

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES OF THE DECOLONIZATION DISCOURSE: SOCIAL COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES IN WARTIME CONDITIONS

Ivan Klopov

Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor at the Department of Information Economy,
Entrepreneurship and Finance, Zaporizhzhia National University, Ukraine
e-mail: uaklopov@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0002-2199-2462

Eldar Veremchuk

Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor at the Department of English Philology
and Linguistic Didactics, Zaporizhzhia National University, Ukraine
e-mail: eldar.veremchuk@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0003-2926-2090

Summary

The article explores the role of decolonization discourse in the context of the modern globalized world, with particular emphasis on the influence of information technologies in its formation and maintenance. Key aspects of decolonization movements are examined, including global trends, regional specificities, and the concept of discourse as a socio-communicative practice. Decolonization discourse is presented as a tool for reclaiming cultural identity, reinterpreting historical narratives, and establishing new sociocultural values. Special attention is given to the role of information platforms in advancing decolonization ideas. Social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok are highlighted as important spaces for promoting local cultures and discussing socio-political issues of global significance. The use of digital tools in social movements and during military conflicts demonstrates their effectiveness in mobilizing communities, coordinating actions, and advocating for the rights of marginalized groups. Critical aspects are digital security, which protects activists from surveillance, and combating disinformation, which is often employed as a tool for manipulation. In the context of military conditions, the study investigates socio-communicative challenges, including the representation of culture and politics in the informational space. It analyzes the role of narratives in maintaining societal morale, organizing resistance, and creating counter-narratives to oppose the aggressor's propaganda. The article highlights the prospects of socio-communicative technologies in decolonization discourse, including their potential for fostering new forms of educational and cultural exchange. The paper concludes by emphasizing the importance of the ethical use of information technologies in decolonization processes. Their potential in the struggle for global justice and the preservation of cultural diversity is critical to shaping an inclusive society. This study contributes to understanding the new roles of information technologies in contemporary sociocultural transformations. It also underscores the urgent need for a more inclusive approach to technological development that prioritizes the needs and voices of the marginalized communities.

Key words: cultural identity, media platforms, disinformation, socio-cultural transformation, digital literacy.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.23856/6709>

1. Introduction

The discourse of decolonization has gained particular relevance amidst contemporary military conflicts accompanied by profound social and political transformations. This process reflects not only the struggle to reinterpret history and reclaim cultural identity but also the aspiration for a more equitable distribution of power and resources on a global scale. In today's world, decolonization has ceased to be merely a historical phenomenon; it has evolved into a multifaceted socio-communicative process encompassing various aspects of life, from cultural to political.

Information technologies play a central role in these processes, serving as tools for shaping, disseminating, and sustaining decolonization ideas. They enable global dialogue, facilitate the mobilization of civic initiatives, and provide platforms for amplifying the voices of marginalized groups. In the context of modern social and political discourses, information platforms such as social media, digital forums, and blogs function not only as communication channels but also as arenas for challenging colonial narratives, spreading counter-narratives, and fostering new forms of interaction.

Understanding the role of information technologies in the contemporary world requires considering their impact on sociocultural processes and political conflicts. In times of military conflict, these technologies support the defense of informational spaces, combat disinformation, and bolster civic engagement, making them a pivotal element of modern social transformation. This article aims to examine the key aspects of the role of information technologies in the discourse of decolonization and identify the socio-communicative challenges that arise under wartime conditions.

2. Definition of Decolonization Discourse

Global trends in decolonization encompass a wide range of historical, political, and cultural processes. For example, studies in Latin America highlight the significant influence of decolonization ideas on critically rethinking global history as a counterbalance to Eurocentric perspectives (*Grecco & Schuster, 2020*). In Africa, decoloniality is seen as a means of resisting global colonial structures, fostering the restoration of cultural and political agency (*Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015*). Regional aspects of decolonization include the adaptation of ideas to specific socio-political contexts. For instance, the #RhodesMustFall movement, which began in South Africa, evolved in the United Kingdom, emphasizing the need to reassess cultural symbols of colonialism (*Sunnemark & Thörn, 2021*). Meanwhile, anti-colonial activists in Africa during the 1950s–60s contributed to the creation of transnational solidarity networks, notably through activities in cities like Cairo, Delhi, and Accra (*Milford, 2023*).

The discourse of decolonization functions as a socio-communicative practice that integrates diverse narratives and ideas. Decolonization frequently relies on alternative epistemologies that challenge Eurocentric approaches. Research (*Seck, 2023*) underscores the importance of leveraging cultural and historical contexts to build resilient narratives that drive social change.

