

# Fake News and Modern Reasoning

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**Abstract**—The following article describes the phenomenon of “fake news” as a powerful means of argumentative influence. It is concluded that nowadays the influence of fake news can be characterized as a global phenomenon. The fake problem did not arise in our time; it accompanies mankind throughout its existence, from the moment of the cognitive revolution people deceived each other, engaged in fraud and manipulation. The solution of this problem should not be sought on the path of striving for honesty or increasing responsibility for lies. In the last decades of the 20th and 21st centuries, mankind successfully solved a number of problems that previously seemed intractable. The problem of fake news will also be solved. The main thing is the awareness of the problem and its setting on the day.

**Keywords**—*fake news; ways of argumentation; rhetorical canon; filter bubble; paradox of relevance*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Modern social life is extraordinarily politicized. This circumstance has caused practically from non-existence (social, but not scientific) a number of terms that have been given some new content. First of all, we are talking about the terms "rhetoric" and "argumentation." At all social and political platforms, talk shows, meetings of political leaders of different levels, one can hear expressions like: aggressive rhetoric, deceitful rhetoric, militant rhetoric, weak argumentation, unworthy argumentation, superficial argumentation, etc. On the one hand, this indicates an increase in the degree of diversity of the political process, the involvement of an increasing number of participants in it. On the other hand, we observe the enrichment and expansion of the content of terms describing rhetorical and argumentation practice. It can be assumed that conceptualization of these concepts is taking place. With the above concepts is closely related to the topic of conflict. "Argumentation and conflict, according to E.N. Lisanyuk, are two strongly interconnected phenomena of social life: conflict is a social, cognitive and dynamic reason for its parties to start the argument" [1]. Argumentation and conflict most often imply a victory at any cost, including through the use of false arguments. The main expansion of modern rhetoric and theory of argumentation comes at the expense of the now fashionable concept — "fake news". Fake news began to play a significant role in the argumentation practices of the political sphere of society. Understanding the essence of fake requires a return to the standard definitions of rhetoric and argumentation.

## II. CLASSICAL RHETORICAL CANON

The main structure of traditional rhetoric is the classical rhetorical canon, consisting of an invention, disposition, elocution, memorial and action. Which of these elements of the canon can be a place to activate fake? It turns out that all. An Invention is a procedure for selecting information for a future communication. Invention puts the subject at the forefront and ensures the purity of the subject content. The main motive for the selection of the subject content is subjective interest. At the level of the invention, tops work, semantic schemes-models that help to distinguish various objects, phenomena and processes from reality, usually 12 types of tops are used. Modern topic is actively using the new format-content structure, a kind of top number 13. The requirement that the objective content be good quality is usually due to the fact that someone has seen or heard something, i.e. was a witness of the event, or received information from the direct participant, a witness, an eyewitness. At this stage, the possibility of abuse by saying "lying as an eyewitness". The witness puts on his vision in words. The following constructions are possible: he saw that exists, saw that does not exist, did not see what exists, did not see that does not exist; further, he told (wrote) that he saw that there is; he read what the one who saw that exists, and so on ad infinitum ... As a result, we very seldom saw something ourselves, and we refer to a long chain of people, the very first of which, it seems, saw something. Somewhere at the very beginning of this chain, false or fake news "appears". The realities of modern society exacerbate the problem of verification. According to E.N. Lisanyuk, "The limited resources and possibilities for factual verification of the information underlying the classical correspondent concept of truth are a feature that, although mature in the information society, is a characteristic mainly of the modern global post-information society" [2].

## III. FAKE DEFINITIONS

False or fake news can be defined as an information hoax or the deliberate dissemination of misinformation in social networks and traditional media in order to mislead the user. This puts the practical task of obtaining financial, political or other forms of benefit. Fake (more common term or fake news) is a falsification, imitation, and means false. Today fakes are called:

- Photos forged in Photoshop, and sometimes video clips mounted in a video editor, or taken at a completely different time and in a different, completely different, difficult to reach or non-existent place.
- Fake news, earlier — it was "newspaper ducks", now they are called "stuffing".
- Pages in social networks, created on behalf of other (famous) people.
- Fake accounts may also be called fake accounts, which are not made by the people on whose behalf they are conducted. Owners of a fraudulent site or account can post dozens of fake comments from non-existent "users" with enthusiastic "reviews" on it, in order to lure naive people to download a virus or send SMS to a short number worth 300 rubles.

