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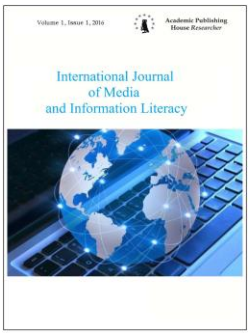

Typology and Mechanisms of Media Manipulation

Anastasia Levitskaya [a, *], Alexander Fedorov [b]

[a] Taganrog Institute of Management and Economics, Russian Federation
[b] Rostov State University of Economics, Russian Federation

Abstract

The discussion around the problem of media manipulation has dramatically intensified in recent years, especially in connection with the spread of fake news via the Internet. For example, studies show that most people, unfortunately, do not distinguish between fake news and other types of news. However, the problem of fake news is not only related to fabricated media texts, but also reflects the audience's general dissatisfaction with traditional mass media, some influential politicians, parties and organizations. From the audience's point of view, the problem of fake news is not limited to false news – it also concerns low-quality journalism, political propaganda and misleading forms of advertising, (dis)trust in public institutions and media agencies.

The fact, that in the modern media world unambiguously true and explicitly false information is becoming increasingly rare, further complicates the situation. As a rule, rather sophisticated manipulation techniques that mix reliable and fake information are being used, so there can be no simple judgements regarding the development of mechanisms to ban or remove false media information. Countering disinformation can be based both on technological (computer) algorithms and on qualitative analytics. We also believe that mass media education of the audience can effectively contribute to the development of analytical thinking and media competence of an individual. In particular, the synthesized typology of mass-media manipulation techniques (based on an analysis of scientific research) by the authors of the article can contribute to the development of media competence.

Keywords: media manipulation, disinformation, fake news, media literacy, society, media, audience, analysis.

1. Introduction

It can be agreed that over the course of many decades, two global, sometimes conflicting trends have been observed in the media: the audience as the object of manipulation and the audience as the collaborator and partner of the information process. Historically, the second one is most productive and promising. Timeliness of the theoretical awareness of this process is a compulsory condition for the civilized development of both traditional and new media (Bakulev, 2005: 196).

Meanwhile, the first trend, alas, continues to dominate and, as we believe, will only intensify in the foreseeable future: "the mainstream media's predilection for sensationalism, need for constant novelty, and emphasis on profits over civic responsibility made them vulnerable to strategic manipulation" (Marwick, Lewis, 2017: 47).

* Corresponding author
E-mail addresses: a.levitskaya@tmei.ru (A. Levitskaya), 1954alex@mail.ru (A. Fedorov)

The reasons for media manipulations are quite diverse and are not susceptible to unambiguous interpretations; however, according to G.V. Gracheva and I.K. Melnik, they can be grouped into the following:

- the reasons due to the bias and subjectivity of people working in the field of mass media, caused by their individual psychological, personal characteristics, political preferences, sympathies, etc .;
- the reasons determined by the political, social, economic and organizational conditions of the media sphere (for example, economic and administrative dependence on specific social actors);
- the reasons depending on the very process of functioning of mass media: to attract attention and gain a mass audience, the media are guided by certain common technologies when creating and rotating certain messages (Grachev, Melnik, 1999).

Having conducted an extensive study of social networks in different countries of the world in 2017 and 2018, S. Bradshaw and P.N. Howard draws attention to new trends in organized media manipulation, as well as the growing opportunities, strategies and resources supporting this phenomenon:

- a significant growth of campaigns for manipulating social networks in 48 countries in 2018 compared with 28 countries in 2017, since each country has at least one political party or government agency that uses social networks to manipulate public opinion; whereas, much of this growth occurs where political parties spread misinformation during elections, or where government agencies feel threatened by unwanted news and foreign interference, and in response to this develop their own propaganda campaigns;
- in 20% of these 48 countries there was evidence of disinformation campaigns conducted through WhatsApp, Telegram and WeChat;
- manipulative propaganda uses the automation of accounts in social networks and online comments, but increasingly involves paid advertising and search engine optimization on an expanding array of Internet platforms;
- manipulation in social networks is a big business: since 2010, political parties and governments have spent more than half a billion dollars on research, development and implementation of psychological operations and manipulation of public opinion in social networks. In some countries, this includes efforts to combat extremism, but in most cases - to spread unwanted news and misinformation during elections, military crises and complex humanitarian disasters (Bradshaw, Howard, 2018: 3).