These approaches provide a foundation for analyzing decolonization discourse as a multifaceted phenomenon, encompassing historical, political, and cultural dimensions.

3. The Role of Information Technologies in Decolonization Discourse

Information platforms have become a key tool in advancing decolonization ideas, especially in the globalized world. Platforms such as social networks, blogs, and forums provide communities – often marginalized or invisible – with the opportunity to amplify their voices, shape narratives, and unite in addressing shared challenges. Information technologies play a critical role in strengthening these processes by creating spaces for communication and supporting the growth of social movements.

Social platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram serve as primary venues for promoting decolonization narratives. For instance, hashtag campaigns such as #RhodesMustFall have drawn global attention to colonial monuments and sparked discussions about historical injustices (*Sunnemark & Thörn, 2021*). These platforms enable activists to engage both locally and internationally, facilitating the exchange of experiences and ideas. In anti-colonial struggles, Twitter has proven to be an effective tool for mobilizing public opinion, disseminating videos, images, and text that depict the realities of resistance.

Information platforms give a voice to marginalized communities historically excluded from global discourse. Research shows that platforms like YouTube and TikTok allow cultural groups to document their traditions, challenge hegemonies, and construct new narratives around identity and history (*Ahmed, 2020*). For example, in Bengal, online communities actively utilize these platforms to restore their cultural identities threatened by prolonged colonial influence. This not only helps preserve traditions but also creates new ways of integrating them into a global context (*Das, 2023*).

Online platforms contribute to the democratization of knowledge by enabling individuals from diverse regions to participate in dialogue. For instance, Wikipedia is used as a tool to create and share content that reflects the diversity of cultural experiences, countering dominant narratives often biased against marginalized groups (*Adu, 2020*).

Despite their significant potential, the use of information platforms faces several challenges:

- censorship and government control: In some countries, social platforms are monitored or restricted, limiting their ability to disseminate truthful information.
- risk of disinformation: Certain platforms are exploited to spread false or manipulative narratives that undermine decolonization initiatives (*Risam, 2022*).

Digital tools have become integral to social movements, particularly in wartime contexts. Their applications range from community mobilization to exposing human rights violations and combating disinformation. These technologies are indispensable in amplifying voices, fostering connections, and addressing socio-political issues on a global scale (Table 1).

Mobilization and Coordination of Social Movements. Digital platforms, especially social media, play a critical role in mobilizing people to participate in social movements. Tools like Twitter and Facebook were pivotal during the #BlackLivesMatter protests, enabling rapid coordination of actions and dissemination of information (*Das, 2023*).

Combatting Disinformation and Cybersecurity. In conflicts, information platforms serve as tools for spreading accurate information and countering disinformation. During the Syrian conflict, platforms like Telegram and WhatsApp were employed to disseminate reliable news and ensure secure communication (*Ahmed, 2020*).

Social platforms also facilitate the documentation and archiving of human rights violations. For instance, during conflicts in the Middle East, YouTube served as a repository for video evidence of war crimes (*Risam, 2022*).

Table 1

The Use of Digital Tools in Social Movements

Tool	Function	Example of Use	Source
Twitter	Rapid dissemination of information and mobilization	Used during the #ArabSpring protests for coordination and information exchange.	(Das, 2023)
Telegram	Secure communication and news distribution	Utilized during the Hong Kong protests to ensure anonymity and coordination.	(Ahmed, 2020)
YouTube	Archiving evidence of human rights violations	Uploading videos documenting crimes during the Syrian war.	(Risam, 2022)
WhatsApp	Organizing local social movements	Coordinating volunteer aid during the COVID-19 pandemic.	(Das, 2023)

In contemporary conflicts and social upheavals, digital security and combating disinformation have become critically important aspects of information warfare. While these platforms can be tools for truth, they also act as sources of fake news. To enhance transparency and protect against manipulation, digital technologies require continuous refinement.

Ensuring Digital Security. Digital security in conflict zones protects personal data for activists, journalists, and civilians. Encrypted platforms such as Telegram and Signal are essential for secure communication, ensuring the anonymity of participants in movements (Ahmed, 2020). For example, during the Hong Kong protests, activists used secure messengers to coordinate actions while avoiding government surveillance.

Disinformation has become a powerful tool in modern conflicts, aiming to distort reality and create confusion among both the public and the international community. Studies reveal that platforms like Facebook and Twitter were exploited during the Syrian war to disseminate false news, influencing public opinion (Das, 2023).

