

Lost in Stereotypes: Gender Clichés in Intercultural Translation of Media Discourse

Oksana Chaika ^{1, 2*}, Natalia Sharmanova ³, Oksana Hutyriak ⁴,
Natalia Berezovska-Savchuk ⁵, Iryna Vakulyk ⁶

¹ Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, University of Luxembourg, 2 Av. de l'Université, L-4365 Esch-sur-Alzette, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

² Department of Foreign Philology and Translation.

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine,
15 Heroyiv Oborony Street, Kyiv 03041, Ukraine.

³ Department of the Ukrainian Language, Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University,
54, Universytetskyi Avenue, Kryvyi Rih 50086, Ukraine.

⁴ Department of the English Language Practice and Methods of Teaching, Drohobych State Pedagogical University after Ivan Franko, 24 Shevchenko Street, Drohobych 82100, Ukraine.

⁵ Department of the Ukrainian Language, Kryvyi Rih State Pedagogical University,
54 Universytetskyi Avenue, Kryvyi Rih 50086, Ukraine.

⁶ Department of Philosophy and International Communication, National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, 15 Heroyiv Oborony Street, Kyiv 03041, Ukraine.

*Corresponding author: oxana.chaika@yahoo.es

© Author (s)

OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development, Ontario International Development Agency, Canada.

ISSN 1923-6654 (print) ISSN 1923-6662 (online) www.oidaijsd.com

Also available at <https://www.ssrn.com/index.cfm/en/oida-intl-journal-sustainable-dev/>

Abstract: This study examined the presence and variation of gender-based stereotypes in headline discourse across three linguistic media environments: English, French, and Ukrainian. Based on a corpus of 600 headlines (200 per language) published between 2023 and 2024 by leading international and national news outlets, the research applied a mixed-method approach grounded in critical discourse analysis, feminist linguistics, and translation studies. The analysis identified recurrent gendered frames and lexical patterns embedded in news headlines, revealing language-specific tendencies in portraying gender roles, emotionality, agency, and public versus private domains. The findings revealed that English headlines frequently rely on affective or conflict-laden constructions, French headlines display recurring associations with aesthetics, professions, and relational roles, while Ukrainian headlines emphasize traditional binaries and cultural idioms. These patterns were further examined through the lens of cross-linguistic comparison to assess how translation, cultural coding, and journalistic conventions contribute to the persistence or mitigation of stereotypes. The study offers a multilingual perspective on how media language shapes and reflects societal attitudes toward gender, providing empirical data to support critical engagement with headline construction practices. Its findings are seen relevant for scholars in gender studies, media discourse, translation, and cross-cultural communication, as well as for practitioners seeking to improve inclusive and non-stereotyped media representation.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, gendered discourse, intercultural communication, media clichés, translation studies

Introduction

Media headlines are a unique linguistic genre characterized by brevity and high communicative impact. They serve gateways to news content, as well as powerful vehicles for shaping public perception and social reality [1, 2]. Within these condensed texts, gendered representations often manifest through stereotypes and clichés, which contribute to the construction and reinforcement of societal gender norms, since “we cannot escape from them, because when we leave behind a stereotype, it is only for adopting a new one built on different basis” [3]; and they are often seen as “essentially highly generalized representations and are intended to reduce something as

complex as a nation or culture to something that can be understood quickly” [4]. Such stereotypical framings may influence audience attitudes, perpetuate systemic gender inequalities, and normalize biased ideologies across cultural contexts [5]. Recent scholarship emphasizes the pervasive role of gender stereotypes in media and legal discourse [6]. Headlines frequently encode dichotomous portrayals of women and men [7], such as the emotional versus rational binary [8], the caregiver versus leader trope [9, 10], an emphasis on appearance over professional achievement [11], and the ideological dichotomy of “them” and “us” [12, 13]. These linguistic choices, often deeply embedded in cultural and ideological frameworks, do not simply reflect reality but actively shape social attitudes toward gender roles [14].

Moreover, the growing importance of intercultural communication in a globalized media landscape necessitates a comparative, multilingual approach to analyzing such discourses [15, 16]. Different languages and cultures encode gender stereotypes in distinctive ways, influenced by historical, social, and political factors. For example, gendered media discourse in English-speaking contexts may foreground individual agency and emotional expression, while French media may emphasize social roles and aesthetics, and Ukrainian media can reflect cultural idioms and collective narratives. Translation serves as a critical site of negotiation where gendered clichés are either reproduced, mitigated, or transformed. Translation studies scholars argue that the process of transferring meaning across languages involves cultural filtering, where translators navigate between preserving source biases and adapting to target audience expectations [17, 18]. Such translation shifts can reinforce or disrupt gender stereotypes, making translation a vital lens through which to examine the intercultural circulation of gendered media discourse [19]. Methodologically, this study integrates corpus linguistics with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and feminist linguistic theory. Corpus linguistics allows for systematic examination of large datasets, identifying frequent patterns and collocations that signal stereotypical gender representations [20]. CDA, as developed by Fairclough [21] and Wodak [22], provides a theoretical framework for analyzing how language both reflects and constructs power relations, particularly in relation to gender. Feminist linguistic theory further deepens this analysis by interrogating how language perpetuates gender inequality and by seeking transformative linguistic practices [23, 24].

Gender representation in media discourse has been extensively studied, with a consensus that mainstream media frequently perpetuates stereotypes that reinforce traditional gender roles [25, 26]. Studies applying corpus linguistics techniques have documented recurrent lexical and semantic patterns associated with gender bias in headlines, such as emotionalization of women and rationalization of men [27, 28]. Feminist discourse analyses have further elucidated the power dynamics underlying such representations, revealing their role in sustaining structural inequalities [14, 21]. Translation studies have begun to explore how gendered language is mediated across cultures, focusing on the strategies translators employ to either reproduce or challenge source stereotypes [29, 30]. This intercultural dimension highlights the dynamic nature of media discourse as it crosses linguistic and cultural boundaries, emphasizing the need for a comparative multilingual approach [31]. However, despite this growing body of research, there remains a significant gap. Most studies focus either on a single language or cultural context or examine gender bias in media discourse without systematically integrating the role of translation and intercultural communication. Comparative studies spanning multiple languages and media cultures are scarce, particularly those that analyze gendered clichés specifically in the compact and influential genre of news headlines. Furthermore, recent analyses frequently rely on older corpora or limited time frames, leaving a need for up-to-date, large-scale datasets that reflect the current media landscape and evolving gender norms. The intersection of corpus linguistics, feminist critical discourse analysis, and translation studies applied to multilingual headline analysis remains underexplored.