Of course, these trends do not contribute to strengthening public trust in various institutions, and the audience is increasingly facing uncertainty regarding the reliability of the available media information. For example, a survey shows that two-thirds of respondents regularly receive news via Facebook, and one-third of respondents encounter fake news, which they initially perceived to be true (Flintham et al., 2018).

Traditional media (print, press, television) from year to year lose their influence, and new media, on the contrary, win. For example, according to Mediascope, in 2019 the Internet in Russia for the first time surpassed television in daily coverage: about 75 % of residents of large cities went online daily and 70.4 % watched TV (Lebedeva, 2019).

Evidently, considering the statistics for the Russian Federation on the whole, and not just for the media consumption of big cities' residents, television does dominate. Television is still the main source of information for most Russians, although its audience is gradually declining. While ten years ago, 94 % of Russians received information on TV, in 2019, only 72 %. Younger people under 25 receive news on TV less often (the main source of information is social networks for them): 42 % versus 93 % of those 65 and older (Volkov, Goncharov, 2019).

Today, not only simple computers and smartphones, but also modern TVs connected to the Internet, give users (based on their personal preferences) the possibility of individual choice of media texts, and Internet sites and social networks engage the audience in a dialogue – both within social networks and with government agencies, business companies, professional journalists, etc.

It is worth emphasizing that media manipulators consciously use these interactive features. But while in the days of the "old media" these manipulations originated from state and business structures, today the previously manipulated audience has gradually transformed from readers/viewers/listeners into full-fledged creators and distributors of media texts, including manipulative ones. Back in the 1980s, newspapers (some with a staff of hundreds of employees)

were proud of circulations of 2-3 million copies, but today the popular blogger's audience of ten million followers is no longer surprising.

The Internet users' reasons to become authors and distributors of media texts, in addition to financial ones, include shaping of the identity, self esteem, self-worth, sense of belonging, following fashion trends, desire to attract attention, desire to maintain communication with peers (Kunshchikov, Stroganov, 2018). A.E. Marwick believes that people "share fake news stories that support their pre-existing beliefs and signal their identity to likeminded others" (Marwick, 2018: 507).

As we know, social networks were not originally conceived as a political or manipulation tool: they were supposed to become a free and democratic space for communication between friends and relatives, with participants could share their impressions of books, films, music, travel, food recipes, post photos and videos etc. However, as soon as social networks (with their wide possibilities of users' segmentation by interests) gained a multimillion audience, they immediately entered the sphere of business and politics interests. Today, social networks are increasingly being used as a swift and relatively inexpensive way to promote information, including false one. As a result, social networks are becoming sources of various kinds of political and advertising fakes.

In recent years, media manipulation issues have been often linked to fake news. Of course, fakes per se (false information) are not new: fake news has been spread by traditional media before, too. The matter is that the Internet has made it possible to distribute fakes both by bots (robots), and by real individual users. Meanwhile putting the issue of fakes on the agenda became advantageous for 1) oppositionists protesting against the ruling authorities and mainstream media; 2) authorities, for which the term "fake news" often becomes an excuse to strengthen censorship and regulation of the Internet; 3) traditional media (major newspapers, television channels), which are painfully experiencing the loss of the audience (which, in particular, caused a decrease in advertising revenue) and try to blame the new media for violating the rules for presenting information, lack of professionalism and irresponsibility (Tambini, 2017: 9).

Evidently, most users of social networks do not create, but disseminate, repost other people's information, including fake information, and here "fake news gullibility intensifies with accelerating exposures and prolongs over time. If recurrence magnifies perceptions of truthfulness even for strikingly problematic and opinionated content" (Fielden et al., 2018: 55).