Combating disinformation involves using artificial intelligence algorithms to fact-check and identify fake content. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, platforms like YouTube implemented tools to flag misleading information and remove fake news (Risam, 2022). These solutions excel at scaling information verification across vast audiences quickly.

Education is a cornerstone in countering disinformation. Critical thinking skills and the ability to recognize fake content are essential. Initiatives aimed at improving digital literacy have proven effective. For example, training programs for journalists in conflict regions teach how to verify information sources and employ digital security tools (Ewuoso, 2023).

Blockchain technology offers an innovative approach to fighting disinformation by ensuring transparency and data integrity. Such systems allow for creating databases that record verified facts, which can be used in international investigations of war crimes.

4. Social and Communication Challenges in Wartime

Culture in wartime often becomes both a means of influence and a tool for manipulation. As noted by Lomachinska, media culture shapes public consciousness by creating ideologically charged content. In information wars, media serve functions of informational, communicative, and ideological representation, spreading content aligned with specific political interests (Lomachinska & Lomachinskiy, 2022).

Political representation within the media sphere reflects ideologies, values, and aspirations. Studies emphasize that a democratic political culture relies on the media's ability to represent civic initiatives and counter dominant state narratives.

A significant challenge is the spread of disinformation, which distorts perceptions of cultural values. Parfenyuk argues that strategic information wars often alter cultural spaces by displacing national values and replacing them with elements of mass culture that promote ideas advantageous to aggressors (*Parfenyuk, 2019*).

Germer's research illustrates how propaganda materials employ visible and invisible elements to manipulate audiences. For example, during World War II in Japan, women's magazines like *Nippon Fujin* used cultural imagery to mask political narratives that supported colonial ambitions (*Germer, 2013*). Addressing the challenges of cultural and political representation in wartime involves not only preserving cultural identity but actively countering disinformation and propaganda. This requires a deep understanding of socio-cultural challenges and strategies to safeguard national values.

During conflicts, both state and non-state actors leverage narratives to justify actions and mobilize public support. For instance, during World War II, the USA extensively used propaganda through films and radio to create an enemy image and reinforce national unity (*Erenberg & Hirsch, 1996*). Media tools promoted patriotic messages, fostering societal cohesion around shared goals.

In contemporary conflicts, narratives play a similar role. For example, during the war in Ukraine, narratives of sovereignty and the fight for freedom have mobilized international support and boosted public morale. Narratives also serve as instruments of resistance against occupying forces and other forms of aggression. Lomachinska's research highlights how media culture can utilize information spaces to craft counter-narratives that discredit official propaganda and strengthen resistance efforts (*Lomachinska & Lomachinskyi, 2022*). For example, during the protests in Hong Kong, activists used social media to disseminate narratives about democratic freedoms, countering the official statements of the Chinese government.

The use of narratives poses challenges. Parfenyuk points out that strategic information wars can manipulate cultural values, creating destructive narratives that undermine national unity (*Parfenyuk, 2019*). These narratives often affect the psychological state of the population, fostering fear and confusion.

Counter-narratives are effective tools for international influence. For example, during the Syrian war, narratives about human rights were used to expose war crimes and attract international attention to the conflict (*Ahmed, 2020*). Such narratives encourage global support and help form coalitions to address conflicts. The strategic use of narratives and counter-narratives in wartime underscores the importance of media literacy and resilience in preserving cultural identity and fostering unity.

5. Prospects of Social Communication Technologies in the Discourse of Decolonization

In the contemporary world, social communication technologies play a crucial role in advancing decolonization ideas. They create platforms for knowledge exchange, community mobilization, and resistance to the hegemony of Western narratives. These prospects are considered through the lens of the ethical use of artificial intelligence, innovations in digital education, and the creation of new forms of communication.

Artificial intelligence (AI) holds significant potential for implementing decolonial practices. It can be used to create inclusive systems that consider the perspectives of previously

marginalized groups. For example, researchers such as Shakir Mohamed and others emphasize that AI must focus on ethical principles and adapt its practices to the needs of vulnerable populations. This includes developing "decolonial tactics," such as reverse learning and the formation of affective communities (Mohamed *et al.*, 2020). One of the key prospects is the use of digital platforms for education. For example, research from Ashesi University in Ghana demonstrates how tools like Wikipedia and Twitter can be used to create "decolonial" learning environments that foster new approaches to knowledge and education (Adu, 2020). Digital technologies open up opportunities for integrating global and local knowledge.

