers do not need to cover

the social and political issues of their own community, as there is no need for this, and that is why they produce “life hack” blogs [3].

The internet portal www.davronbek.ziyouz.com, which functions since 2004, is one of the most popular blogs in the country. As of January 1, 2018, there are 25029 articles on this portal (n.ziyouz.com – 10190, islom.ziyouz.com – 2252, and davronbek.ziyouz.com – 410 articles). There are 10185 books in the portal, including 20 books on the Android Market (883 112 downloads). The number of Facebook fans is 16,833, the number of Youtube subscribers is 2,286 and the number of Telegram messenger followers is 3,650 [4].

Another well-known Uzbek blogger Khudayberdiev Khushnud has been running his own site, Khushnubek.uz, since 2012. His new project is connected with the list of Uzbek bloggers // [Spisok.uzbekskix.bloggerov](http://Spisok.uzbekskix.bloggerov.com) (www.uzbloggerlar.blogspot.com), which offers a comprehensive list of Uzbek bloggers, UzBloggers Championships, the list of contestants and Uzbek bloggers [5].

The interest for bloggers can be seen on example of information, which was provided by the administrator of the xabar.uz, Jamshid Niyazov. According to this information, the bloggers’ championship of Uzbekistan, which begun on April 12, 2019, has come to an end. He noted that, despite the fact, that this championship is being held only for the third time, only this time it started doing its original mission, which is to create public opinion, and draw attention to drawbacks of our society, not only of simple citizens, but also the officials of the country. It should be noted that this year’s championship was completely different from its predecessors in several aspects. Firstly, there were comparably more participants in this championship when compared to the previous years. It becomes obvious, that the level of culture of our compatriots in expressing their unbiased opinion on the situation in the country has significantly increased. Secondly, most of the bloggers’ work is not only focused on everyday problems, but is also focused on issues concerning the current implementation of the tasks set by the President in “The Action Plan for the five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021. This is a clear indication of the championship’s resonance in the public [6].

On August 26, 2019, at the inauguration of the Twelfth International Music Festival “Sharq Taronalari” in Samarkand, local bloggers and journalists and foreign influencers, who gathered at the Registan Square, had a talk with the members of the presidential family. President Sh. Mirziyoev also met face-to-face with more than 100 influencers from over 40 countries,

as well as local journalists and bloggers, expressed his support for bloggers and had a selfie with them.

According to the information “Who are the bloggers, who want to make Uzbekistan known in the world? Can we expect results from them?” provided by www.kun.uz on August 30, 2019, about 100 well-known bloggers are expected to attend the 1st International Congress of Influencers, which is to be held in Uzbekistan on August 22-27, 2019. The total number subscribers of Influencers who have confirmed their participation in the World Influencers Congress (WIC) is about 109 million on Instagram, Facebook and Youtube. Moreover, the content published on the platforms of these Influencers was read 7.7 billion times. We can list some of the prominent bloggers who have visited this Congress. For example, Atta Halilintar (@attahalilintar) is an Indonesian actor and blogger with 9.5 million followers on Instagram. Rawan Bin Hussain (@rawan) is a Kuwaiti model and beauty blogger. He lives in London. Number of subscribers – 3.7 million. Sadaf (@sadafe_beauty, @sadafe_beauty_diary) is an Iranian model, blogger who lives in San Francisco. He has 2.1 million subscribers on his @sadafe_beauty account and 1 million on his @sadafe_beauty_diary account. Sjana Alice Earp (@sjanaelise) is a yoga instructor, model and blogger. She lives in Australia and has 1.6 million subscribers [7].

In most Uzbek traditional mass media, the issue of national culture is limited to the form of reporting. The blog industry is becoming a leader in this regard. Today’s blog journalism is becoming more and more popular; it also manifests itself as a promoter of different cultures. In addition to Internet journalists in Uzbekistan, bloggers also contribute to the formation and development of blog journalism in the country. One of such bloggers is N.Kosimova, a candidate of philological sciences, associate professor, who is the owner of a blog www.nargis.uz. As a result of this site’s analysis, we came to conclusion, that the blogger’s attitude and approach to current and popular topics is a unique one. It is particularly noteworthy that the issue of national culture is enriched with extensive analytical materials. In particular, the cultural relations of Uzbekistan with such countries as Tajikistan, Russia, Azerbaijan and China are widely and comprehensively described. The blogger’s article, “How many Chinas are there?” presents impressions of the winners of nominations announced by the Embassy of China in the framework of the XII National Prize for the award “Oltin qalam (Golden Pen)”, the etymology of the word China, and the history of two Chinas [8]. In turn, this information can be used as an additional source in analyzing the ancient and modern history of the People’s Republic of China, its centuries-old culture and the development of cultural ties between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the People’s Republic of China.

