

LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

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DYNAMICS OF THE POST-YUGOSLAV AND UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE LANDSCAPE IN THE CONTEXT OF INFORMATION WARFARE: TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION

ДИНАМІКА ПОСТЮГОСЛАВСЬКОГО ТА УКРАЇНСЬКОГО МОВНОГО ЛАНДШАФТУ В УМОВАХ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНОЇ ВІЙНИ: СТРАТЕГІЇ ПЕРЕКЛАДУ В КОНТЕКСТІ КУЛЬТУРНОЇ ІДЕНТИФІКАЦІЇ

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Following the disintegration of Yugoslavia, language issues became one of the most contentious aspects of forming new national identities. The division of Serbo-Croatian into several separate languages, such as Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin reflects efforts towards national self-determination of five separate regions (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia-Slovenia). In Ukraine, otherwise, the language issue became central in the context of state sovereignty, especially after the annexation of Crimea and the full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine. Both regions approached the matter of legal regulation of language, establishing prerequisites for the protection and promotion of the state language, which plays a major role in the processes of national consolidation.

Present-day, the predominance of the informational component in human activity over all its other forms has become evident. The rapid spread of new digital, electronic and computer technologies, especially the widespread dominance of internet resources is becoming progressively noteworthy in the information war.

In the common global environment, we can observe the intensive development of information warfare tools in Internet-based mass media. Post-Yugoslav and Ukrainian researchers cite such examples of information warfare tools: disinformation and manipulation, propaganda, attempts to change public opinion, psychological and psychotropic pressure, spreading rumors, blocking television and radio broadcasts, removing national minority channels from the air, spreading pseudo-news, spreading fake information.

Below, we demonstrate the analysis of articles from the national daily newspapers *The Guardian* and *NY Times* covering information about the “Russian-Ukrainian War” in period from August 2023 to January 2024.

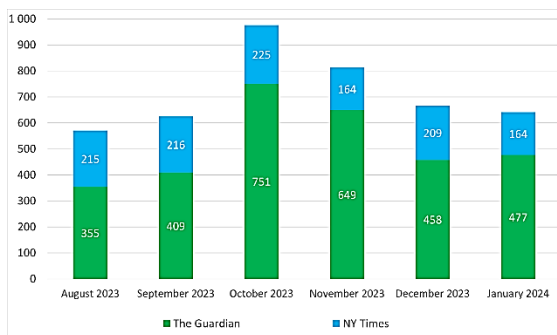


Fig. 1. The number of articles from *The Guardian* and *NY Times* covering information about the “Russian-Ukrainian War”

Among others traditional warfare, information warfare also has its consequences, which can be comparable in scale to actual combat operations [1, p. 1–17]. The consequences of information warfare can include: *the occupation of certain territories; the intensification of measures directed against governing structures by international organizations; international isolation of a state; the emergence of public distrust towards the ruling power; the disappearance of the national environment and adaptation to the traditions and language of the aggressor.* This is particularly relevant in conflicts where cultural identity plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influences on political decision-making. In this context, the language landscape becomes a ground of struggle, where the informative and symbolic functions provide informational compensation to achieve cultural domination and preserve national identity.

The undeniable advantage of language, both verbal and non-verbal, lies in its method of communication and the shaping of our perception of the world, demonstrating fundamental values and defining cultural identification. The fundamental mechanism for forming cultural identification is globalization, a

specific feature of which is the open exchange of information. In view of information warfare, the main characteristics of identifying different social groups in society include:

- instability, contradictions and turbulence of value orientations, reflecting the national-cultural self-awareness;
- the divergence between the cognitive and behavioral components of national-cultural identification, demonstrating the non-linearity and unevenness of the identification process;
- the desire to obtain psychological protection [2, p. 48–60].

In that respect, language transforms into a tool for manipulating consciousness. The perspective of linguistic information is related to the expansion of language, its lexicon, speech activity that is determined by both linguistic and extralinguistic means, which produce structured content. The correct choice of linguistic elements can significantly change the perception of events. Hypothetically, *the language landscape* is the entire spectrum of lexical material aimed at a specific audience without using any filters. It is natural that disinformation correlates with the range of attempts to impose one's version of events, using language as a weapon. Reflecting on and describing the events of the last three years – the war that Russia unleashed against Ukraine, it is important to carefully choose words. The post-Yugoslav and Ukrainian information field is overfilled with various concepts, assessments, sometimes paradoxically opposite. Unfortunately, Russia shapes the opinion of many political leaders who are capable of imposing their will on broad strata. This complicates the understanding of the real situation of events both within the country and beyond its borders.