Digital technologies also help preserve the identity of indigenous peoples by providing platforms for expressing and promoting their cultural traditions. For instance, in Africa, technologies are used to popularize local narratives that resist Western stereotypes perpetuated by global media (Bernal, 2021). While social communication technologies offer immense potential, they also face challenges. Researchers note that these platforms sometimes become tools for reproducing colonial practices, such as the hegemony of English-language content (Das, 2023). Therefore, it is important to integrate approaches that take into account the diversity of cultures and languages.

6. Conclusions

Information technologies have become a fundamental tool in the discourse of decolonization, facilitating the transformation of the global information space and providing a platform for promoting new ideas and narratives. Based on the conducted analysis, several key aspects can be highlighted.

Social networks, blogs, and digital media play a key role in the formation, dissemination, and consolidation of decolonial narratives. Campaigns such as #RhodesMustFall have demonstrated how digital platforms can serve as spaces for global dialogue and solidarity.

In military conflict situations, information platforms contribute to the mobilization of citizens, coordination of actions, and combating disinformation. They also allow marginalized groups to maintain their identity and fight for their rights through the creation of counter-narratives.

Digital tools, such as artificial intelligence and encrypted communication platforms, provide the ability to resist manipulative campaigns and ensure the protection of activists' data. However, disinformation remains a challenge that requires comprehensive solutions, including increasing digital literacy.

Technologies allow the documentation and promotion of local traditions, counteracting dominant Western narratives. This helps cultural groups preserve their identity and expand their influence in the global space.

Innovations in the field of digital education, the development of platforms for marginalized communities, and the integration of ethical principles in the development of technologies open new opportunities for decolonization. However, to achieve sustainable results, it is necessary to take into account multiculturalism and linguistic diversity in global communications.

Information technologies have significant potential in supporting decolonization movements, providing a platform for the dissemination of new narratives, preserving cultural identity, and combating disinformation. At the same time, the success of these initiatives depends on the ethical use of technologies, overcoming the digital divide, and implementing educational programs to develop digital literacy. Thus, social communication technologies remain not only a tool but also an active participant in the processes of decolonization.

References

1. Ahmed, Y. (2020). *Political discourse analysis: A decolonial approach*. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 18(2), 139-155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2020.1714387>
2. Adu, K. H. (2020). *Digital communication tools in the classroom as a decolonial solution: Pedagogical experiments from Ashesi University in Ghana*. Springer, 157-176. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10325-7>
3. Bernal, V. (2021). *Digitality and decolonization: A response to Achille Mbembe*. *African Studies Review*, 64(1), 41-56. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2021.15>
4. Das, D. (2023). *Decolonization through technology and decolonization of technology*. *Companion Proceedings of the 2023 ACM International Conference on Supporting Group Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3583136.3597147>
5. Erenberg, L., & Hirsch, S. (1996). *The war in American culture : society and consciousness during World War II*. *The American Historical Review*, 102, 918-919. <https://doi.org/10.7208/CHICAGO/9780226215105.001.0001>
6. Ewuoso, C. (2023). *Decolonization Projects*. *Voices in Bioethics*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.52214/vib.v9i.11940>
7. Germer, A. (2013). *Visible cultures, invisible politics: propaganda in the magazine Nippon Fujin, 1942–1945*. *Japan Forum*, 25, 505-539. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09555803.2013.783092>
8. Grecco, S., & Schuster, K. (2020). *Decolonizing global history: A Latin American perspective*. *Journal of Global History*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022820000065>
9. Lomachinska, M., & Lomachynski, P. (2022). *The role of media culture in today's information wars*. *Journal of Communication and Media Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2022.2086821>
10. Milford, I. (2023). *African Activists in a Decolonising World*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009277020>
11. Mohamed, S., & Png, M. T., & Isaac, W. S. (2020). *Decolonial AI: Decolonial theory as sociotechnical foresight in artificial intelligence*. *Philosophy & Technology*, 33(4), 659-684. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-020-00417-5>
12. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2015). *Decoloniality as the Future of Africa*. *History Compass*, 13, 485-496. <https://doi.org/10.1111/HIC3.12264>
13. Parfenyuk, O. (2019). *Transformation of cultural values in the era of strategic information wars*. *Journal of Cultural Studies*, 25(3), 67-84. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-019-09347-4>
14. Risam, R. (2022). *Indigenizing decolonial media theory*. *Media Theory Journal*, 4(2), 123-145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611421521>
15. Seck, F. (2023). *The Cultural Underground of Decolonization*. *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 10, 287-309. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pli.2023.21>
16. Sunnemark, F., & Thörn, H. (2021). *Decolonizing higher education in a global post-colonial context*. *Journal of Educational Change*, 12(1), 15-27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-020-09382-2>