The fake news is specially fabricated ("fake factory") and is made up of semi-truthful information to deliberately deceive the reader. The purpose of such news is both commercial and political. Fakes have some similarities with the satirical news, which are based on the paths of exaggeration and entertainment, but they do not set goals to deceive the reader, their task is to attract attention, entertainment, increase circulation, but not deception. Creating a fake has common features with the techniques of "yellow journalism" and methods of political propaganda.

A fake news story needs to be positioned or positioned. All elements of this structure can be involved here. Introduction provides attention to the topic. The presentation provides an opportunity to get acquainted with the circumstances of the case, filed with a particular position. The argument builds a system of arguments confirming the desired point of view. The refutation breaks the opposite arguments, and it is possible to use any methods, up to prohibited ones, for example, "argument to the town", etc. What is new in this area due to fake? This is, without a doubt, a change in the type of argumentation. As evidence, various references to already published news are used. These are posts and reposts of various news. The phenomenon is very popular and familiar. The number of repost fake news on social networks Facebook and others exceeds the number of ordinary news repost: fakes are more interesting to the reader, they better meet his expectations, and they are more exciting. Fake news is well served by whole fake news sites that compete for the reader and often pretend to be well-proven news sources. In some cases, fakes (fake news), fabricated on such sites, migrate to traditional news feeds, because they may have one author and one customer.

Correctly fabricated and well-located fake news needs to be given a presentation with the help of elocution methods. These methods usually include a variety of trails and figures, giving the news a more confident, more unambiguous view; such is the function of metaphors, metonymy, synecdoche, etc. For fake news, there are some special techniques. This invention catchy headlines that do not exactly reflect the essence of the case, but attract attention. Sometimes, the headline is the only thing that people read. Making fake is

well accompanied by question-answer practices. Some strange question is asked, but no one is interested in answering it, only the question itself is important, or rather, its presupposition. There are situations in which the person answering the questions always loses. As an example, we can cite the doctor's conversation with the poet Homeless from "The Master and Margarita", and this is not a unique case. A strange question is a great opportunity to voice and spread the most unpredictable information.

A well-designed and even memorized fake news (the memorization stage can be omitted) is ready for dubbing and going out to the public. The traditional way or action is still a good way to put the news to the masses. The personality of the speaker is still important here, but other factors still prevail: the status of the information channel, prime time or the time of the program's release, but the main thing is the fact that the news has got somewhere, for even true news may not get anywhere, it will not match the desired trend or format.

#### IV. CLASSICAL RHETORICAL CANON AND MAXIMUM EXPECTED PERCEPTION

The classical rhetorical canon in a situation of fake will have to be supplemented by another element — the maximum expected perception (MEP). Any argumentation practice aims to convince the listener in his own rightness, in order to induce him to take the necessary actions. This is the most difficult procedure in the argument, because a person's conviction includes some irrational aspects that are difficult to overcome. So, if a person has no conviction, he must be formed; if a person has any attachments, they must be turned into convictions; if a person already has a conviction, they must be transformed. Modern computer networks and the media are trying to solve this particular problem. For many years, the practice of spreading fake news via e-mail has been practiced; such letters usually contain various nonsense of sensational content, undermining confidence in any information. Most often, the main task of the distributor of such information is to provoke the addressee to follow the link, and then infect his computer with a virus.

#### V. BEST COMMON METHODS OF APPLYING FALSE NEWS

The most common method of applying false news is the so-called. "Filter bubble". The filter bubble is a new concept developed by Internet activist Eli Pariser and described in his 2011 book of the same name: the negative side of personalized computer search. "Filter Bubble" is a phenomenon in which websites themselves determine what information a user would like to see, based on information about his location, past clicks and mouse movements, preferences, and search history [3]. As a result, websites only show information that is consistent with the past views of a given user. All other information, as a rule, is not displayed to the user. Thus, two users with opposite points of view, using the system of personalized search, will receive different information and, accordingly, draw different conclusions. Examples of such practices are Google and other search engines with personalized search results, as well

as Facebook with a personalized news feed, which is filled with more and more personal results with each user action. Imagine that a person has two friends on social networks: one makes posts with the support of the president, and the other with his criticism, and the first user shares the first posts, and the second one ignores. Over time, posts will appear gradually in his feed with an ever more pronounced high assessment of the president. Accordingly, he will receive much less information, contrary to his view, and will be intellectually isolated in his own information bubble. According to the opposite scheme, the situation with the second friend will develop, but in the end his own information bubble is waiting for him. The bubble effect can have negative consequences for the formation of civil opinion. It turns out that it is difficult for people to see or acquire something that somehow was not chosen for them by a search engine. By the way, the source of information for search engines can be the brand and type of personal computer, the operating system, the user's location, the age and language of the user, the history of search queries, browsing history of sites, other open tabs in the browser. Every user is faced with this phenomenon.