This study aimed to investigate how gendered clichés are constructed and translated in contemporary English, French, and Ukrainian media headlines, analyzing the linguistic and cultural mechanisms underlying their persistence or transformation in cross-linguistic media discourse. It was hypothesized that gender stereotypes manifest differently in English, French, and Ukrainian headlines due to distinct cultural and linguistic conventions (*Hypothesis 1*); that translation practices contribute to either reinforcing or mitigating gendered clichés when media content crosses linguistic boundaries (*Hypothesis 2*); and that specific stereotype categories (e.g., emotionality, appearance, professional roles) dominate headline constructions in each language (*Hypothesis 3*). To test these hypotheses, the study compiled a corpus of 600 gendered headlines (200 per language) from leading news outlets between 2023 and 2024; categorized and analyzed prevalent gendered clichés within and across the three languages using corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis methods; compared translation strategies and intercultural adaptations of gendered clichés in multilingual media contexts; and identified implications for media practice and translation ethics aimed at reducing stereotypical gender representations.

Methods

Research Design

As introduced above, this research adopted a comparative critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework to examine the presence and function of gendered clichés and stereotypes in media headlines across three languages: English, French, and Ukrainian. The study focused on how public figures, especially political leaders and women, are portrayed through gendered language, implicit bias, and recurring narrative frames. The research aimed to reveal how such framings construct or reinforce gendered ideologies and cultural expectations in different linguistic and geopolitical settings. The inquiry was grounded in a qualitative design that emphasized inductive categorization, interpretive coding, and contextualized reading of headlines, combining tools from gender studies, translation studies, and media discourse theory.

Corpus and Sampling Strategy

Due to the limitations of automated scraping and access restrictions, the headlines were selected through manual verification and documentation using site-specific search tools, Google advanced search operators, and open archives. The inclusion criteria anticipated that headlines should: 1) be published between January 2023 and December 2024; 2) feature a clear gendered cliché or stereotype (e.g., “iron lady”, “mother of the nation”, “charming first lady”, etc.) that was instantly visible in the headline; 3) come from freely accessible sources (no paywall); 4) be in one of the studied languages, i.e., English, French, and Ukrainian. For instance, headlines were sourced using targeted queries through internal site search tools, e.g., *site:cnn.com Zelenska*, *site:lemonde.fr femmes Ukraine*, filtered manually to meet pre-established inclusion criteria.

In the end, the primary corpus comprised 600 media headlines, with 200 headlines sampled for each language: English, with 100 headlines from *BBC World News* and 100 from *CNN International*, French, with 100 headlines from *Le Monde* and 100 from *France 24*, and Ukrainian, with 100 headlines from *BBC Україна / BBC Ukraine* and 100 from *Суспільне Новини / Suspilne News*. All 600 headlines were documented in a custom spreadsheet including metadata such as language, source, date, gender representation, identified stereotype, and context notes. That arrived at the sample of 200 headlines per language with 100 entries per media outlet, yielding a manageable corpus for in-depth analysis.

Coding and Categorization

After collection, a coding matrix was developed based on prior research in gendered discourse and headline linguistics. All entries were coded manually, and the 600 headlines were reviewed and grouped under dominant gender stereotype categories that emerged inductively during the initial analysis phase. That allowed identification of the seven dominant stereotypical representations and gendered narratives as such that were most frequently observed. Only headlines containing explicit gendered clichés or stereotypical framing (e.g., metaphors of weakness/strength, emotionality, appearance, maternal/paternal roles) were included. The cliché had to be evident in the headline alone, regardless of the article body. Headlines using gendered terms without stereotypical implication (e.g., “female scientist wins award”) were excluded. Duplicates, opinion headlines without societal reach, or idiomatic expressions that did not align with gender framing were also discarded.

In the beginning, using emergent qualitative analysis, headline examples were grouped into dominant categories of gender clichés (Table 1), which included, but were not limited to: *emotional stereotypes*, e.g., overly emotional, irrational, tearful; *appearance-related framing* (beauty, age, weight, style); *heroism vs. victimhood dichotomy*; *maternal/paternal tropes* (self-sacrifice, protection, fertility); *career and power tropes* (“iron lady”, “soft power”, “puppet”), *sexualization and diminutives* (based on use of terms such as “girl boss”, “diva”), and *othering and exoticism*, especially for foreign women or in conflict contexts. In the end, this process resulted in the emergence of seven cross-linguistic stereotype categories, applied consistently across the dataset: *charming / aestheticized* (e.g., focus on beauty, elegance, appearance); *victim / passive* (e.g., helpless, endangered, silenced), *heroic / strongman* (e.g., masculine resilience, military strength), *peacemaker / moral voice* (e.g., emotional authority, family symbolism), *emotional / irrational* (e.g., overly sensitive, unstable), *maternal / caregiver* (e.g., framing through motherhood or caregiving), and *cold / ruthless* (e.g., excessive control, detachment, anti-feminine).

Each headline was coded using a structured table format (Table 1).

