MEDIA AS A TOOL OF MANIPULATIVE TECHNOLOGY OF RUSSIAN INFOAGGRESSION IN THE UKRAINIAN MEDIA SPACE

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Abstract: The relevance of the study is due to the fact that with the advent of the Internet and the rapid development of new information technologies, the possibilities of propaganda, including manipulative one, influence on people in order to sow conflict situations in society, stimulate the spread of nationalist and separatist sentiments. In information wars, which occur both on a global and regional scale, online media often come to the fore, outstripping traditional ones. The article shows the features and possibilities of Internet propaganda in the framework of information aggression in the Ukrainian media space in the context of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict.

Keywords: Bots, Fake, Information war, Media space, Misinformation, Propaganda, Social media, Social networks, Trolls.

1 Introduction

Thanks to the process of global informatization, information has become the most important tool of power and governance. In the field of modern communication theory, sociology of mass communications, media psychology (along with multidisciplinary) generative approach (J. Baudrillard, N. Boltz, P. Winterhoff-Spurk, N. Kostenko, etc.), which accumulates functionality and situationality, is becoming increasingly important, accumulating functionality and situational nature of meeting information needs (which has traditionally been included by scholars in the general context of anthropocentric and socio-cultural visions).

There is a boundary between anthropocentrism and instrumentalism, where scientific theorizing would state that functionality is the cause of many "quasi-motivating" factors in choosing one or another means of satisfying information or recreational needs, which the author believes is enriched today by authenticity and online communities. Socio-psychological approach remains relevant, which provides ample opportunities and allows comprehending as much as possible all aspects of media communication and interpretive capacity of the subjects that make up the "interpretive communities" [31], but not all of them are ready for activities aimed at formation of own information field.

According to J. Baudrillard, against the background of the intersection of rational and postmodern interpretations of the simulative nature of mass communication, the so-called "mass cultural mystification" is built, where the mass itself puts an end to mass culture [2, p. 98-101]. The existence of controlled socialization gives rise to the integration of all contradictory flows of individual life in the space-time operational simulation of social life. Under these circumstances, the individual seeks to be both a buyer and a seller in this "hypermarket of culture".

In order to complete the picture of transforming the mass audience into "interpretive communities" and the average recipient of the mass media – into a personified subject of the media-communicative space, it is necessary to involve scientific principles of persuasive communicative theory (A. Bandura, F. Zimbardo, M. Leippe). In this combination, it can be stated that this is the current scientific foundation of the analysis of socio-cultural objects, which are in fact the metadiscourse of the media (despite all attempts to politicize it) and other products (including art) of the media themselves.

2 Materials and Methods

For the leading institutions of the political system, the media act as a means of political communication, which also includes their impact on the consciousness and feelings of people. In many ways, a new problem for society was the question of how, in what way – with the emerging civil society and political pluralism, as well as declarations on the political freedoms of citizens – the state power, political parties, and other political forces can influence the media in order to propagandize their ideas, solutions, and positions.

The dynamism of the socio-economic, political, spiritual life of Russian society also causes the emergence of a variety of specific issues that are the subject, content of political propaganda, creates new directions, forms, and methods of propaganda work in the international relations field, especially concerning 'neighbors".

Analysis of the literature and sources on the problem of propaganda in the media confirms the need for a special theoretical study devoted to the current state of propaganda activities using the media, carried out by the leading political forces of Russian society. The need to develop objective knowledge about the features of political propaganda in the system of modern political communications and using the media led to the use of a set of various methods that made it possible to create a fairly complete picture of political reality in the studied area, to analyze the features of the propaganda activities of political power in new socio-economic, political and spiritual and ideological conditions, as well as conditioned (as it seems to us) needs and interests of the state authorities and leading political forces, in identifying the characteristic features of political propaganda as a mechanism in the system of modern political communications, the resources of which are contained in the new capabilities of the online media.

On the example of materials from Internet sites and social networks, a comprehensive analysis of the forms, methods, and techniques of propaganda and counter-propaganda used in the media environment of the Internet to cover the Ukrainian-Russian conflict and the political situation in Ukraine was carried out.

