СЕКЦІЯ 2
СПЕЦІАЛЬНІ ТА ГАЛУЗЕВІ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ

TYPOLOGY OF FAKES IN MODERN SOCIETY
ТИПОЛОГІЯ ФЕЙКІВ У СУЧАСНОМУ СУСПІЛЬСТВІ

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The article deals with such social phenomena as false and fake information; their characteristics and differences are found out; the definition of fake information is presented and formulated. The importance of digital hygiene in the era of information and hybrid wars is described. The role of communication channels, such as mass media and the Internet, especially social networks, in creating a distorted reality to manipulate people's consciousness is emphasized.

The article is aimed at researching the influence of fake news on public opinion, distinguishing between false information and manipulation, as well as researching different typologies of fake information. The text delves into the historical existence of fakes, the role of the media in political manipulation, and the challenges associated with the diverse and contradictory flow of information in today's world.

Several key points are covered, including the concept of "post-truth", the meaning of fake news, and the need to understand and distinguish between disinformation and misinformation. Researchers propose a typology of fake information, taking into account such factors as the form of presentation, content, subject, target audience and source of information.

The text gives examples of the most popular fakes related to the russian-Ukrainian war and their refutations based on facts.

The article illustrates how fakes are used for various purposes, such as spreading panic, inciting hatred, and manipulating consciousness. It concludes with the challenges of combating fake news and the importance of media literacy, critical thinking, and fact-checking in the age of information technology. It is also emphasized the need for administrative responsibility for the spread of fake news in social networks. The conclusion emphasizes the urgency of solving the problem of fake news and its impact on information wars in the modern world.

Key words: fake, fake news, false information, misinformation, social networks, social media, disinformation, propaganda, fakes and exposes related to Ukraine, russian fakes, information warfare.

У статті розглядаються такі соціальні явища, як неправдива та фейкова інформація. З'ясовуються їх харак-теристики та відмінності. Наводяться та формулюються визначення фейкової інформації. Описується важливість цифрової гігієни в епоху інформаційних та гібридних війн. Підкреслено роль каналів комунікації, таких як засоби масової інформації та Інтернет, особливо соціальні мережі, у створенні спотвореної реальності для маніпулювання свідомістю людей.

Стаття спрямована на дослідження впливу фейкових новин на громадську думку, розмежування неправдивої інформації та маніпуляцій, а також дослідження різних типологій фейкової інформації. Текст заглиблюється в історичне існування фейків, роль медіа в політичних маніпуляціях і виклики, пов'язані з різноманітним і суперечливим потоком інформації в сучасному світі. Розглянуто кілька ключових моментів, зокрема концепцію «постправди», значення фейкових новин, а також необхідність розуміти та розрізняти дезінформацію та місінформацію. Дослідники пропонують типологію фейкової інформації, враховуючи такі фактори, як форма подання, зміст, предмет, цільова аудиторія та джерело інформації.

У тексті наводяться приклади найбільш популярних фейків, пов'язаних з російсько-українською війною, та їхні спростування, засновані на фактах.

У статті ілюструється, як фейки використовуються для різних цілей, таких як сіяння паніки, розпалювання ворожнечі та маніпулювання свідомістю. На завершення йдеться про труднощі боротьби з фейковими новинами та важливість медіаграмотності, критичного мислення та перевірки фактів в епоху інформаційних технологій. Також наголошується на необхідності адміністративної відповідальності за поширення фейкових новин у соцмережах. Висновок підкреслює актуальність вирішення проблеми фейкових новин та їх впливу на інформаційні війни в сучасному світі.

Ключові слова: фейк, фейкові новини, фейк-ньюз, неправдива інформація, соціальні мережі, дезінформація, пропаганда, фейки та викриття, пов'язані з Україною, російські фейки, інформаційна війна.

Formulation of the problem. Increasingly, information technology is being used to manipulate mass consciousness, influence and manage people. The communication channels in information warfare are the mass media and the world wide web. They are used to create a so-called "distorted reality", which is produced to order by certain stakeholders or groups. Using information technology, people's minds are subordinated to specific propaganda ideas that make a person open and defenseless against manipulative means.

The best place to spread them is the Internet, or rather social networks. This is due to the fact that the huge flow of information is not filtered either by the moderators of social communities or by the consumers of this information. In addition, in a massive flow of information, it is difficult to see where the fake and where the true information. Therefore, it is important to typology of fake

information to further separate fakes from true facts.