Table 1: Cross-Linguistic Gender Stereotypes in Political Headlines

Headline	Language	Source	Date	Gender	Stereotype category	Notes
<i>Zelenska, Ukraine's elegant moral anchor</i>	EN	CNN	2023-11-12	female	<i>Charming / Peacemaker</i>	First Lady framing; aesthetics + moral symbolism
<i>Les femmes en politique: trop émotives pour diriger ?</i>	FR	Le Monde	2023-02-15	female	<i>Emotional / Irrational</i>	Questioning female emotional competence
<i>Ukraine's 'iron lady' leads with steel resolve</i>	EN	BBC	2024-07-11	female	<i>Heroic / Cold</i>	Masculinized strength narrative
<i>Жінки в політиці: емоційність чи професіоналізм ?</i>	UA	Suspilne	2024-08-08	female	<i>Emotional / Irrational</i>	Binary emotional vs. rational framing
<i>Elle ne se laisse pas faire: une femme contre Poutine</i>	FR	France 24	2023-04-05	female	<i>Heroic / Victim</i>	Courage under threat, individual resistance
<i>Українка з серцем матері: піклування під обстрілами</i>	UA	BBC Ukraine	2023-01-29	female	<i>Maternal / Caregiver</i>	Self-sacrificial motherhood framing amid war
<i>Puppet of NATO? The woman behind the power in Ukraine</i>	EN	BBC	2024-02-23	female	<i>Cold / Power / Manipulated</i>	Questions legitimacy of political role
Source:		developed by authors				

Coding was conducted manually that resulted in intercoder reliability as verified on a randomly selected 20% sample ($n = 120$) through a second round of blind coding. Cohen's kappa showed acceptable agreement levels across stereotype labels ($\kappa = 0.81$).

While the headlines were thematically coded according to recurring gendered stereotype categories, drawing from established frameworks in gender and media studies, lexical framings were noted, and comparable examples across English, French, and Ukrainian were selected to illustrate dominant narrative patterns. Although in *Results* headline examples will be presented in translation tables for comparative clarity, they are not interlingual equivalents but rather independently sourced instances reflecting similar stereotype categories across English, French, and Ukrainian media. This parallel presentation enabled a cross-linguistic examination of dominant framings without implying textual equivalence. Such an approach aligns with established practices in comparative discourse and translation studies, where thematically or ideologically related units are analyzed to reveal structural and cultural variations in media representation.

Analytical Framework

The study used a CDA approach, grounded in the work of Norman Fairclough [21, 32], Teun A. van Dijk [33], and Ruth Wodak [14], with insights from feminist media theory [34, 35] and translation studies [36, 37]. Thus, CDA principles by Fairclough [21] and van Dijk [33] guided the examination of power relations and ideological positioning within headlines; gender framing theory informed the identification of symbolic language and normative gender roles; and cross-linguistic comparisons were informed by the translation theory of cultural filtering and ideological shifts [38], allowing for the observation of how stereotypes are preserved, neutralized, or intensified in translation across different languages. It is agreed with Ouachan and Sadik [39] that “while ideology is often understood as a structured system of beliefs or ideas that influence political and social thought, critics emphasize its deeply entrenched and self-perpetuating nature,” as well as in multiple communicative contexts “translation serves as a gateway where ideologies meet, influencing how information is presented and interpreted across cultures” (p.19).

Within this research the analysis focused on linguistic constructions, lexical choices, and narrative positioning that reflected gendered bias, alongside their translation (or re-creation) into another linguistic and cultural setting. The applied framework allowed a systematic examination of how language contributed to the construction and reinforcement of gendered power relations in the media.

Ethical Considerations

All data used were sourced from public domains. No personal or confidential information was processed. All sources were cited and archived. The study adheres to principles of transparency, traceability, and academic ethics.

Results

This section presents the findings from a comparative analysis of 600 media headlines (200 per language) sourced from leading English, French, and Ukrainian news outlets between 2023 and 2024. The results are structured around three key components: (1) the frequency and distribution of gendered stereotype categories; (2) representative headline examples illustrating dominant lexical framings within each language; and (3) observed patterns of consistency and shift in translation across the three linguistic versions. The presentation of findings is strictly descriptive and avoids interpretive analysis reserving it for *Discussion*.

Frequency of Gendered Stereotypes by Language

The headlines were coded into seven dominant stereotype categories. Table 2 presents frequency counts of gendered stereotype categories identified across the 600 headlines in the three languages. These counts represent the number of headlines in each language corpus exhibiting a particular stereotype category, as determined through manual coding. Percentages can be derived by comparing category counts to the total headlines per language ($n=200$) to provide a relative sense of prevalence. This descriptive overview allows for cross-linguistic comparison of stereotype distribution without implying causal or statistical significance.

Table 2: Occurrence of Gendered Stereotypes by Language in Media Headlines

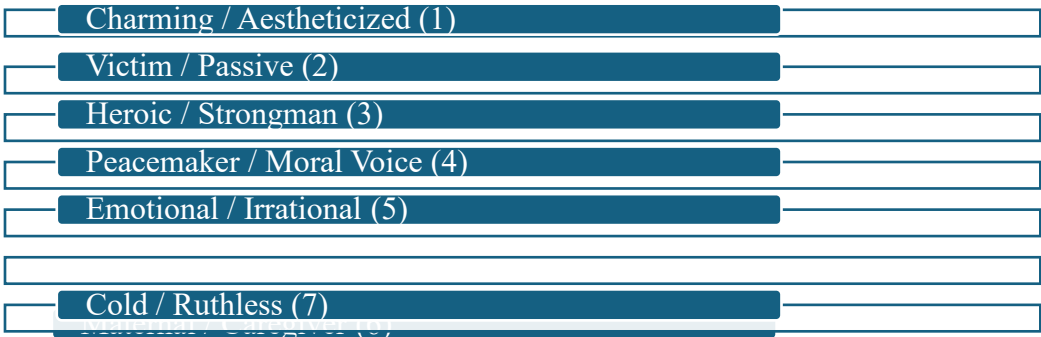
Stereotype Category	English (n=200)	French (n=200)	Ukrainian (n=200)
Charming / Aestheticized	29	51	34
Victim / Passive	42	27	49
Heroic / Strongman	37	31	41
Peacemaker / Moral Voice	31	36	33
Emotional / Irrational	28	19	38
Maternal / Caregiver	21	18	35
Cold / Ruthless	12	18	9
Source: study results			

Notably, French headlines most frequently relied on aestheticized depictions, while Ukrainian headlines showed a greater prevalence of victim and maternal tropes. English headlines, by contrast, leaned heavily on emotional and peacemaking framings, often connoting affective authority in high-profile women.