3 Results and Discussion

Civilizational changes and transformations of media communications not only overemphasize or reload the understanding of the importance of transmitting meanings in the modern media space, but also, most importantly, determine the tools and means in the hands of users ("interpretive communities"). The question of the subjective weight of "being online" is increasingly being raised; interaction in networks removes spatial and temporal barriers to communication, becomes a higher meaning of life, higher than the awareness of why the user is there, i.e., higher than the meaning of receiving or transmitting the information itself. Thus, there is a fairly new trend in which the process of use can "press" on the communication process. In this sense, the results of the annual monitoring conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Ukrainian Society 2020) are important, which are shown below in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1: Answers to the question "What is the level of your trust in the Internet?"

	2019	**2020**
I do not trust at all	9.8	11.6
Mostly I do not trust	15.6	23.2
It's hard to say whether I trust or	44.2	43.7

not		
Mostly I trust	27.4	19.4
I trust completely	3.0	2.0
Average score	3.0	2.8

Table 2: Answers to the question "To what extent do you think the manipulation of public opinion via the Internet is a threat and needs to be prevented?"

	2019
Need prevention	50.1
Rather, they need prevention	20.6
Rather, they do not need prevention	8..7
No need for prevention	4.8
Difficult to answer	15.8
Did not answer	0.0

Source: Ukrainian society: monitoring of social change, 6 (20). Kyiv: Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2019, p.495.

In the context of the study of the above problems, one of the most important is the permutation of systemic and semantic positions of "actors of communicative action" (J. Habermas), which is the main collision of methodological "shifts" and changes in modern scientific approaches.

The media and their active segment – social media – has become one of the most powerful mechanisms influencing the world of objective reality, constructing it at its discretion. Today, in Ukraine, the emergence of the latest digital technologies has determined the powerful development of social media, which combines information content and online communication with consumers. Social media covers a variety of services: online media, social networks, blogs, Weibo, video hosting, and more. In Ukraine, social media was at its peak in 2014-2015, thanks in part to online resources for NGOs, volunteers, activists, politicians and experts. They covered and continue to cover the course of events such as the Revolution of Dignity, the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of hostilities in the Donbass, as well as surpassing television by the popularity. Blogging has become a powerful tool for influence. Opinion leaders and influential people are from Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and other networks. Their influence is growing: several bloggers with 400-900 thousand subscribers are information resources equivalent to regular information channels, or district newspapers with the same audience. The important question arises: What is the role of these new tools of influence in the formation of the Ukrainian media space? We will try to explore this issue in our article, focusing on the Russian-Ukrainian information war, tools and technologies for the dissemination of anti-Ukrainian narratives in the domestic media space.

In general, in the domestic scientific discourse, this topic is quite elaborated and is very relevant. Thus, the research of O. Samorukov, S. Mohylko, R. Marutyan, L. Chupriy, A. Datsyuk, A. Onkovych, P. Gai-Nyrzhnyk, N. Semenova, Y. Kokarchi, V. Gorbulin, G. Pocheptsov, Yu. Polovinchak, O. Susska, M. Ozhevan, N. Semenova, and many others are devoted to this topic.

However, the materials of the analysis of organizations that follow the narrative of Russian information propaganda in the media space and online media and their influence on the formation of public consciousness deserve special attention. This topic is the subject of research by Internews Ukraine, NGO Detector Media, in particular, the latest "Pro-Russian and anti-Western conspiracy in the information war. Key Trends 2020 - 2021" from the Institute of Mass Media and the NGO Detector Media. Many studies of the group Rating, Social Monitoring, Razumkov Center, KIIS, organizations Infosapiens and Democratic Youth Initiatives, etc. address this issue.

The following concepts were operationalized in the articles of:

- Fake News Website is an online media resource consisting of interconnected (content and navigation) web pages specializing in news content mixed with different proportions of news and fake news;
- Leader of public opinion, LOMs-leaders of public opinion;
- A blogger is a person who runs an online blog diary on a social network;
- Influencers are bloggers who have a wide audience on the net.

Manipulation is a psychological, not a physical, influence; it is a hidden action, the fact of which should not be noticed by the object of manipulation, it is an influence that requires considerable skill and knowledge. Among other forms of influence, manipulation allows achieving the desired result with minimal effort.