Given the current geopolitical situation in Ukraine, it is extremely important to find methods to detect, neutralize, disposal and prevent the spread of ordered "infected" information. The most favorable place for their distribution is the Internet, or rather – social networks. This is due to the fact that the huge flow of information is not filtered by the moderators of social communities or consumers of this information. In addition, in a dense flow of information, it is difficult to see where the fake and where the true information. Given this, it is important to typology of fake information to further separate fakes from true facts.

The purpose of the work is to investigate the importance of fake in the media and its impact on public opinion, to find out the signs of false information and differences with manipulation and propaganda.

Exploring information wars, there is a necessity to clearly understand and differences between fake news cases and their use. For achieving our goal, it is necessary to consider the existing approaches to the typology of fakes and determine which ones most effectively reveal the features of this phenomenon from a sociological point of view.

The subject of the research is fakes, fake news, **the object of the research** is the mass media that publish this news.

The flow of information in the modern world is so diverse and contradictory that an individual person is unable to figure it out on his own. Therefore, the selection of the most important information and its presentation is an important task of the entire media system, which, as a result, opens up wide opportunities for manipulating the mass consciousness. The media have tremendous opportunities in the field of political manipulation and influence on the mass consciousness through the formation of a certain public opinion among the population about a particular event, person, phenomenon. This problem has become especially urgent for Ukraine, because the literacy of the population in the field of mass communications is at low level, and the pace of development of information and political technologies is significantly ahead of the development of the legislative framework in the field of information policy, which limits the possibility of using the media for manipulative purposes.

The basis of political manipulation is the virtual reality created by the media, which could radically change the proportions of the true model of the world. An important prerequisite for manipulation must consider the fact that, having a monopoly on information, the media set the priorities of events. Millions of events take place in the world, but only that part of them is discussed that the media bring to the attention of the respondent.

Fakes have existed since ancient times.

Researchers find the first fake messages in the days of the pharaohs [18] and Homer.

In the context of information warfare and the widespread use of social networks, the problem of fakes has become especially important. False stories can spread extremely fast [7] and even a rebuttal from an authoritative source is unable to stop the information wave that "covers" society. Thus, it actualizes the issue of fakes and the effectiveness of their impact on various social groups.

Many scientists studied the manipulative influence on consciousness through the mass media, for instance G. Pocheptsov [7], Rushchenko [11], O. Ryabokon [12], O. Pryhornytska [8; 9].

Today, the terms "fake", "fake new" play an important role in the minds of citizens. The term "fake" possesses many meanings. Fake is information that is not true; a message about something that never happened. At the same time there are important features that separate fakes from other types of manipulation:

– fake created deliberately;
– spread virally;
– systematically supported.

Usually fakes consist of partially true facts or disguised as real news, have negative character and are aimed at misinformation, misleading the audience. O. Pryhornytska argues on the following definition: "A fake is a specially distorted news, event or journalistic material that contains false or deformed information that discriminates against a certain person or group of people in the eyes of the audience" [9, p. 317].

Fake news organically fit into the concept of "post-truth". "Post-truth", named in 2016 "word of the year" according to the Oxford Dictionary, "describes or denotes circumstances in which objective facts are less important in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal conviction [22]".

The purpose of the article is to explore different typologies of fake news. Considering fake as a kind of false information, having certain varieties, the typology of which scientists and practitioners are still trying to determine. For the most part, they correspond to the common approach proposed by First Draft, who marked by the uncertainty of a single methodological basis for classification, replace the concepts of "disinformation" and "fake news", use common concepts in the new reading. Furthermore, these classifications include the interpretation of real facts as a kind of misinformation. The interpretation as an explanation is based on understanding, grounded on categories such as sight, judgment, opinion, and limitless, becoming a subject to regulation and responsibility.

The following types of misinformation should be considered [14]:

– Fake fact;
– Fake source (false source / attribution of information to a known source);
– Fake context;

– Inconsistency of the title and the content (online-click-beit).

Disinformation is spread through news publications (articles, television and radio messages, online publications), bots, trolls and leaks [15]. Disinformation is mostly used in news, as they are the most operative and popular, so the spread will be the fastest and most wide. For instance, fake news – one of the most common mechanisms of disinformation.

Collins Dictionary marked fake news as a concept of the year. And although this phenomenon is not new, the publisher reported that the use of this phrase in 2017 increased by 365%. "Fake news, like allegations or accusations, has been everywhere this year, undermining public confidence in the media," Helen Newstide, head of language content at Collins [1] said.