The situation with fake news is socially and politically problematic in three areas: 1) "its production of wrongly informed citizens, that 2) are likely to stay wrongly informed in echo chambers and 3) be emotionally antagonized or outraged given the affective and provocative nature of much fake news" (Bakir, McStay, 2018).

Another issue related to fake news is that they devalue the opinions of experts, academic researchers, professional journalists, undermine confidence in democratic institutions and can cause moral panic (Sadiku et al., 2018: 188).

Unfortunately, today's audience progressively more trusts information from social networks. For example, 23 % of Americans use Facebook as the main one, and 27% as an additional source of news, and approximately 75 % of the adult population of the United States cannot recognize the degree of reliability of media texts (Silverman, Singer-Vine, 2016).

Many researchers argue that fake news, being exchanged on social networks, is transforming society significantly (Janze, Risius, 2017). However, according to Facebook management, this influence of social networks is greatly exaggerated, for instance, "that of all the "civic content" posted on the site in connection with the United States election, less than one-tenth of one percent resulted from "information operations" like the Russian campaign" (Shane, 2017).

2. Materials and methods

Materials of our research are academic books and articles on media manipulation, as well as Internet sites. Methodology is based on theoretical framework on the relationship, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and the logical in cognition, the theory of the dialogue of cultures. The research is based on a content analysis and comparative approaches.

The following methods are used: data collection (monographs, articles, reports) related to the project's theme, analysis of academic literature, theoretical analysis and synthesis; generalization and classification.

3. Discussion

The subject of media manipulation is rather popular in the academic and expert communities today, and researchers, in particular, pay much attention to the terminological field.

First of all, it is true about the differentiation of concepts such as "misinformation" and "false information" (fake).

H. Derakhshan and C. Wardle substantiate the following typology:

- "Dis-information. Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country;

- Mis-information. Information that is false, but not created with the intention of causing harm;

- Mal-information. Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization, or country" (Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017: 9).

G.G. Pocheptsov essentially agrees with them, too, he believes that misinformation is a conscious deception, as contrasted to deception by chance, ignorance, underestimation, and exaggeration. The latter does not correspond to reality, but this happens without malicious intent. There is no malice in literature and art; they do not have to match the reality. On the other hand, disinformation is embedded into the information stream, on the basis of which some serious decisions may be made. And it is aimed to direct the decision maker to an intellectual or physical act beneficial to the communicator (Pocheptsov, 2018a). Disinformation misleads the audience by a direct lie, a juggling of facts and false, but supposedly documentary evidence, with the goal of whitewashing, or, conversely, compromising.

Thus, the term “misinformation” is understood as “the process of manipulating information: misleading someone by providing incomplete information or complete, but now reduntant information, distorting the context, distorting information partially. The manipulation ... refers to the type of psychological impact in which the skill of the manipulator is used to covertly introduce into the psyche of the addressee’ goals, desires, intentions, relationships or attitudes that do not coincide with those that the addressee currently has; psychological impact aimed at changing the direction of activity of another person, performed so skillfully that it goes unnoticed by him; psychological impact aimed at implicitly inducing another to commit certain actions by the manipulator; the skillful inducement of another to achieve (pursue) the goal indirectly nested by the manipulator” (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

As for the audience's attitude to disinformation, cognitive, emotional-evaluative, value-semantic, and behavioral components can be distinguished.

Cognitive components of the audience’s stance towards disinformation encompass the assessment of its frequency in media; ideas about its sources, goals, implementation methods, expected and actual consequences, links with other risks, and ways to protect against its impact.

Emotionally-evaluative components of the audience’s attitude towards disinformation include: the significance of its threat in comparison with other types of threats; assessment of sources and use of false media information.

Value-semantic components of the audience’s attitude towards disinformation cover the degree to which it can be used; opposing values and values that justify its use.