Research on methods of manipulative influence involves the use of such terms as "method", "reception", "technique", "technology". To date, no clear criteria for the distribution of these concepts have been developed. Their use depends on the level of generalization of the approach and its universality. For example, a combination of several techniques may be defined as a method or technique, otherwise as a technology.

The classification of manipulative methods of influence cannot be approached globally, due to the fact that any communication process requires an individual set of techniques, depending on the situation.

To begin with, let us define a list of the most commonly used methods of manipulative influence on people used by the media and television. Because the media is the link between certain information and society, it allows them to provide news in a certain necessary, 'profitable' way. Therefore, the information, depending on the needs of the "customer", can be changed as follows:

- Distorted by one-sided feed;
- Fabricated, provided as the necessary, fictional information, and not the real;
- Edited, with the addition of own conjectures and comments;
- Interpreted in a favorable light for the manipulator;
- Hidden.

Often, the media can also provide incomplete information, present facts selectively, depending on their subjective position, accompany the material with inappropriate headlines, publish truthful information when it is no longer relevant, provide inaccurate quotes, taking them out of context, as a result of which the information acquires a different meaning.

Today, YouTube, Facebook, Telegram, Instagram, Twitter are no longer platforms for entertainment content – they are now a real battleground of information warfare. According to the Facebook report "Situation affecting the activities in 2017-2020", Ukraine is among the top five in the world in the number of networks with information that affects the activities. In addition to internal [28], Ukraine was also subjected to external information attacks [27] all of which were organized from Russia, and others – from the territory of Luhansk not controlled by Ukraine [17].

After analyzing the information war and methods of information provocation of the Russian Federation, N. Semen identified the following main tasks of Russian information propaganda [26]:

- To create an atmosphere that despises the Ukrainian word, culture, history and country, imposes omnipotent and progressive ideas of Russia;
- Contributing to increasingly tense political situation, distrust and contempt of the people for the Ukrainian government;
- Incitement of discord between Ukrainian political parties;
- Develop social and ethnic conflicts;
- Initiate disobedience and large-scale riots;

- To increase the image and authority of Ukraine in the eyes of other countries;
- To create groups that oppose the constitutional government of Ukraine;
- To falsify the facts of historical heritage and ridicule the achievements of the Ukrainian people;
- To make an attempt to change the system of human values;
- To diminish and suppress Ukraine's world achievements in such important fields as science and technology, with special emphasis on the failures of Ukraine and the omission of its achievements formed in the army desperately desiring for Ukraine's victory over Russia;
- To impose on transcendent real things the way of life, behavior, worldview of human;
- To create panic and weaken the morale and confidence of Ukrainians in victory;
- To damage to information security of Ukraine [26, p. 27-28].

Based on the analysis of online media content 112ua, ZIK, Newsone, Strana.ua, Golos.ua, Vesti, Ukrainian News, Ukrainian News, Details, Bagnet, KP in Ukraine, Apostrophe, Comments, Telegraph, TV and YouTube channels 112ua, First Independent, our experts of the Institute of Mass Media and NGO Media Detector highlighted the following main examples of pro-Russian narratives that advanced during 2020-2021: Ukraine does not comply with the Minsk agreements and violates agreements; Ukraine needs a war to distract the population from the failures of power; Russian Crimea and water supply from Ukraine; Ukraine's interference in the affairs of Belarus; extremism/nationalism in Ukraine; discrediting the current government of Ukraine; Orthodox Church of Ukraine, non-recognition of the church, "schism"; Wagnerians in Belarus; Ukraine is a failed state; oppression of the Russian language in Ukraine; Russian Donbass; Nord Stream – 2; illegal seizure of power in Ukraine as a result of the overthrow of the legitimate leadership; coronavirus (Russia's successful fight against coronavirus, Sputnik-B vaccine); successful Russia, Putin is a defender, Russia does not need a war; Russia is not a party to the war in Ukraine [24].