Distribution and Illustrations of Gendered Stereotypes

The analysis revealed distinct patterns in the use and prominence of gendered stereotype categories across English, French, and Ukrainian media headlines. Each stereotype category from all seven (Figure 1) exhibited language-specific lexical choices and framing techniques that highlight cultural nuances in gender representation. Below are the most salient findings for each category, supported by representative headline examples from the corpus. English examples are presented first, followed by their French and Ukrainian counterparts, with clichés italicized for clarity.

Figure 1: Stereotype Categories across the Three Languages



Category 1 *Charming / Aestheticized* frequently emphasized physical appearance, elegance, and charm, often framing female figures through an aesthetic lens. French headlines exhibited the highest frequency of this stereotype, reflecting a strong cultural focus on elegance and beauty in media portrayals, e.g., EN *Emma Watson stuns in elegant Dior gown at Cannes Film Festival* (BBC, 2023-05-18) / FR *Léa Seydoux éblouit le tapis rouge du Festival de Cannes dans une robe signée Chanel* ‘Léa Seydoux dazzles the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival in a dress by Chanel’ (Le Monde, 2023-05-19) / UA *Як українські зірки змінюють уявлення про красу: відмова від шаблонів і прагнення до автентичності* ‘How Ukrainian stars are changing perceptions of beauty: rejecting stereotypes and striving for authenticity’ (Suspilne, 2024-10-21).

Category 2 *Victim / Passive* included the headlines that depicted agents including women as vulnerable or helpless, emphasizing victimhood or passivity, with Ukrainian media showing the highest prevalence. This framing often involved language that underscored dependency or lack of agency, for instance, EN *Female politicians call for help amid rising threats* (CNN, 2023-10-26) and EN *Why women still can’t have it all* (CNN, 2023-06-13) / *Dirigeantes*

dépendantes des fonds masculins ‘Female leaders dependent on male funding’ (France 24, 2023-10-09) / UA *Переселенки продовжують відчувати себе чужими* ‘Displaced women continue to feel like outsiders’ (Suspilne, 2023-12-23).

Category 3 *Heroic / Strongman* highlighted strength, resilience, and leadership, frequently associated with masculine-coded traits. Across languages, heroic framing was common for male public figures but also applied to some women, often reinforcing traditional power narratives: EN *Guernsey Post boss to become head of civil service* (BBC, 2024-10-04) / FR *Giorgia Meloni : avec son ex-compagnon, la Première ministre avait de nombreuses divergences d’opinions* ‘Giorgia Meloni and her former partner had many differences of opinion’ (Le Monde, 2024-12-19) / UA *За що хвалять і критикують військового-дроняра Олега Ляшка* ‘the iron-willed commander leads the charge’ (BBC Ukraine, 2024-10-24).

In Category 4 *Peacemaker / Moral Voice* representations centered on moral authority, emotional guidance, or familial symbolism. This stereotype often portrayed female figures as the ethical compass or nurturing voice in political or social contexts, e.g., EN *Senator’s wife emerges as voice of reason in healthcare debate: ‘We must put compassion first’* (BBC, 2024-09-22) / FR *La voix de la sagesse: ces femmes qui appellent au dialogue dans les banlieues* ‘The voice of wisdom: these women who call for dialogue in the suburbs’ (France 24, 2023-07-11) / UA *Як Трамп може закінчити війну Росії проти України: WSJ публікує можливі сценарії* ‘How Trump Could End Russia’s War Against Ukraine: WSJ Publishes Possible Scenarios’ (BBC Ukraine, 2024-11-07).

Following *Emotional / Irrational* category, stereotypes included portrayals of excessive emotionality or instability, often used to delegitimize or undermine female figures. Ukrainian headlines showed a marked use of this stereotype. For instance, EN *Why women’s ‘hysteria’ undermines their credibility* (CNN, 2023-05-19) / FR *Les femmes en politique: trop émotives pour diriger?* ‘Women in politics: too emotional to lead?’ (Le Monde, 2023-02-15) / UA *Жіноча емоційність – перешкода у політиці* ‘female emotionality as a political obstacle’ (Suspilne, 2024-08-08).

In Category 6 *Maternal / Caregiver*, maternal tropes emphasized caregiving roles, family orientation, and nurturing qualities, framing women primarily through their domestic or relational functions. This stereotype was somewhat more prevalent in Ukrainian headlines compared to English and French. The examples vary from motherhood to gendered jobs about healthcare or teaching classes, or they emphasize motherhood over professional success, e.g., EN *Can she be a CEO and a good mother?* (CNN, 2024-10-18) / FR *Pourquoi les métiers de soin restent-ils féminins?* ‘Why do caregiving professions remain feminine’ (France 24, 2023-09-11) / UA *Вона гарна мати – та ще й успішна бізнесвумен* ‘She’s a good mother and also a successful businesswoman’ (Suspilne, 2023-05-11); EN *Nursing remains a ‘woman’s job’ despite diversity pushes* (BBC, 2023-06-30) / FR *Réfugiées ukrainiennes : ces mères courage qui soignent leurs familles loin de chez elles* ‘Ukrainian refugees: these courageous mothers who care for their families far from home’ (Le Monde, 2023-04-25) / UA *Чому в Україні вчителі – це переважно жінки?* ‘Why in Ukraine are teachers predominantly women?’ (BBC Ukraine, 2023-10-05).

Category 7 *Cold / Ruthless* portrayed figures, often women, as emotionally detached, overly controlling, or ruthless, challenging traditional femininity with a negative connotation. French media used this category slightly more frequently, e.g., EN *Iron Lady 2.0: Prime Minister’s ruthless cabinet reshuffle leaves allies stunned* / FR *PDG sans pitié : elle licencie en souriant, les syndicats dénoncent sa froideur* ‘Merciless CEO: she fires people while smiling, unions denounce her coldness’ (France 24, 2024-04-10) / UA *Тільки офіс і ніяких виходів на каву. Чому боси стають жорсткішими* ‘Only office, no coffee breaks: why bosses are getting tougher’ (BBC Ukraine, 2024-08-30) or UA *Польські фермери на кордоні розсипали українське зерно* ‘Polish farmers spilled Ukrainian grain at the border’ (BBC Ukraine, 2024-02-20).

