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“FAKE” NEWS FUNCTIONS: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT

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У статті стверджується, що різні типи текстів (фейлетон, репортаж, глоса і памфлет) вже стали об’єктом вивчення сучасних наукових розвідок; доводиться, що жанр «фейкових» новин належить до публіцистичних текстів соціально-критичного спрямування, що під час створення «фейкових» новин автор вирішує низку тактичних завдань; згадується, що однією із специфічних рис «фейкової» новини постає інконгруентність як когнітивний механізм утворення комічного смислу; надається посилання на останнє ґрунтовне дослідження «фейкових» новин, виконане у руслі лінгвокогнітивного та комунікативно-прагматичного параметрів, й пояснюється, що намір адресанта «фейкової» новини полягає у створенні контакту з реципієнтом задля інфотейнменту; з’ясовується етимологія слова «фейк», яке корінням сягає у розвиток германських мов; наводяться його синоніми, екстралінгвальні чинники його виникнення та чотири позиції, з якими наразі значення й уживання лексичної одиниці «фейк» корелює; згадується, що фраза «фейкова новина» набула титулу фрази 2017 року за результатами друкарського будинку Коллінз; доводиться, що «фейкова» новина – це обман, повністю чи частково вигадана інформація про події, видатних особистостей; презентуються сім типів «фейкових» новин; історичні передумови розвитку функцій «фейкових» новин подаються як історична ретроспектива аналізу прикладів «фейкових» новин на матеріалі

публіцистичних нотаток; доводиться, що всі «фейкові» новини базуються на розповсюджені брехні; у центрі уваги «фейкових» новин відомі люди, видатні події; визначено домінуючі функції «фейкових» новин (розважальна, дискредитація опонента, збраряддя інформаційної війни).

Ключові слова: «фейк», «фейкова» новина, публіцистичний текст, класифікація «фейкових» новин, функції «фейкових» новин.

В статъе утверждается, что различные типы текстов (фельетон, репортаж, глосса и памфлет) уже стали объектом изучения современных научных исследований; доказывается, что жанр «фейковых» новостей относится к публицистическим текстам социально-критического направления, что во время создания «фейковых» новостей автор решает ряд тактических задач; упоминается, что одной из специфических особенностей «фейковой» новости является инконгруентность как когнитивный механизм создания комического смысла; делается ссылка на последнее комплексное исследование «фейковых» новостей, выполненное в русле линвокогнитивного и коммуникативно-прагматического параметров, и объясняется, что намерение адресанта «фейковой» новости сориентировано на установление контакта с реципиентом з целью инфотейнмента; определяется этимология слова «фейк», развитие которого связано с развитием германских языков; приводится синонимический ряд слова «фейк», экстралингвистические факторы его возникновения и четыре позиции, с которыми сегодня связано значение и употребление лексической единицы «фейк»; упоминается, что фраза «фейковая новость» приобрела титул фразы 2017 года по результатам издательского дома Коллинз; доказывается, что «фейковая» новость – это обман, полностью или частично выдуманная информация о событиях, известных личностях; описуется семь типов «фейковых» новостей; исторические предпосылки развития функций «фейковых» новостей представлены как историческая ретроспектива анализа примеров «фейковых» новостей на материале публицистических заметок;

доказывается, что все «фейковые» новости базируются на распространении лжи; в центре внимания «фейковых» новостей известные люди и события; определяются доминантные функции «фейковых» новостей (развлекательная, дискредитация оппонента, орудие информационной войны).

Ключевые слова: «фейк», «фейковая» новость, публицистический текст, классификация «фейковых» новостей, функции «фейковых» новостей.

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The article states different types of texts (feuilleton, report, glossa and pamphlet) have already been investigated; proves the genre of “fake” news belongs to publicistic texts of socio-critical orientation, while creating “fake” news the author solves a series of tactical tasks; mentions one of specific features of “fake” news is incongruity as a cognitive mechanism of the comic sense creation; makes a reference to the latest complex studying of “fake” news (linguistic, cognitive, communicative and pragmatic parameters), the intention of the addresser of the “fake” news is oriented into establishing a contact with the recipient to entertain him; defines the etymology of the word “fake”, the development of which is deeply tied with Germanic languages; presents synonyms for the word “fake”, extralinguistic factors of its evolution and four items which correlate with its meaning and usage; mentions the term “fake” news is regarded to be “the word of the year” by Publishing house Collins; states “fake” news is swindling, fully or partly imaginary information about social events, real personalities; describes seven types of “fake” news; historical background of the development of “fake” news functions are presented as historical retrospective of the analysis of “fake” news (the case study of publicistic notes); proves all “fake” news are based on lie spreading; in the center of “fake” news are celebrities and key events; outlines dominant functions of “fake” news (entertaining, discredit of the opponent, the tool of information war).