Analysis of media consumption and misinformation in the information environment of Ukraine for March – November 2020, conducted by the NGO Media Detector, shows that only in May 2020 the Facebook community in the southern and eastern regions more than 470 times disseminated information on "Ukrainian Distortion of History". The surge in historical manipulation occurred on May 9, when pro-Russian forces spread the message "we can repeat" or "to Berlin". Other common anti-Ukrainian propaganda narratives are "Ukraine is a Nazi country", "The Maidan is a mistake", "The PCU is divided", "Ukraine is in a civil war" and "Ukraine's External Administration" [19, p. 15; 21, 24, 23, 25].

Most materials with pro-Russian and anti-Western rhetoric were found in the following media: Strana.ua, 112ua and ZIK, and the study did not show a significant decrease in the number of such materials after blocking media that are within the sphere of influence of V. Medvedchuk. Indeed, YouTube channels 112ua, ZIK, NEWSONE are blocked, but the site strana.ua, to which access was disabled by the decision of the National Security and Defense Council in August 2021, has moved to another URL – strana.news, and operates to this day. The number of subscribers to the YouTube channel Strana.ua has even increased: from 456 thousand in 2020 to 475 thousand in 2021 [12].

The main distributors of (pro) Russian narratives "escalation of the Ukrainian-Russian war is the work of Ukraine" are Strana.ua, Golos.ua, Vesti; "Ukraine is a failed state" – 112ua, ZIK, Newsone; "Russia is successfully fighting the coronavirus. Putin is ready to sell this vaccine to Ukraine" – 112ua, ZIK, NEWSONE, Strana.ua; "Extremism / nationalism / Nazism / radicals in Ukraine" – Strana.ua, 112ua; Ukraine is repressing. Oppression of Russian-speaking citizens and the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine – 112ua, ZIK, Newsone [21, p. 13-14].

Recently, Telegram, which serves as a social network, has become one of the main areas of gossip, hate speech and disinformation narratives and is becoming increasingly popular in Ukraine. A study by the NGO Media Detector shows that 49 of the 100 most popular telegram channels in Ukraine belong to the category of news and media. Among the ten most popular, six are often "draining", provocative and neglecting news standards [19, p.43]. In February 2021, experts from the SBU network exposed a large-scale reconnaissance network of the Telegram Channel, which was commissioned by the Federal Special Service of Russia to conduct reconnaissance and sabotage activities. Residents of Kharkiv and Odessa took part in the event and promoted the idea of the so-called "Russian Spring"; their "general manager" was one of the organizers of mass riots during the "Antimadan" in Odessa. They created and managed many political channels, including Legal, Resident, Cartel, Plitkarka, Black District, Political Agenda, Atypical Zaporozhye, Trendy Zaporozhye, Trey Perkharkov, Odessa. Frayer, Dniprovsky site, Mykolaiv site, Kherson site. Although the Kharkiv court ruled to terminate the first four, these channels continue to operate, broadcasting other content, including anti-vaccination information.

With the development and spread of social networks, the audience and influence of bloggers-leaders of public opinion is growing rapidly; the largest audience in Ukrainian social networks are politicians, journalists, public figures and activists. According to a study conducted by the Media Institute, the most influential bloggers who report on social and political topics on Facebook are: Denis Bigus (about 79 thousand), Tatiana Montyan (over 101 thousand), Yanina Sokolova (over 144 thousand), Roman Skrypin (over 136 thousand), Andriy Luhansky (over 87 thousand), Serhiy Sternenko (65 thousand), Denis Kazansky (over 102 thousand), Andriy Smoliy (over 105 thousand), Oleksiy Arestovych (over 186 thousand) thousand), Andriy Karpov (Andriy Poltava) (over 60 thousand), Olesya Medvedev (in the IMI study – 400 thousand, according to our data – over 24 thousand), and others. The most popular political bloggers on YouTube are Oleksandr Semchenko (over 553,000), Oleg Yelisevych (531,000), Rostislav Shaposhnikov (343,000) and others [11; 12].

