

4. Language Doctors, The. (2025). Khrushchev We will bury you translation mishap. <https://thelanguagedoctors.org/blog/khrushchev-we-will-bury-you-translation-mishap/>
5. Profpereklad.ua. (н.д.). Хибні друзі перекладача в перекладі економічних текстів. <https://profpereklad.ua/lozhnye-druzja-perevodchika-v-perevode-jekonomicheskikh-tekstov/>
6. Ulatus. (2025). The true cost of legal translation errors: Analyzing 5 multi-million dollar cases. <https://www.ulatus.com/translation-blog/the-true-cost-of-legal-translation-errors/>
7. Wikipedia. (2024). We will bury you. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We_will_bury_you

Natalia Liubymova

*Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design
(Kyiv, Ukraine)*

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN TIMES OF WAR: THE ROLE OF THE TRANSLATOR IN SHAPING GLOBAL NARRATIVES

This paper investigates the role of translation in shaping global narratives during wartime. It argues that translation is not neutral but ideologically and culturally embedded. The study combines discourse analysis and translation studies to demonstrate how linguistic choices influence international perception.

Globalization has transformed war into a global communicative phenomenon. Information about conflicts spreads instantly through media and digital platforms. Translation becomes a key mechanism through which these events are interpreted worldwide (Baker, 2020, 50–60). As a result, translators act as mediators between cultures and as agents influencing meaning construction.

War discourse is characterized by deliberate lexical choices. Terms such as “operation,” “intervention,” “invasion,” or “liberation” are not neutral but reflect ideological positions. For instance, the same event can be described as “defence” or “aggression,” depending on the perspective. Translators must decide whether to preserve the original framing or adapt it for the target audience.



Intercultural communication in wartime is complicated by cultural differences. Concepts such as “freedom,” “security,” and “justice” carry different meanings in different cultures. Translators must interpret not only language but also cultural context. Misinterpretation may lead to misunderstanding or manipulation.

Translation strategies play a crucial role. Domestication adapts the text to the target culture, while foreignization preserves original elements. Neutralization avoids ideological bias, whereas intensification emphasizes emotional impact. Each strategy contributes to shaping the global narrative.

Translation Strategies in War Discourse

Domestication – simplifying political references

Foreignization – preserving original context

Neutralization – reducing emotional tone

Intensification – emphasizing dramatic effect

Digital technologies have further transformed translation practices. Machine translation tools provide speed but often lack contextual accuracy.

The ethical dimension of translation is particularly important in wartime. Translators face dilemmas between neutrality and truth, accuracy and impact. Their decisions can influence public opinion, diplomatic relations, and historical memory.

Modern translators operate within a complex information space, where language functions as a tool of power. They must critically evaluate sources, recognize bias, and uphold professional responsibility.

Example 1:

Variant 1: "There were civilian casualties during the strike." (Neutral)

Variant 2: "Civilians were killed in the attack." (Critical / more explicit)

Variant 3: "The strike resulted in collateral damage." (Euphemistic / minimizing impact)

Example 2:

Variant 1: "The region was liberated by our forces." (Neutral / official narrative)

Variant 2: "The region was occupied by our forces." (Critical / протиположне трактування)

Variant 3: "Our forces took control of the region." (More neutral, descriptive framing)

Example 3:

Variant 1: "The city is under control." (Ambiguous / neutral)

Variant 2: "The city is under military control." (More explicit, slightly tense)

Variant 3: "The city has been secured." (Positive / legitimizing framing)

These examples illustrate how, through their choice of vocabulary, a translator: either maintains neutrality, or emphasises the emotional and ethical aspects, or, conversely, softens the perception of an event through the use of technocratic vocabulary.

In other words, translation is not merely the conveyance of meaning, but the construction of a narrative through lexical choice, evaluative judgement and discourse.

Conclusion. Translation in times of war is a powerful communicative act. Translators shape global narratives, influence intercultural understanding, and contribute to the construction of reality. Therefore, translation should be studied not only as a linguistic process but also as a socio-cultural and ideological practice.

REFERENCES

1. Baker, M. (2020). *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account*. Routledge.
2. Cronin, M. (2013). *Translation in the Digital Age*. Routledge.
3. O'Hagan, M. (2021). *The Impact of New Technologies on Translation Studies*. Routledge.
4. Pym, A. (2010). *Exploring Translation Theories*. Routledge.
5. Venuti, L. (2012). *The Translator's Invisibility*. Routledge.
6. Chesterman, A. (2016). *Memes of Translation*. John Benjamins.