Translation Patterns and Cross-Linguistic Shifts

The findings revealed how gendered media narratives are transformed through cross-linguistic translation, especially in headlines portraying women in politics and public life. Rather than applying quantitative metrics, this analysis adopted a comparative qualitative approach that foregrounded discursive patterns and narrative shifts. Drawing on a carefully selected corpus of headlines from English, French, and Ukrainian-language media, the three recurrent translation tendencies arrived to center on: (1) preservation of gendered framing, where the original emphasis on appearance, emotion, or relational roles remains intact across languages, (2) mitigation or intensification through lexical and syntactic choices, where translators soften, amplify, or recontextualize gendered assumptions, and (3) cultural substitution and discursive reframing, where headlines are adapted to fit culturally salient narratives or ideological frameworks in the target language.

To illustrate these patterns, comparative tables (Tables 3-5) were used to present representative headlines in their original and translated forms, along with brief interpretative commentary. These tables served as interpretive tools, allowing to trace both linguistic equivalence or divergence and ideological alignment or shift in the target texts.

Table 3: Preservation of Gendered Framing Across Languages

Language	Headline	Gendered Frame	Observations
English	<i>The graceful First Lady captivates the nation</i>	Appearance, charm	Emphasis on grace over substance
French	<i>Une femme élégante charme la scène politique</i>	Elegance, charm	Woman as aesthetic presence in political arena
Ukrainian	<i>Граційна перша леді заворює націю</i>	Grace, national enchantment	Reinforces traditional role of First Lady
<i>Source: research findings</i>			

Table 1 presents cases where gendered framing was preserved across Ukrainian, French, and English media headlines. These examples frequently highlight women's appearance, emotional appeal, or symbolic roles in political narratives. In all three languages, such frames were retained with minimal deviation, whether in reference to First Ladies, female political figures, or activists.

Lexical and syntactic choices were adapted to target-language conventions, but the underlying discourse remained consistent. The pattern suggests that equivalent gendered scripts are readily reproduced in translation, especially in politically symbolic contexts.

This approach, focusing on preservation of gendered framing, is exemplified here for Category 1 *Charming / Aestheticized*. A similar descriptive and comparative analysis was systematically applied to the remaining six stereotype categories (Categories 2 through 7), each revealing distinct patterns of translation strategies in line with their thematic focus.

Table 4: Mitigation or Intensification of Gender Bias

Language	Headline	Lexical Shift	Interpretation
English	<i>Are female leaders perceived as less rational?</i>	Mitigation	Focus on perception, not inherent traits
French	<i>Les femmes en politique: trop émotives pour diriger ?</i>	Intensification	Direct questioning of emotional competence
Ukrainian	<i>Жінки в політиці: емоційність чи професіоналізм?</i>	Binary framing	Introduces contrast but maintains bias axis
<i>Source: research findings</i>			

Table 4 illustrates examples of mitigation and intensification of gender bias through lexical and syntactic shifts in media headlines across the three languages. In English headlines, gendered stereotypes tend to be mitigated by framing biases as matters of perception rather than inherent traits, thereby softening the claim. Conversely, French headlines often intensify gender bias by directly questioning women's emotional suitability for leadership roles. Ukrainian headlines demonstrate a binary framing strategy that contrasts emotionality and professionalism, maintaining the underlying bias while presenting it as a dichotomy. These variations highlight how translation and cultural conventions influence the degree to which gendered stereotypes are either challenged or reinforced in headline discourse.

Table 5: Cultural Substitution and Discursive Reframing

Language	Headline	Discursive Shift	Cultural Resonance
English	<i>Political reckoning: harassment allegations shake the establishment</i>	Institutional impact	Emphasizes disruption, accountability
French	<i>#MeToo en politique: un tabou qui se brise</i>	Movement framing	Aligns with global feminist discourse
Ukrainian	<i>Чому саме зараз почали говорити жертви домагань?</i>	Victim agency focus	Emphasis on timing, courage

Source: research findings

Table 5 illustrates cases of cultural substitution and discursive reframing in gendered media headlines across English, French, and Ukrainian outlets. These examples demonstrate how translation and journalistic practices adapt gendered stereotypes to align with the cultural norms and communicative conventions of the target audience. Rather than straightforward lexical equivalence, this process involves substituting culturally specific metaphors, idioms, or gendered tropes with locally resonant expressions that modify the original framing (e.g., an English headline framing a female politician as a “peacemaker” may be rendered in French using a phrase emphasizing “moral authority” such as FR *la voix de la sagesse*, while the Ukrainian version might highlight familial symbolism as UA *моральний компас* ‘moral compass’). For instance, an emotional vulnerability stereotype in one language may be recast as a form of moral authority or strength in another, reflecting divergent cultural attitudes toward gender roles, e.g., the English instance of an *emotional leader* contrasted with FR *femme forte* ‘a strong woman (lady)’ and UA *залізна леді* ‘an iron lady’. Such discursive reframing highlights the translator’s or journalist’s active interpretive role in shaping gendered narratives, rather than passively transferring source content. This phenomenon was observed consistently across all seven identified stereotype categories, underscoring the dynamic and negotiated nature of gender representation in multilingual media discourse.

Discussion

This study examined how gendered stereotypes are preserved, altered, or restructured through cross-linguistic translation of media headlines in English, French, and Ukrainian. The analysis revealed three dominant translational tendencies, i.e., preservation of framing, mitigation/intensification through linguistic choice, and cultural substitution, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of how gendered discourse travels across languages.