In the article “Azerbaijan Culture Day was held at the University” written by the blogger N.Kosimova on March 1, 2018 there is given the analysis of the cultural ties between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. The following is taken from the article: “The Days of Azerbaijan Culture was organized by the Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center in the Institute of Arts and Culture of Uzbekistan. As part of the event, the Center for Azerbaijan Culture and Arts named after the composer Kara Karaev was opened at the university. The center will host open classes for students in various fields of culture, present Azerbaijan feature films and meetings with artists. A Memorandum of Cooperation with the Institute of Arts and Culture of Uzbekistan was signed within the framework of Azerbaijan Culture Days” [9].

The following information is taken from the article “Navruz Celebrations in Azerbaijan’s Cultural Center”, published on March 16, 2018: “After independence, the holiday Navruz has found a new place in life, discovering new meaning and essence. It has truly become a celebration of the popular holiday, and the celebration of this holiday in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan is a testament to the common language, values, aspirations of the two peoples for peace and prosperity. In 2009, Navruz was included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List at the initiative of Azerbaijan. The exhibition of Azerbaijan national clothes, performed by fashion designers of the Zarqaynar fashion house, performances by wrestlers and illusionists certainly received applause from the participants” [10].

The article “Tajikistan’s National Museum: A Tour to History” published on January 3, 2019, provides information about interesting exhibits and the past and present of the Tajik people, written heritage, archeology and numismatics. In addition, it is noted that if the museum’s fund had only 530 exhibits in 1934, today there are more than 5,000 exhibits in it. The Uzbek journalists paid special attention to a copy of a 15-meter-tall lying statue of Buddha, which dates back to the 7-8 centuries and a copy of the Samanid mausoleum, which is situated in Bukhara. These exhibits show that Buddhism had once flourished here in ancient times and is a symbol of the life and culture of one fraternal nation since the time of the Samanids’ development [11].

As it is known from the above given information, the blogger provides detailed information about the cultural life of a number of foreign countries in Uzbekistan, their peculiarities, as well as the meetings and activities held within the cultural centers of Uzbekistan. Unlike other sites (kun.uz, daryo.uz, qalampir.uz, podrobno.uz), this blog is distinguished by the attractiveness, colorful pictures, and rich facts of the provided information.

Another journalist, translator, poet, blogger Manzura Bekjanova’s blog www.manzur.uz serves as one of the most important blogs in Uzbekistan. Unlike N.Kosimova, M.Bekjanova provides a series of articles on national culture in her blogs.

The following information is given in the article of the blogger entitled “Our Cultural Heritage in the World Recognition”, which was published on August 27, 2019: “More than 15 interesting events were held during the Cultural Heritage Week “Uzbekistan – Crossroads of Great Paths and Civilizations: Empire, Religion, Culture”. One of them was the international conference in Samarkand on the theme “Preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage: actual problems and strategies for their solution”. It was organized by UNESCO under the auspices of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and is the first of this kind not only in Uzbekistan, but also in the Central Asia. The scientific forum was divided into sections, with particular emphasis on a number of topics such as “Cultural Heritage and Urban Planning”, “Legal Basis for Preservation of Cultural Heritage”, “The role of education and information technologies in the preservation of cultural heritage”. Adam Smith Albion (USA), collector, director of the Asian Young Entrepreneurs Program, who took part in this conference, says the following about it: “I have read a lot about Uzbek artists, craftsmen and their creative work. I’m very interested in textiles, metalwork here, and I can tell that many Western countries are now very interested in these unique types of art” [12].

Moreover, there is provided an information on opinions of the participants of the 3rd International Congress of the World Society for the study, and promotion of Uzbekistan’s Cultural Heritage in Tashkent including UNESCO Director General Odri Azule, Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Aziz Abduhakimov, Doctor of History, Professor – Edward Rtveladze, Doctor of History, Professor – Efim Rezvan, Abdulkhakim Shariy Juzjoni – member of the Turan Academy in Uzbekistan, representative of the international Babur Foundation in Sweden, director of the State History Museum Jannat Ismailova.