Fake news has pushed the development of a separate area of fact-checking projects, which, in addition to the logical benefits, can bring heavy traffic to publications. PolitiFact, The Washington Post, and FactCheck.org have reached a new level of popularity, according to Nieman Lab experts [10].

Researchers at the University of Western Ontario identify five types of fakes [17]:

1. Intentionally misleading

This is news created entirely in order to deceive readers. There were many examples in the 2016 USA election that claimed that "the celebrity X supported Donald Trump" and it wasn't true.

2. Jokes taken as true

Humor sites like Onion or Daily Mash present fake news to saturate the media. Problems can arise when readers see a story out of context and share it with others.

3. Large-scale mystifications

Frauds reported in good faith by authoritative news sources.

4. Deliberately one-sided coverage of events

Selected but true elements of history compiled as evidence.

5. Stories where the "truth" is contradictory

This applies to issues where ideologies or opinions conflict, such as territorial conflicts. Reporters may be unconsciously sympathetic or perceived as such.

The BBC offers a simpler classification [19]:

– false news spread intentionally to make people believe something wrong or make many people visit a website;

– news that contains truthful information but is not completely accurate.

The second type of fake can occur if journalists or bloggers do not check all the facts before publishing the material, or exaggerate some of them.

Ukrainian researchers have a wide field for analyzing fakes, so specialists from the organization StopFake, led by Yevhen Fedchenko, analyzed over 500 materials – examples of Kremlin propaganda for 2014-2017 [6]. As a result, researchers have grouped all materials in 18 topics:

1. Illegal seizure of power in Ukraine as a result of the overthrow of the legal leadership;

2. Ukraine – a "fascist state";

3. Ukraine – a "failed state";

4. Russia is not an occupier and has not carried out a military attack on Ukraine;

5. Discreditation of the Ukrainian Armed Forces;

6. Fakes that discredit civil battalions that officially joined the Armed Forces of Ukraine in 2015;

7. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees from Donbass and Crimea;

8. Territorial disintegration of Ukraine;

9. "Territorial claims" from neighboring countries (claims to parts of Ukraine that will be joined by countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania or Slovakia);

10. Fake legitimization of the annexation and occupation of Crimea with the use of representatives of foreign governments, international organizations and foreign media;

11. Fakes which "explain" that the war in Ukraine is actually carried out by the US military, NATO or Western private military contractors;

12. Decrease of Western support for Ukraine – "fatigue from Ukrainian issues"

13. Manipulation of international organizations;

14. Fakes that manipulate political and economic relations between Ukraine and the EU (eg visa-free regime, Free Trade Agreement, Eurovision Song Contest, etc.);

15. Stories about the disintegration of the EU, the collapse of the United States and the West in general, their insignificance in world geopolitics;

16. MH17 disaster;

17. Fakes about the use of biological weapons by the West against Ukrainians or in the temporarily occupied territories (stories about AIDS / Zika / other diseases);

18. Fake mixing of topics – Ukraine – Syria – terrorists from ISIS (for example, Crimean Tatars are portrayed as jihadists, Ukraine as a training ground for terrorists.

The content analysis of the topics of fake materials showed, on the one hand, their rather great variety; on the other hand, it lasts in the promotion of Russian narratives about Ukraine. For four years, the media systematically promoted certain accents that should influence public opinion among various audiences.

In particular, the largest number of refuted materials (121 cases) concerned the Ukrainian army and volunteer battalions.

At the end of 2015, the propaganda theme in the context of Ukraine is changing and gaining a new meaning. Russia's geopolitical scope and the universality of its propaganda methods, which it now applies to various countries, such as Syria, Turkey, Germany, etc. are becoming apparent.

The coverage of topics related to Ukrainian, Turkish and Syrian issues has undergone though the transformation. Materials began to appear in the Russian media: "Turkobanderites: jihadists

are fighting in Ukraine" (Russia 24 TV channel) or "Azov Battalion is ready to fight together with Turkey against Russia in Syria" (RT), "Ukrainians are fighting on the side of Syrian terrorists" (nbnews. com.ua). In this case, the Russian media creates a synthetic image of the enemy, which allegedly absorbs all the major threats to Russia.

Western journalists have developed their own typology of fakes, it looks like more universal [20]. They separate disinformation, misinformation, and mal-information.

– Misinformation is information that is untrue, and the person who disseminates it knows that it is not true. This is a deliberate lie aimed at misleading people.

– Misinformation is false information, but the person who disseminates it believes it is true.