The development of cooperation between the post-Yugoslav countries and Ukraine involves the creation of translation projects, organization of interchange programs for teachers, students, translators. Within the framework of conducting master classes, seminars and conferences, there is the reciprocity of experience between scholars of both regions.

The role of the translators during information warfare consist of supporting the official position of their country. A translator must remain objective and convey information as closely as possible to the original source, striving not to become a tool of propaganda. Accordingly, in the process of translation, they need to adapt the message for the target audience in such a way as to not “distort its essence”, with the aim of protecting the national-cultural identity under the conditions of informational globalization pressure. The development of information technologies and the growing role of social media in the modern world only intensify the globalization pressure on both Ukrainian society in the conditions of war and on international communities, as the information presented is often fake. As a result of the hard-working of translators – mainly on a voluntary basis, the world receives truthful information about what is happening in Ukraine.

The activity of a translator in military conditions is intended at a deep understanding of the cultural identity of their own people, factors shaping public opinion in order to ensure successful communication between the “top of the power”, the socio-political force and international organizations, partners, allies. Linguistic and paralinguistic means of communication chosen by the translator during simultaneous interpretation become catalysts for constructive dialogue between the political class of the state and world leaders. In consequence, the translator is a full-fledged subject of the communicative act, the result of which is the political decision-making that can change the course of the war. The outcome of communication is influenced by the translator’s intonation, manner and pace. The same phrase, said with different intonation, can provoke completely opposite reactions [3]. A translator’s mistake in the conditions of information warfare during peace negotiations can lead to an escalation of the conflict.

Having analyzed the work of dozens of native and foreign translators, they use such translation strategies as:

1) **Literal translation.** This translation technique is particularly popular when covering cultural identity and ideological context. It usually causes wide resonance in foreign media. Ideologically motivated distortion of the text during translation can lead to an intensification of the information war on a global scale. By employing this translation technique, translators reproduce the essence of words, phrases, fragments without significant changes in the structure and form of words. On the point of word-for-word translation, they also resort to **transliteration** in case there is no direct equivalent in the target language.

2) **Equivalent translation.** Translators refer to this type of lexical transformations to depict Ukrainian cultural identity, which is based on stereotypical perceptions of Ukrainians. Universal means of such identity type include manifestations of ethnicity, national character, aspirations to break free from the influence of “imperial Russia”.

In the process of selecting an equivalent, the translator focuses on preserving the semantics of the word in order to achieve a precise translation of the entire text. It is important that the translation of a text, which highlights events in Ukraine, does not lose the national idea that unites Ukrainians. The basis of the transformational model emphasizes national-cultural identity, political, informational, economic processes in Ukraine. In this process, the translator becomes a mediator between cultures on an international level and influences the preservation of cultural identity through the choice of authentic lexicon, stylistics that reinforce the intention of the incoming message.

Hence, studying the post-Yugoslav and Ukrainian experience in the aspect of the linguistic scope can provide valuable exemplar for other regions facing similar challenges. The interaction between native and foreign philologists creates conditions for the development of effective strategies for language policy and cultural integration in the post-war recovery of the country. The

analysis of text translations in English-language online news during the coverage of the information war in Ukraine in the context of cultural identification showed that the most common translation transformations were literal translation, transliteration and the selection of lexical equivalents.

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PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES IN A POST-YUGOSLAV AND UKRAINIAN MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT: WARTIME CHALLENGES

ПРОБЛЕМИ ПЕРЕКЛАДАЦЬКОЇ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ В ПОСТЮГОСЛАВСЬКОМУ ТА УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНОМУ ПРОСТОРИ: ВИКЛИКИ ВОЄННОГО ЧАСУ

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The post-Yugoslav region and Ukraine demonstrate in what manner historical events, particularly conflicts and wars, shape modern multicultural