Behavioral components of the audience’s attitude towards disinformation are: preferred methods and responsiveness to its appearance; actual willingness to support public and state initiatives aimed at combating disinformation, discuss related problems with other people.

Personality components of the audience’s attitude toward disinformation are associated with psychological mechanisms, values, social trust, anxiety level, and social identity (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

G.G. Pocheptsov rightly asserts that any processes of disinformation, as soon as launched industrially, that is, massively and consciously, are dangerous and difficult to resist. The complexity of this struggle is determined by the following:

• a disinformation campaign is based on the concepts already existing in the mass consciousness, it only changes their priority, emphasizing those having a conflict potential;

• a disinformation campaign is the first to introduce information into the mass consciousness, which challenges efforts of later refutations, since a certain point of view has already been introduced into the mass consciousness;

• a disinformation campaign works with specific social groups, leading them to confront each other, the rest of the population witnesses this struggle, but these activated groups are very difficult to persuade;

• narratives introduced from the outside begin to contribute to the emergence of counter-narratives, thereby intensifying the confrontation, which passes from information to virtual space;

• from the information and virtual spaces, the conflicting ones are ready to go into the material world, which often happens, but the "street", in principle, cannot solve information and virtual problems (Pocheptsov, 2019: 28).

Thus, the model for designing a disinformation campaign involves determining the target audience, identifying destabilizing messages for this particular audience, determining the vulnerability of the audience and its resistance level, testing the content and language of the message in focus groups, and selecting media channels to deliver the message (Pocheptsov, 2019: 28).

Regrettably, the power of disinformation influences is enhanced by the audience's indifference to deactivate fakes, as any refutations are aimed at significant changes in beliefs formed under the influence of false information. In addition, the duration of the influence of disinformation on an individual can be quite noticeable, since the "forgotten" false information remains in memory, and when it pops up again, it is "perceived as reliable and is not in any doubt" (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

Network misinformation, using personalization and conspiracy techniques (often with the help of so-called trolls and bots), often becomes more convincing for users than even candid media texts coming from official media, especially if fake news is actively supported by users of any network groups by (political) interests, and the individual himself has no incentive to look into the problem using the method of checking facts by comparing several authoritative sources of information.

In this context, fake news is often seen as a form of deliberate misinformation (Sadiku et al., 2018: 187). However, in reality this is far from always the case, since fake information can be either completely false or partially true. This information may also be missing the context necessary for revealing its full content (and if it is disclosed accurately and completely, in all details, then the meaning of this kind of information can sometimes be reversed). The information may be true for some exceptional case, but, being generalized, also becomes fake. In addition, the ambivalence of media terminology is manifested in the fact that the very phrase "fake news" can be used in the political struggle with opponents, regardless of whether they are false or not. For example, in order to discredit their adversary, some politicians indiscriminately and cynically put labels on the true arguments of their opponents (Dentith, 2017: 66; Tambini, 2017: 1).

In addition, unlike professional misinformation, network news can be unintentionally misleading, since the world of fakes is a simplification of the complex world in which we live. Hence the craving not only for fakes, but also for conspiracy theory at one level, and magicians with fortune-tellers at another one (Pocheptsov, 2018b).

There is a viewpoint arguing "fake news to be fabricated information that mimics news media content ... Fake-news outlets, in turn, lack the news media's editorial norms and processes for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of information. Fake news overlaps with other information disorders, such as misinformation (false or misleading information) and disinformation (false information that is purposely spread to deceive people). Fake news has primarily drawn recent attention in a political context but it also has been documented in information promulgated about topics such as vaccination, nutrition, and stock values. It is particularly pernicious in that it is parasitic on standard news outlets, simultaneously benefiting from and undermining their credibility" (Lazer et al., 2018: 1094).

Other scholars come to similar conclusions about the nature of fake news: "Fake news is the presentation of false claims that purport to be about the world in a format and with a content that resembles the format and content of legitimate media organizations" (Levy 2017: 20). "Fake news is the deliberate presentation of (typically) false or misleading claims as news, where the claims are misleading by design" (Gelfert, 2018: 108).

