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SANAT DERGİSİ / ART JOURNAL



Yıl / Year: 1, Cilt / Volume: 1, Sayı / Issue: 1

Ocak / January 2023

Ss. / Pp. 34-43

Yayına Geliş Tarihi / Article Arrival Date

07.10.2022

Yayımlanma Tarihi / The Publication Date

31.01.2023

FAKE NEWS AND GLOBAL INFORMATION: ANGLES AND PERSPECTIVES IN THE SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH

Lola BAÑON CASTELLÓN¹

Abstract

Detecting fake news has become one of the most pressing challenges for journalism in the digital age. They are characterised by their plausible appearance and above all by their deliberate manipulative intent.

The phenomenon particularly affects international news, which is mostly managed by large corporations more concerned with profit than with journalistic values. In this scenario, a reversal is taking place that affects the quality of news: it is not the audiences who are always looking for information, but rather it is the information that seeks out the audiences at the click of a button.

This evidence imposes on journalists the need to seek mechanisms for verification and diversification of information control.

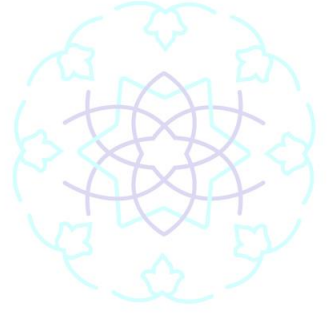
In a world of growing multipolarity and in the wake of a pandemic that has demonstrated the global nature of the problems facing humanity, the reconstruction of a new order in which people are at the centre of interest is priority. New challenges such as climate change or major migrations can only be tackled from a collective perspective that values the veracity of international journalism and the responsible

¹ Prof., Valencia University (Spain), lolabanon@hotmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-4841-7978.



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consumption of news in order to preserve the collective project of an egalitarian humanity aimed at the general welfare and not at private profit.

Key Words: Fake News, Truth, Global Information Order, News.

SAHTE HABER VE KÜRESEL ENFORMASYON: HAKİKATİ ARAMAK İÇİN BAKIŞ AÇILARI VE PERSPEKTİFLER

Özet

Sahte haberleri tespit etmek, dijital çağda gazetecilik için en acil sorunlardan biri haline gelmiştir. Bu tarz haberler, makul görünüşleriyle ve her şeyden önce kasıtlı manipülatif niyetleriyle karakterize edilirler.

Bu fenomen özellikle, gazetecilik değerlerinden daha çok kârla ilgilenen büyük şirketler tarafından yönetilen uluslararası haberleri etkilemektedir. Bu senaryoda, haberlerin kalitesini etkileyen bir tersine dönüş yaşanmaktadır: her zaman bilgi arayan izleyiciler değil, daha çok bir düğmeye tıklayarak izleyicileri arayan bilgi.

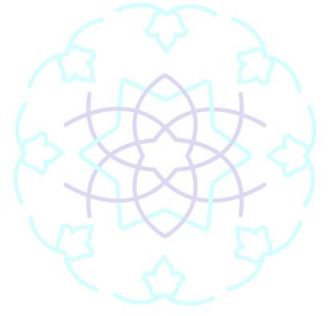
Bu kanıt, gazetecilere bilgi kontrolünün doğrulanması ve çeşitlendirilmesi için mekanizmalar arama ihtiyacını dayatmaktadır. Büyüyen çok kutuplu bir dünyada ve insanlığın karşı karşıya olduğu sorunların küresel doğasını gösteren bir pandeminin ardından, insanların ilgi odağında olduğu yeni bir düzenin yeniden inşası önceliklidir. İklim değişikliği veya büyük göçler gibi yeni zorluklar, yalnızca uluslararası gazeteciliğin doğruluğuyla ve özel sektörle değil genel refahı hedefleyen eşitlikçi bir kolektif insanlık projesini korumak için haberlerin sorumlu tüketimine değer veren kolektif bir bakış açısıyla ele alınabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sahte Haber, Hakikat, Küresel Enformasyon Düzeni, Haber.



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Introduction

Truth-telling has always been a universal challenge for journalism and a task of enormous complexity for political, social, economic and strategic reasons. In today's world, the term post-truth has become popular in recent years to describe contexts in which objective facts are less decisive in shaping public opinion than emotional resources and personal beliefs (Oxford, 2016). Some researchers highlight the hybrid nature of this concept, pointing out that even it is not simply an abstraction of what we consider to be the opposite of truth (Keane, 2018).

This reflection has had a particular impact in the field of international information since 2016, the year in which the Brexit referendum was held, which determined the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, and Donald Trump was elected president of the United States. As soon as he took office, the occupant of the White House was surrounded by a large team of social media specialists who dedicated themselves to disseminating data that they presented as alternative realities without providing evidence. *“In this sense, the deployment of fake news refers to ideologically motivated denigration of unsympathetic mainstream news media coverage and to the contestation of the notion of “truth” itself”* (Douai,2019)

A fake new is a false news item that is disseminated with a deliberate intention to deceive and that has two fundamental characteristics: It has the appearance of real news precisely to deceive us and pursues an intentionality (Meneses,2018).