The main disadvantage of filtering search queries is that it closes a person from new ideas, items and important information and creates the impression that his own interests are everything that exists in the world. This brings potential harm, both for the individual and for society as a whole. The harmful effects of the filter bubble affect society as a whole, as it can undermine the formation of public opinion and make people more vulnerable to various types of propaganda and manipulation.

“Filter Bubble” is not the only computer method for adjusting public opinion. An analogous phenomenon is the so-called “The paradox of relevance” [4]. This concept corresponds to the following situation. People and organizations are looking for some information that initially seems to them correct or important, but as a result it turns out to be practically useless or ineffective, while the same people ignore information that initially seems or perceived as incorrect and irrelevant, but as a result turns out to be correct and useful. The problem arises because the real significance of a particular fact in these cases becomes apparent only after this fact has become known. Prior to this, the idea of studying it was rejected because a fact was incorrectly perceived or interpreted. As a result, a person who is looking for information falls into a context trap, he cannot find out what he really needs, and falls into some kind of information blind spot. This phenomenon is called the “paradox of relevance”, it often occurs throughout human history and is an important issue, both for science and for education.

The following phenomenon, similar to both the “filter bubble” and the “relevance paradox”, is called “the propensity to confirm the point of view” [5]. This is the name of a person’s tendency to seek and perceive only such information (to give preference to such information), which is consistent with his point of view, belief or hypothesis.

This phenomenon is a kind of cognitive distortion of reality and a systematic error of inductive inferences. It is

often observed when people collect or memorize information in a selective way or when they interpret the information received in a biased way. The effect is stronger in relation to emotionally significant issues and deeply rooted beliefs. People tend to interpret diverse circumstances or ambiguous evidence in a way that supports their point of view. Such a phenomenon is well described by the statement “I fully agree with my wife.” The cognitive distortion of reality is accompanied by a biased search for information, a corresponding interpretation, a specific memorization. As a result, many “strange” argumentative results are explained. These include:

- The phenomenon of polarization of views — the existing differences are becoming stronger, despite the fact that the parties present the same evidence;
- The phenomenon of persistence of conviction — the point of view is maintained even when the supporting evidence is refuted;
- The phenomenon of primacy — the tendency to give preference to the information obtained first;
- The phenomenon of false correlation — the tendency to see the connection of situations or processes even where it does not exist and cannot be.

People tend to confirm their beliefs:

- People tend to test their hypotheses in a biased way, focus only on one possibility and ignore alternative ones;
- People tend to take what they want for reality, because a person has a limited ability of a person to process information;
- People are more likely to weigh the losses from the recognition of their wrongfulness, instead of assessing the situation in a neutral scientific style.

In some situations, these trends can significantly distort the findings of people. The propensity for affirmation affects a person’s excessive self-confidence in his own judgments and can maintain and strengthen beliefs when receiving evidence to the contrary. These inclinations or cognitive distortions are expressed in poor decisions made in political, organizational or other contexts at different levels of decision making.

## VI. FAKE NEWS APPLICATION EXAMPLES

The origins of modern interest in the term “fake news” are related to the holding of the 2016 US presidential election. Hillary Clinton became the main target of fake news during the presidential election campaign of 2016. According to a number of analysts, the distribution of false news was one of the reasons for her defeat in the elections. There is also an alternative point of view, according to which false news was mainly used against Donald Trump. US President Donald Trump in January 2017 attributed to the category of fake news reports of the CNN channel, describing his activities in the new status. In the same 2017,

US President Donald Trump applied the term “enemies of the people” to journalists who report fake news. The investigation into the history of the 2016 American elections has not yet been completed. Research into the problem of fake news has also not yet been completed; moreover, it is at the very beginning, there is a growing interest in this topic and the number of publications [6] [7].

## VII. CONCLUSION

As a result, we can conclude that in our time the influence of fake news can be characterized as a global phenomenon. However, the fake problem did not arise in our time; it accompanies mankind throughout its existence, from the moment of the cognitive revolution people deceived each other, engaged in fraud and manipulation. How to cope with this problem? It is unlikely that its solution should not be sought on the path of striving for honesty or increasing responsibility for lies. In the last decades of the 20th and 21st centuries, mankind successfully solved a number of problems (hunger, life expectancy) that previously seemed intractable. These problems were solved with the help of innovative technologies, and not according to the recipes of Malthus, for example. The problem of fake news will also be solved. The main thing is the awareness of the problem and its setting on the day.

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