The European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI) identifies ten types of fake news: propaganda, clickbait, sponsored content, satire and hoax, error, partisan content, conspiracy theory, pseudoscience, misinformation and bogus content and the different types of motivation:

money, politics/power, humor/fun, passion and [the aim to] (mis) inform (EAVI, 2017; McGonagle, 2017: 204-205).

It can also be added that fakes often use inadequate generalizations, representing, for example, the opinion of one person (often marginalized) as the position of a party or country and despise the standards of traditional journalism and (like poisonous mushrooms trying to pass themselves off as edible) imitate the facade of "branded" news channels.

Clearly, false information may use the so-called simulacra (from Latin – simulacrum), that is, references with no referents or copies substituting originals and Internet memes – short media texts, usually bright (audio) visual images, often filed in an ironic or sarcastic (often political) context, spread by people or bots in social networks, are gaining immense popularity.

Douglas Rushkoff authors the development of the theory of media viruses, which can also be associated with the spread of fake news or misinformation. However, he believes that media viruses can be viewed in a positive context, as "a media virus can be developed with the goal of fighting against a political party, religion, social institution, economy, business, or even a worldview. In the same way that scientists use viruses to defeat a certain bodily disease or cause the destruction of dangerous cells with antibodies, media activists use viruses to fight those whom they consider enemies of our culture. Media viruses, whether they are engineered, introduced from outside or spontaneous, cause social mutations and are the key to a certain kind of evolution" (Rushkoff, 2003).

J. Farkas and J. Schou add more positive effects of fake news, considering fake news as a critique of digital capitalism, critique of right-wing politics and liberal and mainstream media (Farkas, Schou, 2018: 303-306).

K. Born identifies several factors that triggered the spread of fake media information:

- democratization of the creation and distribution of media texts, so that any person or group can influence a large number of people online;
- information socialization, leading to the information consumption from any sources, and not only from traditional media agencies that observe journalism standards;
- atomization as a departure of individual news from brand sources;
- anonymity of the creation and distribution of media texts: for a network user today, it is more important *who* (for example, his friend) shared a piece of information than its *source*;
- personalization of the information environment, which distinguishes it from the "old media", allowing to use the micro-target audience;
- sovereignty: unlike television, the press, and radio, social networks are self-regulating (Born, 2017).

Herewith, often the speed of distribution of fake news is several times higher than the speed of ingenuous messages. This is linked to the fact that fakes better correspond to the expectations of a person, his/her ideas about the real world, and not about its version, which is skillfully written about in newspapers. Indeed, quite often fakes emphasize the negative, while regular messages – the positive. And the negativity causes more interest. Fake comes to this world as a result of a sharp transformation of the model of the information flow's generation and broadcast. The first model can be described as "one speaks and listens, the other one listens and speaks," the second as "one speaks – many listen," and the current one as "many speak, many listen" (Pocheptsov, 2018b).

The concept of "manipulation" is closely related to the concepts of misinformation and false information. According to G.V.Gracheva and I.K. Miller, manipulation in political activity refers to the following: fraud; a system of psychological impact, aimed at the introduction of illusory representations (Grachev, Melnik, 1999).

In social terms, manipulation is defined as illegal dominance, confirming social inequality. Manipulation as a control of human consciousness presumes interference in the processes of ideology, the formation of models of knowledge, understanding in the interests of certain states, organizations or groups (Van Dijk, 2006: 359).

However, in the media sphere, the term "manipulation" is considered more ambiguously. Of course, a biased media agency or a specific blogger may intentionally mislead the audience, but one may also inadvertently use false information for dissemination, erroneously considering it to be true. Moreover, the media agencies themselves can become the victims of manipulation by individuals and organizations: the generated media texts can become viral very quickly, and journalists, craving to get ahead of their rivals and neglecting the verification of the accuracy of the

information received, immediately publish it on seemingly solid media platforms (Fitzpatrick, 2018: 45).