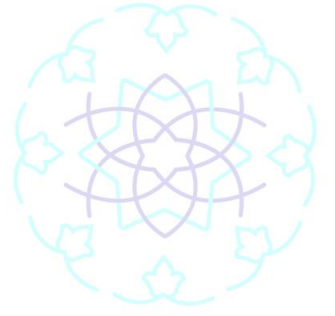
According to Rochlin (2017) a fake news can be defined as a deliberately false headline and story published on a website that wants to look like a real news site. Other authors make substantial differences:” There is the *fake news genre*, describing the deliberate creation of pseudojournalistic disinformation, and the *fake news label*, namely, the instrumentalization of the term to delegitimize news media”(Egelhofer, and Lecheler,2018)

A fake new exists insofar as it has an objective. This objective can be directly economic or it can have an ideological objective, since, by influencing society's thinking, it can be made to drift towards an ideological line.



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The concept of fake news is not recent. Fake news has always existed for as long as we have had the use of the word. What has changed is that lies used to be confined to a private circle, but now, with social networks, they spread worldwide, massively, and at unprecedented speed.

Fake news already appeared as a trend in 2004 in the context of comedy television programmes. The issue was confined to this type of media. In 2018, however, we have started to talk about a disinformation epidemic. For information professionals, this is not a new war, but for more than 30 years they have been placing this problem at the heart of some of their professional axes (Becker, 2016). The so-called fake news have appeared at a time of crisis in liberal democracies, implying an increase in populism, extreme positions and online disinformation (McNair, 2018). In a modern democracy, a strong citizenship is inconceivable if it does not work on its capacity to recognise distortion, falsehood and propaganda in information.

This is a phenomenon that has grown exponentially as the Internet and social networks are, for many, the main way of access to information. In addition, there are new factors that mark changes in the process of news dissemination: immediacy, globality and simplicity (Fort, 2019).

International Information: The Border Between Propaganda And Fake News

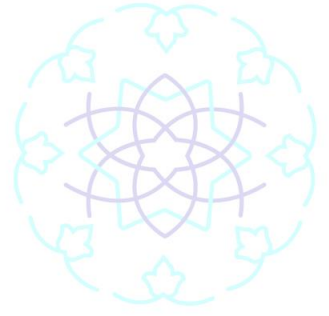
Propaganda and fake news are concepts that refer to similar territories where manipulation of the truth is the main perspective. But there are clear differences between the two: fake news seeks to alter the objective account of the facts to create an alternative one while propaganda is information that is generated to try to convince people in a given environment of an idea or a fact.

Propaganda has historically worked from one nation to its own people, its national border. The classic example is that of Nazi Germany, where the Nazi government sought to make all Germans feel Nazi; propaganda seeks to convince and unify society around an ideology.



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In the case of fake news, on the other hand, the alteration of the story seeks to turn the truth into an ideological issue, which ceases to be objective and becomes what the creator of the fake news wants you to believe. Early studies confirmed that fake news spread faster and to a greater extent than real news (Vosougui et al., 2018).

Specifically, when we talk about international news, we have to refer to the fact that they are normally distributed massively by companies whose main objective is economic profit and not strictly or even primarily, on many occasions, the preservation of journalistic values.

Business on the internet is done through the counting of clicks and visits. The digital environment is the great distributor of information on a quantitative level. But this does not mean that there is a guarantee of quality in this volume of news; at least not in a mechanical way. In fact, it is often difficult to know what is true and what is false.

If you generate traffic with information, you generate money through advertising and this leads us to the fact that fake news spreads faster and more massively than verified information and therefore, unfortunately, constitutes a source of economic profit.

Good journalism, on the other hand, requires an investment of time and money; the truth is always much more expensive in the short term.

Instantaneity And Distance; Problems of International Journalism

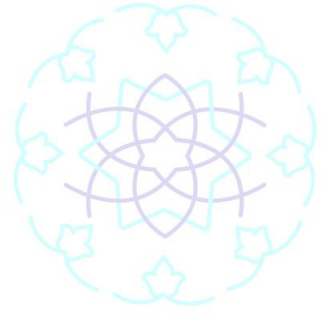
In international journalism, scoops were traditionally disseminated by the traditional media until a few years ago. They combined information and opinion, with a clear separation between the two, even using graphic and format resources. This role is now played by social media. Millions of people do not pay for information because they feel they are up to date by opening their watsapp or facebook. These audiences in turn become redupliers, thus achieving the sensation of being participants and builders of the information process; a process in which professional verification is often absent.

Big media corporations today live under the dictatorship of the click, under pressure to offer content that goes viral and generates money. This has led to the incorporation into the



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thematic agenda of topics that have no transcendence but which contribute to this financial objective. This whole context contributes extraordinarily to the growth of fake news.

On the other hand, there is another reason that stimulates the creation of news circulation traffic: the digital world has built a world of information inflammation in which there is a constant demand for content.

In the past, traditional newspapers had a daily edition and on television there were two editions of news programmes, one in the morning and one in the evening. Now, digital media are forced to update content on the fly and TV stations need to maintain broadcasts all day long.