According to the article “Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan in World Collections” published in the section “Interview” of “Manzur.uz” on July 30, 2019, there was held a meeting dedicated to the presentation of new book-albums “Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan in the World Collections” on July 27 at the media hall of “Sevimli” TV channel. It provided detailed information on the works done during one and half year to prepare these multi-volume collections for publication. These books contain valuable sources and treasures preserved from ancient khanates, emirates and left to us by our wise ancestors.

The researchers, who were directly involved in the project told about the process of preparing rare manuscripts to be collected into a book at the meeting. For example, Dilorom Yusupova, a researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies says the following: “Some of the exhibits are very old. Among them we can see manuscripts in the Arabic, Persian, and Turkic languages of the periods ranging from the 10th to the 20th centuries. They were written by different authors and cover a wide variety of topics. While many belong to well-known scholars, there are some manuscripts, which have not yet been fully analyzed. Among the authors of the 16th-19th centuries, who wrote historical and geographical works, there are a lot from Central Asia, especially Khorezm, Bukhara, Khurasan [13].

The following interesting information is given in the blogger’s article “Is Uzbekistan a Homeland of Damascus Steel?” in the “News” column, of September 20, 2019: There was held a media event at the famous “Travelers Club” in London entitled “New Uzbekistan: invaluable cultural initiatives”. It was attended by a group of British scientists and experts studying the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. A number of interesting reports were presented at the event. In particular, a group of experts from the Institute of Archeology at the University College London reported that Damascus steel, popular in the East, is made of iron ore mined in Uzbekistan. This decision was made by a team of scientists led by Dr. Milyana Radzyavovich, who had once studied ore samples, precious stones and raw materials extracted from the mines in Uzbekistan. Extensive research is also being undertaken to study the scope of extraction and production of tigrel steel from the Akhsikent region in Ferghana Valley [14].

Based on the aforementioned data, it is worth mentioning that there is a significant increase in blogging activity in Uzbekistan. For example, according to a news release from www.sputniknews-uz.com dated October 20, 2019, in the telegram channel “Qo’shni mahalla” there was given information about the most popular bloggers in Uzbekistan, based on news blogs released on October 4-17 and which were read by most of their followers. 22 most popular bloggers of Uzbekistan were added to this list. In the first place we can see is Khushnudbek, a blogger, a lawyer, who made a selfie with the President; he provides all the needed information for applicants. There were more than 169,000 members in his channel. In the second place there is “Troll.uz”, who called himself as “joking blogger” with 51 thousand followers. In the third place, we can find “Rais Buva”, a comics blogger with over 48,000 subscribers.

According to Wikipedia, Russia is in the first place by the number of bloggers. There are 70 Russian bloggers on Wikipedia. In the second place there is the USA with 56 famous bloggers. Ukraine is in the top 3 with 18 bloggers. The UK is ranked fourth with 13 bloggers [15].

According to Oriella PR Network, 85% of UK and 44% of European news sites and 70% of US newspapers have their blogs. 41% of the media in Europe, Southeast Asia, North America and Brazil have Twitter microblogs. Half of these media put information in their blogs and microblogs, 60 to 100% of which cannot be found in their “off-line” version [16].

Our research is not only connected with the activities of Uzbek bloggers but also Chinese bloggers. It is worth noting that the Chinese Internet, its Internet media, and especially Internet journalism, are being studied as objects of various researches. Alexander Maltsev, expert on Chinese Internet, e-commerce, media and digital marketing, founder of Internet Magazine “Magazeta”, “Eastern Hemisphere Forum”, “Shanghai Russian Club Website”, “Coordinating Council of Nationals in China” [17]. In his article “How China’s Blogger Market Works” he writes the following: “In 2017, there were 1.5 million bloggers in China, with over 100,000 fans each. The famous bloggers in China are called Wanghuns. In addition, they are recognized as competitors with traditional media in terms of focus and influence on global network users. According to Weibo and iResearch, the total audience of Wanghuns in 2017 was over 470 million” [18]. By 2018, Vanhun Market has become a complex ecosystem valued at 100 billion yuan (over \$ 15,000).

This ecosystem includes wanghuns, incubators and agents, platforms and service companies and organizations.

Wanghuns, in turn, are divided into several types:

- Streams – video broadcasts;
- We Media – an independent private media outlet;
- WeChat and channels in other sites;
- e-commerce – bloggers who have a shop on the marketplace;
- Ordinary bloggers (popular people on the internet);
- Celebrities in other areas (TV stars) [19].