The problem of manipulation is also related to the fact that the network nature of the Internet and the ability to replicate and remix images, text and video often makes it impossible to determine where an idea, image or memory originates from, especially in case of ironic game of meanings. All this makes the process of exposing media manipulations very difficult (Marwick, 2018: 478).

Ideally, when presenting media news, it is necessary to strive for balanced information, however, today we often deal with the so-called false balance, since some of the media texts can be the products of a "polite society" or political correctness. As M. Dentith argues, "in a polite society there are certain things which are not talked about. Some truths which might be considered toxic should they be discussed openly are politely ignored or glossed over. For example, we might have all been aware that, in the 1970s, the police routinely planted evidence in order to secure convictions, but as those criminals were thought to be obviously guilty of something, we politely ignored the specific cases of evidence tampering. It would be impolite to talk about the matter, or think of raising it because the intentions of the police - keeping the streets safe - was a public good. Politeness is one reason why the claim "That's just your opinion!" Ends up having what appears to be apparent epistemic weight; we are often polite in the face of dissent, in order to not cause further dissent, or embarrassment" (Dentith, 2017: 76).

4. Results

Hence, based on an analysis of various studies (Bakir, McStay, 2018; Born, 2017; Bradshaw, Howard, 2018; Dentith, 2017; Derakhshan, Wardle, 2017; Farkas, Schou, 2018; Fitzpatrick, 2018; Flintham et al., 2018 ; Gelfert, 2018; Grachev, Melnik, 1999; Janze, Risius, 2017; Kara-Murza, Smirnov, 2009; Lazer et al., 2018; Levy, 2017; Marwick, 2018; Nielsen, Graves, 2017; Pocheptsov, 2015; Pocheptsov, 2019; Rushkoff, 2003; Sadiku et al., 2018; Tambini, 2017; Tandoc et al., 2018; Van Dijk, 2006 and others), we can discern a number of basic manipulation techniques used by modern media:

- *appeal to authority, to opinion leaders, testimonial*: the use (including the help of the so-called "respected mediators") of real or fictitious statements of personalities with high authority, or vice versa, causing a negative reaction in people to whom the targeted manipulative effect is directed.

- *bandwagon*: selection of judgments, statements, phrases that require uniformity in behavior, creating the impression that everyone or "positive" nations, parties or groups do this. With the help of this "community", the audience is convinced that most people share the "correct" political, religious, etc. proposed by the media agency. point of view.

- *conceptual parasiticism*: parasitism on popular concepts, terms (using "patriotic", "folk", youth, slang words), (co) feelings, reflexes, (latent) desires, actions, etc .; in terms that hide/change the essence of the phenomenon;

- *disabling, blocking critical and rational perception*: appealing to the simplest emotions, subconsciousness in the atmosphere of a show, scandal, emphasizing shock, traumatic and paranormal phenomena; in particular, the manipulative effect can be enhanced by the introduction of political evaluations in entertainment shows;

- *exploitation of slogans, myths and stereotypes*;

- *false alternative*: an imaginary choice, while the audience is presented with several points of view on a given topic, but in a way that latently features an opinion that is beneficial to the communicator in the best light; the pseudo-alternative can also be manifested in the so-called non-alternative choice ("there is no other way");

- *misrepresentation*: distorting the opponents' opinions, attributing to them something they did not say and did not commit;

- *mockery, trollization, deepening the subject*: ironic, sarcastic, playful attitude to a particular phenomenon, theme, organization, country, nation, person, idea, symbol, etc .; used to defame something / someone, to show insignificant and frivolous, not worthy of attention;

- *multiplication, crushing, chaos*: redundancy, high pace of information flow which allows, on the one hand, even important (political) events to be integrated into the general "machine-gun" news mode, and on the other hand, it creates the need for interpretations, explanations, because a

person does not want to live in a world that he cannot make sense. Mosaicism and randomness deprive the audience of a sense of orderliness and predictability of being;