Next page

Table 6: Summary of Hypotheses and Findings

Hypotheses	Findings	Discussion Summary	Reference(s) in Text
H1	<i>Gender stereotypes manifest differently in English, French, and Ukrainian headlines due to distinct cultural and linguistic conventions</i>	Confirmed: Stereotypes differ by language while English headlines show affective/conflict framing, French focus on aesthetics and roles, Ukrainian emphasize traditional binaries and cultural idioms (see Section 4.1, 4.4)	Discussion 4.1, 4.4; Tables 2 & 3
H2	<i>Translation practices contribute to either reinforcing or mitigating gendered clichés when media content crosses linguistic boundaries</i>	Confirmed: Translators mitigate or intensify stereotypes through linguistic choices, e.g., English uses conditional phrasing to soften emotional bias, French intensifies emotion, Ukrainian reframes binaries (Section 4.3)	Discussion 4.3; Tables 4 & 5
H3	<i>Specific stereotype categories (e.g., emotionality, appearance, professional roles) dominate headline constructions in each language</i>	Confirmed: Seven stereotype categories were identified and applied; maternal and aesthetic stereotypes dominate across languages, while emotional/irrational and heroic roles vary by culture (Section 4.2)	Discussion 4.2; Methods Section 2.3; Tables 1 & 2

Source: Designed by authors

Following the hypotheses outlined above, the data illustrate that gendered framing (H1) was indeed most consistently preserved across languages when the figure represented a symbolic or emotionally resonant role, such as First Ladies or maternal tropes. For instance, the following headlines EN *with a mother's heart*, FR *au cœur tendre* 'soft-hearted / gentle-hearted', and UA *жінка з серцем матері* (zhinka z sertsem materi) 'a woman with the mother's heart (literal translation)' reproduce a stereotypically feminine image that transcends language boundaries. These lexical choices reflect cultural scripts readily understood in all three contexts, suggesting that translators are either reinforcing or strategically retaining familiar emotional codes that align with societal expectations.

Similarly, intensification or mitigation of gender bias (H2) varied by language. In French, the headline *Les femmes en politique: trop émotives pour diriger?* explicitly questions women's emotional fitness to lead, intensifying gendered discourse. In Ukrainian, *Жінки в політиці: емоційність чи професіоналізм?* (Zhinky v politytsi: emotsiynist' chy profesiionalizm) 'Women in politics: emotionality or professionalism?' frames it as a binary, implying that emotion and professionalism are oppositional. Meanwhile, the English version – *Are female leaders perceived as less rational?* – shifts focus to perception rather than essence, i.e., a mitigation strategy. This divergence supports H2 and illustrates how target-language norms, journalistic style, and socio-political climate mediate the translation of bias.

Furthermore, cultural substitution (H3) appears in instances where headlines adapted references to suit local resonance. For example, UA *Перша леді: обличчя спротиву* (Persha ledi: oblychchia sprotyv) was rendered in English as *Ukraine's First Lady: the face of resilience*, while the French version read in the reverse order as *Symbole de résistance: la Première dame d'Ukraine*. Here, the term EN *resilience* reflects Anglo-American cultural values,

whereas FR *symbole de résistance* echoes France's historical lexicon of political struggle. Such shifts confirm that translations are not only linguistic acts but also culturally reframing processes, particularly when gender and public symbolism intersect.

Bridging a Gap in Feminist Translation and Media Discourse Research

While existing research has explored gender bias in media [25, 26], and separately in translation practices [36, 37], few studies have analyzed how gendered narratives are reshaped during translation across multiple languages within real-time media contexts. Prior work has largely concentrated on literary texts [23, 30] or textbook and static content [5]. This study contributes original insight by mapping live translational practices across three sociopolitical and cultural spheres, where gendered framings are not merely reproduced but re-evaluated and sometimes ideologically restructured. For example, while literary feminist translation studies have highlighted gender bias in canonical texts, this research extends the scope to politically charged headlines such as those about First Ladies or female leaders, revealing how gendered framing is dynamically negotiated in media translation (see Tables 1 and 3 for illustrative examples). From this perspective, these findings support *Hypothesis 1*, demonstrating that gender stereotypes manifest distinctly across linguistic and cultural contexts and are actively negotiated in translation.

Reproduction of Global Gender Scripts

The prevalence of headlines (see Tables 1 and 3) confirms that stereotypical framings of women as *graceful*, *emotional*, or *moral figures* continue to dominate across all three languages. This supports the notion of “globally circulating gender scripts” [4, 15] that are easily reproduced in translation due to their normalized ideological familiarity. English, French, and Ukrainian outlets all depict First Ladies or female politicians using aesthetic or maternal frames, reflecting a convergence of editorial logics, where gendered symbolism is seen as both intelligible and marketable across audiences [10, 11].

For instance, headlines about Melania Trump commonly emphasize her “grace” and “poise” similarly in all three languages, reinforcing maternal or ornamental stereotypes categorized as *charming/aestheticized* and *maternal/caregiver* in our coding scheme (see Methods, Section 2.3). This confirms *Hypothesis 3*, which posits that certain stereotype categories such as appearance and maternal roles dominate headline constructions across languages.

Translation as a Site of Ideological Filtering

The study also highlights that translation is not merely technical but a discursive and ideological act [19, 38]. Examples of mitigation (e.g., softening emotional bias through conditional phrasing in English) or intensification (e.g., more explicit emotional framing in French) reflect editorial and cultural positioning, consistent with Munday and Calzada Pérez [2] and Wodak [22], who argue that translation choices reflect power-laden decisions. The Ukrainian binary headline (UA *емоційність чи професіоналізм?* ‘Emotionality vs. professionalism’) subtly maintains the stereotype while reframing it, aligning with Čufar [8] and Sharlamanov and Kostovska [28] on culturally mediated *emotion/reason* binaries. For example, the *emotional/irrational* stereotype category is manifested through an English headline that softened the emotional judgment by stating “perceived as emotional,” while the French headline directly described the politician as FR *passionnée*, intensifying emotional associations. The Ukrainian headline framed the woman's role as a choice between “emotion or professionalism,” thus reinforcing a cultural dichotomy not explicit in the source text (see Table 4). These observations confirm *Hypothesis 2*, illustrating how translation strategies contribute to either mitigating or reinforcing gendered clichés.