From August to November 2020, the Ukrainian online publication Pravda analyzed 334 channels that distribute social and political videos, and found that the total number of views of video channels that directly or covertly conduct pro-Russian propaganda is 2.5 of the number of views of channels. supporting the position of Ukraine. Among the TOP-8 political YouTube bloggers in Ukraine, only two have a clear pro-Ukrainian position – VATA TV and Andriy Luhansky. Their video views decreased 5 times compared to the same period, For example, as Alexander Semchenko, a blogger, his statement is a mixture of Russian propaganda and criticism of the Ukrainian government (convincing evidence is his video "Alexander Semchenko on Russophobes in the new Rada", in 2019 "nationalists demanded to withdraw from the Minsk agreements and Donbass launches offensive", 2021). However, there are also positive changes: due to the growing popularity of some news channels, the pro-Ukrainian socio-political YouTube channel is gradually increasing – skrypin.ua (279 thousand), Toronto Television (479 thousand), BIHUS info (483 thousand), Roman Tsymbalyuk (382 thousand), and others [12].

To understand the influence of bloggers on public opinion, let us pay attention to the personality of Anatoly Shariy, who through media activities successfully attracts a large number of supporters. (His YouTube channel has 2.53 million subscribers, his Facebook profile 347 thousand, Instagram – 288 thousand, Twitter – 256 thousand, Telegram channel – 230 thousand; he also has his own online publication "sharij. net") and create own political force (Shariy Party) just a month and a half before the early parliamentary elections in 2019, gaining 2.2% of the vote and ahead of such well-known parties in the political arena as Svoboda, Hromadjanska Positsia, Samopomich. The leader of the party, as well as the editor-in-chief of sharij.net is his wife Olga Shariy (also a well-known blogger with an audience of

387,000 subscribers, who, according to FOCUS.ua, topped the ranking of the most influential women in Ukraine in 2020) [20].

In 2020, A. Shariy was the absolute leader in the YouTube political sector in Ukraine [12]. Her leading position was confirmed by the online voting of the Fokus.ua team for the "Top 50 Ukrainian bloggers" in May this year: she took second place in the overall ranking and first in the "politics" category [16].

A. Shariy has been living in the European Union since leaving Ukraine in 2012 due to criminal proceedings. His growth as a video blogger began with the creation of a YouTube channel in 2013, which also marked the beginning of Euromaidan. The blogger did not support the new political reality, arguing that the Revolution of Dignity did not bring the expected freedom, but provoked an armed conflict with Russia and the occupation of Ukrainian territory. Shariy is a frequent commentator of the Russian media, especially the advertising TV channels Russia 24, Russia 1, the TV channel of the Russian Ministry of Defense Zvezda. In his videos and interviews, the "virtual politician" slandered Ukraine's national policy and deliberately disseminated manipulative information about government initiatives and events in the east of the country. In particular, the blogger repeated the narrative of Russian propaganda that the Malaysian Boeing plane over Donetsk was shot down not by Russia, but by the Ukrainian Buk aircraft.

Specialists in the field of mass communication use the concepts of "protective cocoon" and "echo camera" to group users of social networks with similar views, so that they are in a comfortable zone of emotions and information [19]. When a person consciously or unconsciously chooses sources of information (blogs, media) that share or promote values or opinions close to him, the factors of selective perception increase. This is the so-called trigger Herd Instinct: a user who joins a community begins to trust the information he receives from the community. Therefore, when the reality provided by the media differs from real situation, and public opinion is distorted, manipulative interpretation based on wrong values and media awareness is dangerous [18; 19; 24].

An investigation conducted by the Ukrainian military portal mil.in.ua to expose Shariy's fraud in the Donbas conflict showed that he systematically distorted information on video, for example, by pretending that Russian military equipment was Ukrainian. In addition, in his statement, Shariy slandered certain ethnic groups in Ukraine, calling the inhabitants of Western Ukrainians "second-class", "hybrid" and "grandchildren of mercenary helpers" [3; 28]. In October 2020, the SBU released a video showing a map of Ukraine without Crimea and parts of Luhansk and Donetsk regions, bringing Shariy to justice for violating the territorial integrity of Ukraine. In February 2021, the Security Service of Ukraine declared him a suspect in treason and violation of civil equality. In August 2021, the SBU imposed new sanctions against A. Shari (and O. Shariy) for systematic anti-Ukrainian propaganda. However, this did not affect his media activities, as the blogger's media resources were not blocked and were provided free of charge, getting increasingly more views: for example, their total number on YouTube today exceeds 4 billion. Analysis of the geography of watching his YouTube video shows that the share of Ukrainian viewers is 25%, and Russian – 52% [12]. Based on an analysis of bloggers' subscription accounts on Facebook and YouTube, experts have concluded that many of them are bots, especially Russian ones [14].

