

## **MEME TRANSLATION AND LOCALIZATION: APPLIED APPROACH**

Internet memes have emerged in the contemporary digital age as a unique and influential way of communication that blends text, image, and cultural references to convey humor, critique, and social commentary. Their viral essence and cultural features make memes both powerful tools of expression and sophisticated objects of translation. The study considers the translation and localization of memes through an applied, comparative approach, with a particular focus on English and Ukrainian-language contexts.

Memes often contain layers of meaning that stem from linguistic puns, references to pop culture, political events, and sociohistorical symbols. These characteristics pose significant challenges for translators who must render the content linguistically and preserve its humorous, contextual, and cultural relevance for a potential audience. However, traditional translation approaches are frequently not appropriate for memes, requiring a hybrid approach combining audiovisual translation, transcreation, and localization principles.

The research combines theoretical findings with practical analysis. To frame the discussion, it employs the key translation theories, such as Skopos Theory, Relevance Theory, and the domestication vs. foreignization model. The methodology involves collecting and analyzing a corpus of memes from Ukrainian and English social platforms, focusing on those with high engagement and clear cross-cultural potential. Three primary dimensions are explored: (1) linguistic humor and wordplay, (2) culturally specific imagery and symbolism, and (3) socio-political commentary. The study identifies dominant translation strategies for each dimension, discusses potential vulnerabilities, and suggests adaptable solutions.

The findings prove that successful meme translation relies on the translator's deep knowledge of source and target cultures and willingness to prioritize engagement with the audience over textual accuracy. The research emphasizes the value of creativity, cultural intuition, and visual awareness in meme translation. It highlights the growing significance of this skill in areas such as digital marketing, political communication, online education, and cross-cultural discourse.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the emerging work in digital translation studies and offers practical insights for translators, educators, and content creators working in multilingual and multicultural online environments.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Vermeer, H. J. (1989). Skopos and Commission in Translational Action. In A. Chesterman (Ed.), *Readings in Translation Theory* (pp. 173–187). Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectura Ab.
2. Gambier, Y., & van Doorslaer, L. (Eds.). (2016). *Handbook of Translation Studies: Vol. 4*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
3. Chiaro, D. (2010). *Translation and Humour, Volume 1: Theory and Practice*. London: Continuum.