This speed prevents journalists from dedicating themselves to generating quality content and in such environment, the verification process declines. This is a scenario for to the growth of fake news. And this is happening in a context of great precariousness: the possibility of free access to many media has created a culture of gratuity in the consumer, which has left the media with many difficulties for their economic survival.

Media Distrust And The Protection of Audiences

In the field of international news, distance is an added difficulty when it comes to checking whether information is real or not. In fact, the proliferation of fake news is so great, especially when it comes to coverage of armed conflicts or controversial news, that even in the face of careful reporting, the suspicion that it is fake news often spreads.

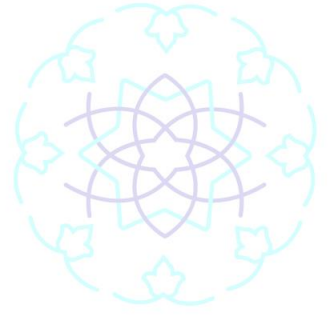
Audiences have neither the time nor the conditions to engage in the verification process. Thus, most people look for information that reaffirms their thoughts and beliefs; finding the real information is not a priority. This is a trend that is extremely detrimental to the development of critical thinking in our societies.

On the other hand, even though we are aware of the danger of disinformation due to the spread of fake news, a false sense of security is created in audiences: it is thought that we will be able to detect falsehoods, and this is certainly not the case.



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Conclusion: The Industry of Lies in International Crises

In our digital society, it is not audiences that seek out information, but information that seeks out audiences to drive up interactions and click counts. We can notice this on our mobiles and computers when we see the notifications we constantly receive. Sometimes we share, retweet and disseminate without even reading or observing in depth.

In recent years we have experienced very serious international events: in our Mediterranean environment, especially the Syrian and Libyan wars, the worsening of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and now, in another geographical area, but of great influence, the conflict in Ukraine.

The creators of fake news are constantly working to create business around these realities and are aware that consumers of information will find it difficult to check whether they are lying.

Unfortunately, there is a huge imbalance in this respect: any media outlet has to invest a lot of money to produce quality information while a fake news creator has to make hardly any outlay at all.

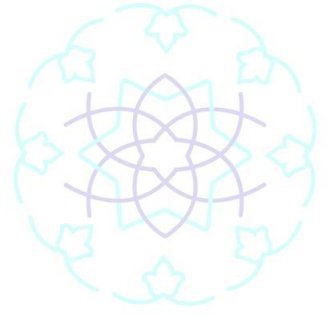
This is the way a lie industry has been generated, a perfect business in which the creators of fake news do not have to spend money to spread lies and consumers become mercenaries by doing the work of disseminating this false information without receiving any salary or compensation, only the stupid feeling of having a leading role in the process for that small circle to which they have forwarded the falsehood.

In these cases, in order to reverse false content, it is necessary to select, create quality content and try to counteract false information (López-Borrull and Ollé, 2020). It is also important to diversify the control of information, artificial intelligence and digital literacy (Alvaro, 2017). In this process, an important key would be to raise awareness and form more critical readers and audiences and more consumers of diverse sources (Finley; McGowan; Kluever, 2017).



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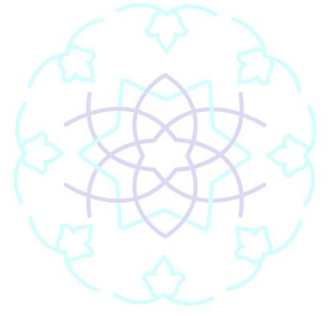
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Fake news is here to stay and a series of professional strategies will have to be deployed, especially those related to training users in the use of information and, by extension, in the validation of their sources (López-Borrull, Vives and Badell,2018)

The fake news phenomenon has greatly discredited even the traditional media that used to be respected by their audiences. It is when there is no trust that the behaviour of withdrawing into our ideological spectrum intensifies, of only attending to those ideas and options that fit our thinking, without entering into debates, believing only the news that is within our ideological family and that ratifies our belief. This is a radical diminution of plurality of thought and an effective training to contribute to the development of totalitarianism.

In a multipolar world subject to growing imbalances and with global problems such as pandemics, climate change and large human exoduses, truthful information is necessary to rebuild a new order in which humanity is a value. Today, the great game of energy management, the flow of international trade, the management of human mobility and the medical research that preserves our lives is played outside our borders. Almost every important issue is decided at the international level. Honest journalism, that which pursues the truth, must be there and needs an active and responsible information-consuming citizenry to combat the pandemic of fake news, a virus that destroys trust in institutions and turns readers and audiences into helpless and unwitting pawns of a big business that favours very few and destroys the collective project of a global society that is aware of and responsible for collective world welfare.



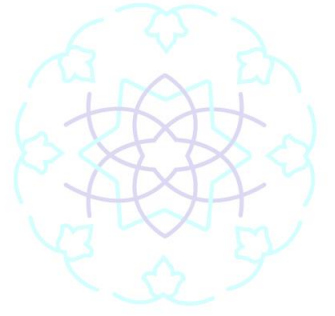
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