In June-July 2020, Semanticforce Internews-Ukraine and the Ukrainian World of Joint Research conducted an interesting analysis of commentators' activities, including video comments from ten popular YouTube channels, which regularly broadcast anti-Western speeches and Russian propaganda: 112 Ukraine, Anatoliy Shariy, Andrey Portnov, Olga Shariy, Strana.ua, Ukraina.ru, Klymenko Time, NewsOne, Topinform, ZIK. It was found that the share of Russian commentators predominates on the channels of Anatoly and Olga Shariyev, Ukraina.ru and

Topinform: the 20 most popular commentators left a total of 7,650 comments during the month. Based on the analysis of their usernames, profile photos and the frequency of publishing the same comments, the authors of the study suggested that there were many bots. Therefore, it is concluded that one of the tools to promote "correct" news is not only the creation of "fake" news, but also the involvement of "fake" fans, i.e., the use of virtual "people" (robots or trolls) [9].

In today's world, the use of robots to increase the popularity of social networks is a very common tool. The robots are hired users who support the ideas or actions of the object (bloggers, political forces, media resources), criticize their opponents and use various information and psychological methods of influence (misinformation, manipulation, spreading rumors, suggestions, psychological pressure) [26]. The robot can also be a special program that automatically performs the tasks assigned to it. In modern society, a combined method is used: the use of robot programs and human robots simultaneously.

Trolls are also popular tools and media weapons – they are accounts that spread information, promote or disseminate suspicion, distrust of other users. Key features of trolls are as follows: a large number of subscribers (mostly bots), even if the account is relatively new; the account is usually anonymous or has a fictitious username.

The mechanism of manipulation is very simple: first of all, "the interest of the Russian media in Ukrainian events has increased", which has led to the continuous appearance of Ukrainian topics and evening news in the final TV program. This information is obtained from the Federal Media page on Facebook or other social networks, and then distributed through the local network, robots and regular users. One can use also the opposite scheme: first publish fake news in online publications or private blogs, then distribute them on social networks using robots, and then receive them through LOM, which has a large number of subscribers. Having attracted enough attention, the news reached the mainstream media, including TV channels [10].

Since 2014, the activity of "Kremlin trolls" and "Kremlin robots" has intensified, with the task of harshly criticizing Ukraine and the West on social media and praising the Kremlin leadership. Hiring commentators with provocative information became part of Russia's information war against Ukraine [21]. At least 7 troll farms are known in Russia. The most famous of these is the Internet Research Agency (IRA) in St. Petersburg, which employs at least 400 people. Bloggers are given "technical tasks" – key words and topics for discussion, such as Ukraine, the Russian opposition and relations with the West, so under each article in the mainstream media there are thousands of comments on the necessary content [4].

Preventing the spread of unwanted and harmful content is the task of social media management. Therefore, Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube focus on monitoring and blocking the activities of accounts, pages and groups that influence public opinion, especially on a regular basis to "clean up" the accounts of robots. In the period from 2014 to 2020, Facebook deleted thousands of anti-Ukrainian sites on the resource and develops software algorithms to automate such operations [13].

If destructive content still appears on social media pages (account activity agreed with the Russian Federation poses a special threat to Ukraine's information security), experts from relevant law enforcement agencies will take part in a campaign to boycott them, namely detecting and blocking Russian robot farms. In order to protect the network and information space of Ukraine, in January 2012 the Department for the Protection of National Interests in the Field of Information Security of the Security Agency of Ukraine was established. In January 2018, the Cyber Security Center was established on its basis, whose tasks include detecting and eliminating targeted cyber attacks and preventing the spread of information "invasion", which undermines the stability of the situation in the country. Since the beginning of 2021, SBU network experts have closed 12 robot

farms, liquidated 65,000 powerful social networks "robot army", blocked 500 resources that disseminate destructive information that undermines the constitutional order and territorial integrity of the country, etc. [9].