Incubators and agencies are companies that help “complete shutdown” and offer a wide range of services. Their job is to act as intermediaries between advertisers and authors, from script writing to film and analysis.

Platforms are a place where wanghuns interact with their audience. In China platforms consist of universal social or narrow thematic networks (sports, tourism, etc.). They also include video and audio platforms – stream services, youtube analogs, short video programs, and podcast terms. Marketplaces consist of trading platforms and narrow profile sites (Taobao, Tuniu).

According to a 2017 survey by www.magazeta.com, there were chosen 10 most famous Chinese Internet celebrities – wanghuns. They are:

- Syue Zhejian – has 38 million subscribers at Weibo, and is known for his humor in various TV shows in 2016;
- Papi Jiang is a comedian video blogger who deals with the context marketing model business and has over 26.3 million subscribers;
- Wan Sytsun is one of the most well-known and respected bloggers in China, known to people as “People's boss”, “Rich prince”, “Secretary general of the entertainment industry” and has over 23.7 million subscribers;
- Aykelili – a 22-year-old photographer with over 9 million subscribers, who has become an Internet cerebriby by using short comedy videos to Miaopai's video platform;
- Little E – Chinese girl with the surname E, who has about 4 million subscribers on the Internet, known for her videos of unusual ways of cooking at workplace;
- Fu Yuanhuay is one of the most famous swimmers in China, running her micro blog, with about 7.8 million subscribers;
- MC Tyanyu – In 2015, the 25-year-old rapper created a video channel discussing acute social issues and has more than 7 million subscribers;
- Zhang Dai is a designer and former model, who opened an Internet Store in 2014. She conducts online broadcasts featuring new collections on her page, providing material and design information and responding to comments from users in comments section. Her page is currently viewed by about 5.7 million subscribers;
- Mi Men is one of the most controversial online celebrities in China. He became famous in 2015, abandoned journalism and started his own blog. In 2017, he held a 15-hour training course, promising that the followers' salary would increased. He also guaranteed a refund of the course fees if users failed to achieve the desired result. Despite the criticism, he has nearly 3 million subscribers at Weibo.

- Zhang Jietyan – In 2017 she became the face and main “marketing tool” of the Australian dairy company, which planned to enter milk market of China [20].

Thus, it has been revealed that wanghuns have been influencing the multimillion audience with short video clips and long-term audio and video programs in the course of their work. Among blogs of China travel and beauty blogs are considered as the most important ones.

According to information provided by www.24china.com, there are 10 top English blogs in China. They are:

- “Shanghaiist”, although being a Shanghai website, it is an active blog, covering not only this city but the whole country, with news, art and entertainment programs, food, local events and more;
- “China Real Time Report” – an English blog about China. It analyzes information on Chinese reports. This blog covers spheres like law, politics, economics and culture;
- “China Digital Times” is a bilingual website that covers news and reviews about China. It is based in California, and its English-language blog is updated frequently;
- “Sinocism” is a website that is enriched only with text and almost without symbols. Nonetheless, its followers are numerous and it is frequently updated. This site is more like news headlines about what's happening in China;
- “China File” is a website of the Asian community to highlight US-China relations. This Chinese blog covers such topics as Chinese news, analytics, culture, the environment and the media. Articles on this website, which are frequently updated, are written by many contributors;
- “The Beijinger” is the most popular magazine in the English language covering Chinese lifestyle and contains stories, guides and other information about China;
- “Speaking of China” is a personal blog run by Jocelyn Eikenburg. The original American writer is married to a Chinese guy. As a result, she blogs about the life of foreign wives in China, interethnic and intercultural relations in the country;
- “TechNode” is an English language website covering Chinese technology. It is a blog that is updated many times a day;
- “VPNDada” – Every foreigner, who lives in China knows what a VPN is and why one needs it. As the use of VPN becomes more and more difficult, the VPNDada site requires verification and review [21].

As one can see, the distinctive feature of Chinese blogs is the red color that dominates in the Chinese culture elements, the attributes and hieroglyphs that reflect national culture.

One of the bloggers listed above is a Chinese girl with the surname E, who is known for her unusual cooking videos on the Internet and has become a promoter of national culture by offering Chinese cuisine to general public. This is because, national cuisine is a component of national culture. Another beauty blogger, designer and former model Zhang Dai organized an online store in 2014 and is known for online broadcasts on her page. This blogger's activity demonstrates Chinese national and contemporary costumes, which are part of national culture, and are available not only to Chinese audience but also to global network users.