Key words: “fake”, “fake” news, publicistic text, classification of “fake” news, functions of “fake” news.

Revitalization of linguistic researches of publicistic texts of social and critical orientation is conditioned by a leading role of social and political journalism as the reflection of modern society processes.

Different types of such texts (feuilleton, report, glossa and pamphlet) have already been investigated [1]. The actuality of their investigation is resulted by important socio-critical functions of publicistic itself and integral approach of linguistic, cognitive, pragmatic and stylistic aspects [1]. According to the results and conclusions of this investigation we consider “fake” news to be a genre that complements the list of social and critical orientated types of texts.

The texts of “fake” news always have a relatively limited volume, the brevity of reasoning, a limited degree of abstractness of utterances. But at the same time a significant amount of information is given. One can view the emphasized objectivity and controversy in the text of any “fake” news.

While creating the “fake” news the author solves a series of tactical tasks:

- strengthening or weakening the image of a well-known person;
- shifting or distraction of a reader’s attention;
- intentional concentration of the attention onto the object of the “fake” news;
- deliberate reminder of a certain thought or emotion etc.

All these author’s steps correspond different purposes: to misinform the public; to promote somebody’s viewing, policy or position; to cause aggression; to discredit the opponent; to persuade the readers by means of faked factors; to spread panic; to change a well-established opinion; to bully the addressee; to activate attention, etc [2, c. 185].

One more specific feature of the “fake” news which allows studying it as a socio-critical type of text is its incongruity as a cognitive mechanism of the comic [3, c. 61]. By incongruity we mean abnormality caused by sudden appearance of a

new sense plane (retorted comic sense) that is sharply contrasted to the sense of true news.

The last well-grounded scientific research, done by Yu. Omelchuk, dealt with the complex analysis of “fake” news as a genre of modern English media discourse, taking into account linguistic, cognitive, communicative and pragmatic parameters [4].

It has been proved that the “fake” news as a genre of media discourse is realized with the help of means of mass communication and it provides conscious and clear position of the addresser. It is accompanied by the set of integrative strategies to attract the recipient’s attention among which there are not only verbal but visual and audiovisual ones. Such a fact lets define the “fake” news as a new media reality where “yellow” news occupies a central place. It includes untruly, apocryphal or even retorted facts of a person as well as the whole society. The intention of the addresser of the “fake” news is oriented into establishing a contact with the recipient to impress, astonish and entertain him, that is “infotainment” [4].

The aim of our article is to point out the etymology of the word *fake*, some extralinguistic factors of “fake” news evolution and to show how its functions develop.

According to Merriam-Webster Thesaurus the word *fake* may be used as an adjective (not genuine; imitation or counterfeit), for example *She got on the plane with a fake passport*; a noun (a thing that is not genuine; a forgery or sham) - *fakes of Old Masters*; a verb (forge or counterfeit something) - *She faked her spouse's signature* [5]. The synonyms for the lexeme *fake* are *forgery, counterfeit, copy, sham, fraud, hoax, imitation, mock-up, dummy, replicate, reproduction, lookalike, likeness, copy, reproduce*. Also we become the witnesses of a great deal of neologisms such as “fake” programme, “fake” film, “fake” talkings, “fake” promises, “fake” information etc in mass media [6, c. 40].

The etymology of the word *fake* is unknown, but perhaps it is ultimately related to German *fegen* “sweep, thrash” (late 18th century). As a synonym for “fake” news the term *hogwash* (“newspaper duck”, canard) or Latin word

combination *non testatur* (or its abbreviation NT – “not verified”) are widely used. According to one of the versions the term *hogwash* was introduced by Martin Luther, a famous figure in the Protestant Reformation, at the beginning of the XVIth century. He once instead of writing the word *legende* (legend) wrote *lugemde* which was perceived by Germans as *a lying duck*.

Another version is also connected with Germany: at the end of the XVIIth century the editors of German newspapers began to mark unchecked news by letters NT. That abbreviation sounded as “Ente” – “a duck” in German. As a result unverified news got the name of a waterfowl bird [7].

Nowadays the meaning and the usage of the lexical unit *fake* is deeply connected with:

- 1). Photos forged with the help of Photoshop; sometimes we may deal with videos which are mounted by Video Editor or shot in a quiet different time or place;
- 2). Pages in social nets created on behalf the names of other different (famous as a rule) men;
- 3). Counterfeit accounts in Twitter;
- 4). “Fake news” which not everybody can distinguish from true real news.