- name calling: labeling: 1) negative labeling, demonization: "sticking negative labels", insulting epithets, metaphors, names related to a particular phenomenon, organization, country, nation, person, idea, etc. are used to defame something / someone. Negative concepts such as "authoritarianism", "aggression", "enemy", "imperialism", "militarism", "Nazism", "nationalism", "occupation", "racism", "totalitarianism", "junta" are exploited etc.; 2) glittering generality: "halo effect", "radiant generalizations": uplifting epithets, metaphors, names related to a particular phenomenon, organization, country, nation, person, idea, etc., are used to make something / put someone on a pedestal, advertise. It exploits such positive concepts as "brotherhood", "democracy", "friendship", "health", "quality", "love", "peace", "patriotism", "victory", "superiority", "prosperity" , "Equality", "freedom", "commonwealth", "happiness", "success", etc.

- *opponent isolation*: depriving the opponent of the opportunity to speak;

- *plain folks, maximum simplicity, rubbing into trust*: betting on trusting relationships with a wide audience, its support under the pretext that the ideas are maximally simplified, the communicator's proposals have a positive meaning, since they are supposedly close to ordinary people ("I'm the same as you are");

- *preemptive impact*: the fastest possible (significantly outperforming competitors) news message presented in the way necessary for the communicator; a message about possible negative or positive phenomena with their immediate refutation in favor of the communicator;

- *promotion and self-promotion*: advertising and self-promotion of an individual, group, party, organization, company, etc .;

- *reiteration*: constant, intrusive repetition (including the reception of the initial and secondary information waves) of certain statements, regardless of the truth;

- *rumour creation and exploitation*;

- *sacrificed cow*: exposure of a certain "lesser evil" as a "sacrifice" in order to conceal the "greater evil";

- *selection, card stacking, concept change*: substitution of concepts, biased selection of information, unbalanced emphasis only on positive or only negative facts and arguments while ignoring the opposite; using assumptions as arguments; replacing the positive (or negative) qualities of a phenomenon with other (sometimes opposite), necessary for the manipulator at the moment. Thus, the attractiveness is justified, or vice versa, the unacceptability of any point of view, program, idea, etc.

- *straightforward lie*: direct lie, falsification, forgery in media texts;

- *transfer, projection, associated chain*: transfer of meanings, positive (or negative) qualities associated with established positive or negative concepts in society to certain phenomena, organizations, countries that are necessary for the manipulator at the moment, nations, ideas, personalities, etc .; avoiding discussion of topics undesirable for the communicator;

- *Trojan horse*: fragmentation and gradual integration of the disinformation between neutral/unbiased information;

5. Conclusion

Thus, the discussion around the problem of media manipulation in recent years has dramatically intensified, especially in connection with the spread of fake news on the Internet. For example, as studies prove (Nielsen and Graves, 2017: 6-7), most people, unfortunately, do not distinguish between fake news and other types of news. However, the problem of fake news is not only related to fabricated media texts, but also reflects the audience's discontent with traditional mass sources of information, specific influential politicians, parties and organizations. From the audience's point of view, the problem of fake news is not limited to false news - it also applies to poor-quality journalism, political propaganda, and misleading forms of advertising; distrust in public institutions and media agencies.

In addition, in the modern media world, unambiguously true and explicitly false information is becoming increasingly rare. In fact, rather sophisticated manipulation techniques that mix reliable and fake information are being used, so there can be no simple judgements regarding the development of mechanisms to ban or remove false media information. One of the promising ways

of counteracting fakes is to develop methods for identifying communities on the Internet which are most likely to spread false and misleading information (Mikheev, Nestik, 2018).

Resistance to disinformation can be based on both machine (computer) algorithms (Janze, Risius, 2017) and qualitative analytics (Van Dijk, 2006). We also believe that mass media education of the audience can effectively contribute to the development of analytical thinking and media competence of the individual (inter alia, the given typology of mass-media manipulation techniques that have been synthesized based on analysis of scientific research).

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