– Mal-information is information based on reality, but it is used to harm a person, organization or country.

Misinformation refers to the dissemination or promotion of inaccurate or misleading information without the intent to deceive. It can be spread unintentionally, resulting from errors, mistakes, or a lack of awareness about the accuracy of the information.

The key characteristic of misinformation is that there is no deliberate effort to mislead or manipulate. It may arise from genuine misunderstandings, misinterpretations, or the rapid dissemination of unverified information.

Disinformation, on the other hand, involves the intentional creation and dissemination of false or misleading information with the purpose of deceiving and manipulating the audience. The spreader of disinformation knows that the information is false, and their goal is typically to influence opinions, sow discord, or achieve some other malicious objective.

Intent: The key characteristic of disinformation is the malicious intent to deceive. Those behind disinformation campaigns may use various tactics, such as fake news, propaganda, or manipulated media, to achieve their goals.

Claire Wardle, First Draft News Research Director identifies seven types of Mis and Disinformation [21].
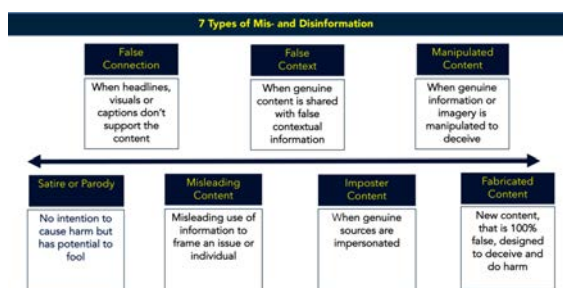

Illustration 1

As we can see the fake information can be classified according to various criteria. After analyzing the most typical examples of fake news, we have identified the following criteria that provide the basis for classification:

– the form of presentation (text, photo, video, voice recording);

– in content (agitation, propaganda, manipulation, etc.);

– by subject (political, social, economic, etc.);

– by appointment for a certain age category (for young people, for adults, for retirees, etc.);

– by source of information (from the first source, without source, unknown source, etc.).

Fake information is created for a specific purpose. Answering the question "why spread lies?", we have identified several types of fakes on social media depending on their task:

– fakes that sow panic among people;

– fakes that incite ethnic (racial, religious, etc.) hostility;

– fakes that spread misconceptions in order to confuse us, to distract from the truth;

– fakes that manipulate consciousness;

– fakes that advertise someone or something;

– fakes that bring profit to the media that distributes it ("yellow press");

– fakes that tarnish someone's reputation (most often a photo after Photoshop);

– fakes that have an entertaining character.

But, despite the nuances, we can fix the main common features of fake news:

– Has a source (which with the help of modern technology can be traced, although it is difficult);

– Spreads rapidly;

– Completely or partially untrue;

– It is difficult to stop and refute;

– Has a real impact on society.

Fakes and disinformation have been an important component of Russian aggression against Ukraine since 2014. With the help of stories about "Nazis", "biolaboratories" and "the creation of nuclear weapons", propagandists prepared the ground for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Now, by spreading fakes, the Russians seek to reduce international support for Ukraine, stop the supply of weapons, psychologically influence Ukrainians and encourage their own population. Therefore, for Ukrainians, the topic of fakes is especially important as an element of information war.

We have selected and analyzed the most interesting fakes and revelations related to Russia's war with Ukraine (period 2014–2022). We have selected and analyzed the most interesting fakes and revelations related to Russia's war with Ukraine (period 2014-2022). These examples were repeatedly replicated by the Russian media and government officials. Tens of millions of people (not only in Russia) continue to consider this information is true, despite many refutations.

1. Fake: The enemy is tracking your geolocation

Let's start with a fake that has been widely distributed since February 24. Information appeared in Telegram channels and mass media that the enemy uses geolocation in the phones of ordinary users to aim weapons [2].

Truth: The GPS signal is one-way. Your phone receives a signal from several satellites and uses this data to determine its own position. The device does not send anything in the reverse direction.

2. Fake: The USA has recognized the conduct of biological research in Ukraine

The stories about the American biolaboratories in Ukraine, where they create biological weapons and conduct experiments on people, are almost 9 years old [2].

Even in a recent speech accompanying the annexation of four regions of Ukraine (Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson), Putin mentioned "US biolaboratories."

Truth: There is no evidence of the presence of biolaboratories on the territory of Ukraine. The United States is helping Ukraine develop public healthcare and biosecurity facilities as part of the Biological Threat Reduction Program.