Another important way to combat the spread of misinformation is to end its source of danger at the state level. According to the Decree of the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko of May 15, 2017 № 133/2017 "On the application of personal special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions)" the operation of Russian social networks VKontakte, Odnoklassniki, services Yandex and other resources is prohibited in Ukrane; in 2020, President Zelensky extended the prohibition for another three years. However, although the popularity of these resources among Ukrainian users has dropped significantly (76.1% of them used VKontakte in May 2017, in December 2019 - 22%), they did not achieve the expected results due to misinformation and publicity.

In March 2021, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine established the Center for Strategic Communication and Information Security, which is an important step in countering Russian propaganda. The work of the center is focused on responding to external threats, uniting the efforts of national and public organizations, combating misinformation, responding quickly to fakes and promoting Ukrainian narratives.

The Center for Countering Disinformation was established under the National Security and Defense Commission in March 2021. It focuses on combating threats to Ukraine's national security and national interests in the information sphere, ensuring Ukraine's information security and effectively combating propaganda and destructive false information and campaigns, to prevent manipulation, public opinion.

However, state institutions cannot completely limit the flow of Russian propaganda (new propaganda will immediately appear in the locations of blocked resources), so media departments and public activists have played an important role. In this case, we can mention the public organization Internews-Ukraine, which opened its first office in Ukraine in September 2015 for human rights defenders, civil activists, representatives of public organizations and the media Digital Security Academy. In July 2019, the company launched an anti-troll project on Facebook "TrollessUA", which aims to detect and block suspicious personal data that uses hate speech to actively comment and disseminate false information [4]. The in-depth online training "Anti-robots: how to expose information manipulation", organized in June 2020, discussed methods of combating robots, fakes and information "invasion" (including of Kremlin origin) based on the experience of foreign and Ukrainian experts: for example, the network Facebook Ten of the most useful tools affected by malicious information on the Internet, which will help to analyze accounts on social networks and expose networks of bots, analyze photos and videos [32].

4 Conclusion

If misinformation cannot be distinguished from a large amount of news, it is impossible to fight misinformation, so there is an urgent need to introduce media literacy courses in educational institutions. This was emphasized by President Zelensky in his speech at the All-Ukrainian Forum "Ukraine 30. Culture. Media. Tourism" (March 2021). The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine supports this initiative, in particular, based on launched back in 2011 regional experiment to introduce media education. Media literacy is a component of the Civic Education courses for 10th grade students, and the Neighborhood Culture course for 1st and 4th grade students. Today, media education and media literacy are taught in general secondary education institutions in the form of separate courses ("Fundamentals of Media Literacy", "Steps to Media Literacy", "Media Culture", "Media Education") and integrated [23].

To date, 655 schools from all regions of Ukraine have joined the "Ukraine, Choose and Divide: Information Media Literacy" program organized by the International Research and Exchanges

Committee (IREX) with the support of the British and American embassies and the MES of Ukraine and Ukraine, College of News. The project aims to develop skills of critical perception of information and the integration of information literacy in the curricula of schools, universities, and colleges of postgraduate education. As part of this plan, the VeryVerified online media literacy course was launched in 2019, mainly for teachers, students, and undergraduates. Since 2012, the website of the Ukrainian Academy of Journalism has hosted the website of the Media Education and Media Literacy portal, the teaching model of which is most popular with media literacy teachers [29].

Therefore, summing up, we note that the growth of manipulation is evidence of systematic attempts to create a distorted picture of the world for Ukrainians, but beneficial for the aggressor country. Emotional posts or videos with provocative headlines are supported by "necessary" comments from robots and trolls and have a powerful control effect on the consciousness and desires of the user. The task of state institutions, public organizations, and citizens of Ukraine is to use all opportunities and resources of social media as a means of protection in the information confrontation. It is important to remember that in information warfare, anticipation tactics are more effective than disinformation, so blocking hostile content, increasing media literacy, responding quickly to "throwing" information and false information, as well as filling information gaps used for manipulations.

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