Publishing house Collins has acknowledged the term “fake news”, which was seen most of all in mass media headlines and Twitter of Donald Trump, “the word of the year”. The usage of this word was increased in 2017 to 365 %.

Publishing house Collins defines “fake” news as forgery, often sensational information spread and disguised as news [8]. “Fake” news is swindling, fraud, roguery, knavery, fully or partly imaginary information about social events, real personalities or things and phenomena. Such information is presented in mass media under the influence of true journalistic materials.

The intention and purpose behind “fake” news is important. In some cases, what appears to be “fake” news may in fact be news satire, which uses exaggeration and introduces non-factual elements that are intended to amuse or make a point, rather than to deceive. Propaganda can also be “fake” news. Some

researchers have highlighted that "fake" news may be distinguished not just by the falsity of its content, but also the character of its online circulation and reception.

Claire Wardle of First Draft News identifies seven types of fake news:

1. satire or parody ("no intention to cause harm but has potential to fool");
2. false connection ("when headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content");
3. misleading content ("misleading use of information to frame an issue or an individual");
4. false context ("when genuine content is shared with false contextual information");
5. imposter content ("when genuine sources are impersonated" with false, made-up sources);
6. manipulated content ("when genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive", as with a "doctored" photo);
7. fabricated content ("new content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm") [9].

The historical background of "fake" news functions developing may be represented by means of historical retrospection analysis of "fake" news examples. The critical and analytical survey of some publicistic notes proves that they all are based on spreading lie and as a result people's fates were put at stake. They are oriented to discredit the opponent. According to the classification given above the following samples of the "fake" news belong to misleading content. For instance, in Ancient times (the 1st century BC) the first Emperor of the Roman Empire, Octavian, led a forgery campaign against his rival Mark Antony, portraying him as a drunkard, a womanizer, and a mere puppet of the Egyptian queen Cleopatra. He published a document purporting to be Mark Antony's will, which claimed that Mark Antony, upon his death, wished to be entombed in the mausoleum of the Ptolemaic pharaohs. Although the document may have been forged, it invoked outrage from the Roman populace. Mark Antony ultimately killed himself after his

defeat in the Battle of Actium upon hearing false rumors propagated by Cleopatra herself claiming that she had committed suicide [7].

The Medieval Ages witnessed a fake news story in Trent claimed that the Jewish community had murdered a two-and-a-half-year-old Christian infant. The story resulted in all the Jews in the city being arrested and tortured. Stories of this kind were known as “blood libel”: they claimed that Jews purposely killed Christians, especially Christian children, and used their blood for religious or ritual purposes.

Another illustration represents the entertaining functioning of fake news. The story is connected with a series of six fictionalized articles published in *The New York Sun*, 1835. They got the title “Great Moon Hoax”. The articles informed the readers about a real-life astronomer and a made-up colleague who, according to the hoax, had observed bizarre life on the moon. The discoveries were falsely attributed to Sir John Herschel, one of the best-known astronomers of that time. Such stories were intended to entertain readers, and not to mislead them.

It is necessary to add that the well-known astronaut of the XXth century, Neil Armstrong, has also become the object of “fake” news “Conspiracy Theorist Convinces Neil Armstrong Moon Landing Was Faked” [8]. The analysis of this “fake” news has been presented on the basis of the contexts: morphological, lexical and semantic, syntactic and graphic [10]. It has been proved that the author of the “fake” news is trying to persuade the reader to believe in faked moon landings, thus, to entertain the recipient by the fabricated content.

The brightest illustration of the early stages of society's dependency on information from print to radio and other mediums is “The War of the Worlds”, the American radio drama (1938). The episode was presented as a series of simulated news bulletins. Although preceded by a clear introduction that the show was a drama, it became famous for allegedly causing mass panic, although the reality of the panic is disputed as the program had relatively few listeners. An investigation was run by The Federal Communications Commission to examine the mass hysteria produced by this radio programming; no law was found broken. Fake

news can even be found within this example, the true extent of the "hysteria" from the radio broadcast has also been falsely recorded.

This historical note proves the idea of some Ukrainian researchers of "fake" news that it is "the tool of informational war" [2, с. 185]. It is a manipulated content according to C. Wardle's classification.

The focus of our further investigations is to show the category of the comic realization in the texts of up-to date "fake" news, to find textual and video correspondences to the six types of "fake" news given above, to study the texts of "fake" news within linguistic and synergetic aspects.

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