These figures show that the UK is a leader in blog journalism. Alternatively, according to the latest data available at www.blog.feedspot.com/uk_blogs/, on November 11, 2019, the top 100 UK websites and blogs were selected. We have analyzed some of them.

- In the first of the top 100 there is Marie Claire's blog [22]. She has 291,800 users on Twitter. Her fashion house and beauty tips, trends, global reports, news and interviews with some of the world's most famous people consist most part of the information in the blog;

- The blog "The Londoner", just like "Beijinger's blog in China, covers the lifestyle and cuisine of Rosie Thomas, who has traveled extensively around the world. After she has moved to London, she became an influencer of bloggers of various levels. She has 336,800 subscribers on Instagram;

- The blog "Reddit United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland" covers news, politics, economics, society, business, culture and other issues related to the UK. The number of Facebook fans is about 1,300 [23].

It is worth noting that on November 8, 2019, it was included to the top 10 list of cultural blogs and websites of UK:

- "ArtMag (Arts Magazine) Arts and Culture" blog is the largest art magazine in Scotland, now widely distributed in England. There are 2,600 followers on Twitter;

- The "DCMS" blog is responsible for setting policies in government, culture, media and sports, and covers the country's news on spheres like art, museums, broadcasting, music, cinema, sports and tourism. Unlike ArtMag, it has 220,900 followers on Twitter;

- "We Are Chester" is a website/blog for visitors to Chester, to get ideas about things to do in this city. Facebook fans are about 835;

- "I Am Birmingham" – a blog that covers the latest news and culture news about Birmingham. The number of Facebook followers is 10,400, and it has 77,500 followers on Twitter.

- The Blog "We Are Cardiff" offers personalized stories from various media and major media outlets. Its Instagram followers are about 11,100;

- The blog "Culture Vulture" of Poppy Loves – a London-based lifestyle guide, which makes you feel like a real Londoner after learning about the most popular places to visit in this city. It has 10,300 Facebook followers, 32,600 followers on Twitter and 59,700 users on Instagram;

- "Catherine's Cultural Wednesdays" is a blog that offers travel books, and valuable information about art, culture and travel without children. It has 209 Facebook fans, 3,200 followers on Twitter, and it has 30 social activists;

- "Glasgow Punter Local Culture" – a personal blog about concerts, museums, exhibitions in Glasgow and social history of this city. It has 683 followers on Twitter;

- "London Culture Blog" is a blog for Londoners, who enjoy everything that this great city has to offer. It has 113 fans on Facebook and 1,300 users on Twitter;

- "Tidal Cultures" is a blog exploring the cultural and natural aspects of natural landscapes in the UK, the Netherlands, and beyond. The number of Twitter followers is 861 [24].

III. CONCLUSION

Based on the above, it is reasonable to conclude the following:

Firstly, starting from August 2019, there were some amendments to "The Law on Informatization" of Uzbekistan, according to which the term blogger is defined as "a natural person, who collects, analyzes, edits, prepares and distributes messages and materials and puts them to discussion with his/her users, on his/her webpage and (or) website, including the Internet";

Secondly, there are some specific, similar and different peculiarities between the bloggers of Uzbekistan, China, and the UK. As the common features we can say that bloggers in every country cover the cultural sphere of the society. Chinese and British bloggers have extensive use of multimedia tools, a large number of audio and video materials on their blogs, and a strong impact on network users, as well types of blogging (designers, models and bloggers). Whereas Uzbek bloggers focus on the generalities of a particular topic, while Chinese and British bloggers have a tendency to analyze some of its aspects.

Thirdly, blogs in each of the three countries include news headlines in the spheres like politics, economy, society, and culture. The information is provided in the Uzbek, Russian, English and other foreign languages. Only in China the red color, hieroglyphic and national paintings, which are the main element of national culture, stand out as a distinctive feature;

Fourthly, the bloggers of Uzbekistan N.Kasimova and Manzura Bekzhanova mostly analyze the issue of national culture in more depth. China's best English language blog "China Digital Times" provides cultural information on China's cultural sphere. On 10 cultural blogs of UK there were given information about featuring art, museums, exhibitions, broadcasting, music, movie, sports and tourism on November 8, 2019.

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