3. Fake: Ukraine is preparing a "dirty" bomb

In the fall, Russian Defense Minister Serhiy Shoigu said that Ukraine was allegedly preparing provocations on its territory using a "dirty bomb" [13].

True: IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) inspectors constantly monitor and check nuclear facilities on the territory of Ukraine, there is no evidence that Ukraine is planning to make a nuclear bomb.

4. Fake: Russian speakers are sent to prison

Russian propaganda actively uses facts about the law on the Ukrainian language, which was adopted by the Verkhovna Rada in 2019. They wrote that now they will be imprisoned and fined for speaking Russian, and "language inspectors" will walk the streets [5].

The truth: the Russian language of communication was not banned. According to a survey by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Razumkov Center conducted in December 2022, 44% of residents in eastern Ukraine still speak Russian (40% speak Ukrainian) [3]. That is, for example, today in Kharkiv, both Ukrainian and Russian are spoken about equally often.

5. Fake: Poland, Romania, Hungary dream of taking the territories of Ukraine

In order to destroy the relations between Ukraine and Europe, Russian propagandists (and officials too) are spreading the fake that the western regions of Ukraine will come under the protectorate of Poland [16].

Even Putin said at the end of the year that "in Poland, nationalist elements are sleeping and see the return of their so-called historical territories" [13]. This fake was part of the narrative that Ukraine's allies want to divide it among themselves.

Truth: Poland sheltered the largest number of Ukrainian refugees — more than 1.5 million [16]. Accordingly, in the Polish media, propagandists tried to create an image of Ukrainian refugees as dangerous, aggressive people promoting the ideology of Nazism. This is how Russia wanted to make Poles and Ukrainians quarrel.

Illustration 2. (map from voxukraine.org)

6. Fake: lights are turned off for Ukrainians because electricity is sold abroad

When Russia began to attack the energy system of Ukraine, propagandists created a fake that the Ukrainian government continues to export electricity to Europe, and that is why there are blackouts in the population [13].

In fact, Ukraine already stopped selling electricity in October 2022 in order to meet its own needs.

7. Fake: Western weapons are resold by Ukraine abroad

In the German information space [16], fakes about the weapons provided to Ukraine by Western countries often appeared. The purpose of this narrative is to create an impression of Ukraine as an unreliable partner that cannot ensure the intended use of the aid provided. And that is why it seems that it is not worth allocating weapons or other aid to Ukraine [4].

The narrative about "war crimes of the Armed Forces of Ukraine" was traditional for the German media. There have been many reports that it seems that the Ukrainian military is shelling and destroying objects of civilian infrastructure.

Truth: Allies scrutinize reports and monitor weapons use.

In conclusion, we note that any, even positive, fake information as a result has a negative impact and is a harmful phenomenon in the media space. It needs to be tackled at both the state and individual levels. In particular, do not forget about self-control. There are a few rules to follow in order to counter the spread and refute fake information. First, you need to check the information that you distribute yourself. It is important to remember that information is considered reliable only when it has been confirmed by official sources. If the title of the message has an ambiguous content, it is better to comment before explaining, explain the content of the information, because many users of social networks read only the headlines of the message. In the case of dissemination of information, the user becomes a kind of source, a public journalist, and in the network the author of the message is responsible for the comments under the publication. It is also necessary to analyze the information received, check whether this information is on the official website or on the official website of the person about whom they write, and not to disseminate the

news that casts doubt on its veracity. Fact-checking is central to anti-misinformation strategies, and it has grown exponentially in recent years. This is due to the growing spread of false news and misinformation and the need to debunk viral hoaxes. Social networks are becoming increasingly important in the fight against false news and misinformation, as the most favorable environment for the spread of fakes.

One can argue that fighting fakes is quite difficult and expensive. Since social network users are the main spreaders of fakes, it is necessary to improve their media literacy and critical thinking, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to develop mechanisms to prevent the spread of fakes. For example, it is necessary to disable the ability to share posts that are fake or have signs of being fake before fact-checkers check them. It is also necessary that users of social networks and the Internet also bear administrative responsibility for the spread of fake news. These methods will help to significantly reduce the number of fakes and information garbage in general.

The above analysis of possible classifications of fake news clearly demonstrates the danger this media phenomenon poses in the modern conditions of the development of information technology. Figuratively speaking, the uncontrolled spread of fake news is capable of provoking a kind of "information terrorist attacks" of enormous destructive power. Awareness of the negative aspects of this phenomenon motivates social and state institutions to search for mechanisms for filtering fake stuffing.

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