Cultural Reframing and Discursive Recontextualization

Cultural reframing emerged particularly in cases where a figure's personal, political, or national symbolism allowed media to localize the narrative. For instance, coverage of Giorgia Meloni differed sharply across languages, not in fact, but in emphasis (Table 5). The French version foregrounded her “tumultuous personal relationships” (*emotional/irrational*), English media highlighted “her struggle to maintain political cohesion” (*heroic/strongman*), and Ukrainian media emphasized her “firm ideological stance” (*cold/ruthless*), demonstrating selective emphasis fitting local socio-political narratives (Arcimaviciene & Baglama, 12; Paolucci et al., 3) and highlighting how ideological dichotomies (“us vs. them,” “maternal vs. rational”) are shaped by local socio-cultural expectations, especially when reproduced in translation. This supports *Hypotheses 1 and 2*, confirming that gendered stereotypes are culturally mediated and translationally adapted, rather than mechanically transferred.

Feminist Critique and Media Translation Ethics

From a feminist translation perspective, the frequent recurrence of biased lexical framings, especially regarding emotion and appearance, raises concerns about translators' ethical agency and editorial oversight [36, 39]. Despite advances in gender-aware language policies, media translation often lags academic discourse, emphasizing the ongoing need for feminist linguistic activism [24, 34]. The persistent transfer of similar gendered scripts across different political contexts reveals a shared symbolic economy of gender that is both translatable and persistent. For example, across the languages the repeated use of terms such as "temperamental" or "fragile" in translated headlines perpetuates harmful stereotypes (primarily falling under *emotional/irrational* and *fragile/victim* categories), suggesting limited critical engagement in editorial decision-making. These ethical considerations highlight practical implications linked to *Hypotheses 2 and 3*, urging reconsideration of translation ethics in media discourse.

Implications for Research and Practice

The findings contribute to ongoing debates in translation studies by underscoring how cross-linguistic media representation participates in constructing and sustaining gender ideologies [21, 32, 33]. They also speak to the ethics of media representation, especially in conflict or transitional societies, e.g., Ukraine, where discursive framing can carry amplified symbolic weight [1, 17]. The study offers a model for comparative media discourse analysis that is both multilingual and gender-sensitive, i.e., something notably lacking in current literature. For instance, the heightened symbolic stakes in Ukrainian headlines during the ongoing conflict demonstrate how gendered framing interacts with national identity and political ideology, demanding ethical scrutiny in translation choices.

This study's novelty lies in its empirical comparison of gendered media headlines across three languages and sociopolitical contexts, revealing patterns of bias and the discursive strategies by which these biases are either maintained or adapted. Having incorporated both qualitative table-based exemplification and critical discourse orientation, the paper builds a methodological bridge between feminist translation studies and media discourse analysis [18, 40]. Moreover, the systematic inclusion of real-time media data across English, French, and Ukrainian offers fresh insights into how gendered discourse migrates, transforms, or resists transformation in multilingual media environments.

Conclusions

The research findings have demonstrated that gendered stereotypes in media headlines are not merely transferred unchanged across languages; rather, they are actively preserved, mitigated, intensified, or culturally reframed through translation practices in English, French, and Ukrainian media. The identification of three dominant translational tendencies (preservation of framing, mitigation/intensification through linguistic choices, and cultural substitution) highlights the complex interplay between language, culture, and ideology in shaping gendered discourse in multilingual media environments.

The empirical comparison of 600 headlines allowed the research to reveal both the persistence of globally circulating gender scripts and the culturally specific inflections that shape how women in politics and public life are portrayed. The findings underscore translation as a site of ideological filtering where editorial and cultural priorities influence the visibility and framing of gendered stereotypes, which can either reinforce or challenge dominant gender norms. This dual role of translation as both a conduit and a mediator emphasizes the need for heightened awareness of the ethical responsibilities borne by translators, editors, and journalists in cross-cultural media contexts.

The study advances feminist translation studies and media discourse analysis by providing a methodological bridge that incorporates corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis, applied in a comparative, multilingual framework. It further contributes to understanding how media language participates in the construction and circulation of gender ideologies, especially in politically charged and transitional societies such as Ukraine, where gendered media representations carry amplified symbolic weight.

Looking forward, several avenues for further research emerge. Extending this comparative framework to include additional languages, particularly those with distinct grammatical gender systems, would broaden the understanding of how gendered ideologies travel and transform across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Analyses that move beyond headlines to include full articles, multimedia content, and social media discourse could reveal how gendered framing operates across different journalistic genres and platforms.

Moreover, qualitative investigations into the decision-making processes of translators and editors through interviews or ethnographic methods would shed light on the conscious and unconscious strategies that govern the reproduction or disruption of gender stereotypes in media translation. The integration of corpus linguistics with advanced

computational tools and artificial intelligence could enhance the scope and precision of future studies, allowing for longitudinal tracking of gender discourse evolution and its responsiveness to social change.

Finally, this research underscores the critical ethical dimension of media translation in conflict or crisis contexts, where gendered portrayals intersect with national identity and political ideology. It calls for the development of guidelines and training that promote gender-sensitive translation and editorial practices, contributing to more equitable and inclusive media representation worldwide.

To summarize, this study revealed the complex dynamics of gendered discourse in multilingual media and charted a course for ongoing scholarly engagement and practical intervention to foster greater gender equity in global media communication.

References

1. Baker, M. (2016). *Citizen media and public spaces*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315726632>
2. Munday, J., & Calzada Pérez, M. (2020). New contexts in discourse analysis for translation and interpretation. *Meta*, 65(1), 5–8. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1073633ar>
3. Paolucci, C., Martinelli, P., & Bacaro, M. (2023). Can we really free ourselves from stereotypes? A semiotic point of view on clichés and disability studies. *Semiotica*, 253, 193–226. <https://doi.org/10.1515/sem-2022-0034>
4. Hood, C., & Hayes, C. J. (2025). Bonded by stereotypes, clichés, and tropes: Introduction to themed issue “Symbols of Japan.” *New Readings*, 20, i–xvi. <https://doi.org/10.18573/newreadings.153>
5. Kookiattikoon, S., Kijpooonphol, W., Kluensuwan, P., Zhang, H., & Wider, W. (2024). Gender representations: A case study of semiotic analysis of gender bias in EFL textbooks. *International Journal*, 5(11), 7467–7485. <https://doi.org/10.61707/cwxm9232>
6. Kravchenko, N., Chaika, O., Kryknitska, I., Letunovska, I., & Yudenko, O. (2022). Commissive modality of international legal discourse: An implicit mitigation of the bindingness. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 12(6), 1039–1047. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1206.03>
7. Alvarez, D., Gonzalez, A., & Ubani, C. (2021). The portrayal of men and women in digital communication: Content analysis of gender roles and gender display in reaction GIFs. *International Journal of Communication*, 15, 462–492. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/14907/3334>
8. Čufar, K. (2023). Prescriptive descriptions: Reason–emotion binary through feminist critique. In M. Brigaglia & C. Roversi (Eds.), *Legal reasoning and cognitive science: Topics and perspectives* (Special Publication, pp. 328–352). «Diritto & Questioni pubbliche».
9. Popper, M. (2016). Followership, deity and leadership. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 46(2), 211–228. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12096>
10. Bear, J. B., & Pittinsky, T. L. (2022). *The caregiving ambition: What it is and why it matters at home and work*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197512418.001.0001>
11. Rahbari, L. (2019). Beauty or the beast? University academics’ perceptions of women’s physical appearance and academic achievements. *Journal of International Women’s Studies*, 20(2), 309–323. <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol20/iss2/21>
12. Arcimaviciene, L., & Baglama, S. H. (2018). Migration, metaphor and myth in media representations: The ideological dichotomy of “them” and “us.” *SAGE Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018768657>
13. Chaika, O., Sharmanova, N., Hutyriak, O., & Shynkaruk, V. (2024). Cultivating multiculturalism via teaching phraseology to philology students. In S. Tolochko (Ed.), *Transformation of education: Modern challenges* (pp. 80–105). Technology Center PC.
14. Wodak, R. (2020). “The boundaries of what can be said have shifted”: An expert interview with Ruth Wodak (questions posed by A. Schulz). *Discourse & Society*, 31(2), 235–244. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608191.d17>
15. Hall, K., Borba, R., & Hiramoto, M. (2021). Language and gender. In *The international encyclopedia of linguistic anthropology* (pp. 892–912). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9781118786093.iela0143>
16. Chaika, O., Domina, V., & Olishevych, V. (2023). Cambiando los paradigmas en educación: La enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras a través de la comunicación. *Educación y Humanismo*, 25(45). <https://doi.org/10.17081/eduhum.25.45.6468>
17. Slimani, H. (2025). Analyzing the translation of cultural references: Navigating challenges and ensuring accessibility for the target audience. 24, *مجلة الحقيقة*, 1(1), 480–495. <https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/265774>

18. Le, D. (2024). Investigating how cultural differences influence the translation process and the strategies used by translators to bridge cultural gaps. *Journal of Translation and Language Studies*, 5(3), 26–36. <https://doi.org/10.48185/jtls.v5i3.1268>
19. Kamola, B., Iroda, A., Gulandon, K., & Onaxon, I. (2025). The ethics of translation: Navigating bias, ideology, and accuracy. *Innovation in the Modern Education System*, 6(50), 230–233. <https://interoncof.com/index.php/USA/article/view/9722>
20. McEnery, T. (2019). *Corpus linguistics*. Edinburgh University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781474470865>
21. Fairclough, N. (2023). Critical discourse analysis. In *The Routledge handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 11–22). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003035244-3>
22. Wodak, R. (2004). Critical discourse analysis. In *Qualitative research practice* (p. 185). <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608191.d17>
23. Kramer, E. (2016). Feminist linguistics and linguistic feminisms. In *Mapping feminist anthropology in the twenty-first century* (pp. 65–83). <https://doi.org/10.36019/9780813574318-005>
24. Foubert, O. (2023). Neologisms in contemporary feminisms: For a redefinition of feminist linguistic activism. *GLAD!*, 15. <https://doi.org/10.4000/glad.7722>
25. Merma-Molina, G., Ávalos-Ramos, M. A., & Martínez Ruiz, M. Á. (2022). Gender stereotypes: Persistence and challenges. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 41(7), 1112–1135. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-12-2018-0229>
26. Gurung, N. G. (2025). Construction of gender stereotypes and its implications in development practices. *NPRC Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(2), 147–159. <https://doi.org/10.3126/nprcjmr.v2i2.76189>
27. Kerr, A. D. (2021). Emotions, rationality, and gender. In *Gender equality* (pp. 202–212). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95687-9_106
28. Sharlamanov, K., & Kostovska, M. (2025). Rationalization, emotion and the self. In *The modern construction and postmodern deconstruction of self* (pp. 81–105). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-83922-1_4
29. Lawson, R. (2023). *Language and mediated masculinities: Cultures, contexts, constraints*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190081041.001.0001>
30. Meng, L., Meng, F., & Zhu, X. (2019). *Gender in literary translation*. Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3720-8>
31. Chaika, O., & Sharmanova, N. (2023). Innovative efficiency models in foreign language communication: Lifelong learning and multiculturalism. In *Lifelong learning: Models and methods of implementation* (pp. 59–88). Technology Center PC. <http://doi.org/10.15587/978-617-7319-70-1.ch3>
32. Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315834368>
33. Van Dijk, T. A. (2015). Critical discourse analysis. In *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 466–485). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118584194.ch22>
34. Steiner, L. (2014). Feminist media theory. In *The handbook of media and mass communication theory* (pp. 359–379). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781118591178.ch20>
35. Krijnen, T. (2017). *Feminist theory and the media*. John Wiley & Sons.
36. Castro, O., & Ergun, E. (Eds.). (2017). *Feminist translation studies: Local and transnational perspectives* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315679624>
37. Irshad, I., & Yasmin, M. (2022). Feminism and literary translation: A systematic review. *Heliyon*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09082>
38. Bennoudi, H., & Zaid, A. (2023). Ideology and translation. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 5(1), 243–253. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v5i1.1185>
39. Ouachan, A., & Sadik, M. M. (2025). Ideology in media translation: Some theoretical perspectives. *International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies*, 6(2), 16–25. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlts.v6i2.561>
40. Zhang, M., & Munday, J. (2018). Innovation in discourse analytic approaches to translation studies. *Perspectives*, 26(2), 159–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2018.1403740>