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The spread of Russian disinformation within the Ukrainian information field

Rozprzestrzenianie rosyjskiej dezinformacji w ukraińskim polu informacyjnym

Abstract: The objective of this study is to identify and analyse the methods of disinformation utilized by Russia to disseminate information in the Ukrainian information field. The main tasks include defining the concept of disinformation and explaining its societal dangers, characterising Information-Psychological Operations (IPSO) as a component of Russia's disinformation campaign against Ukraine and investigating the most prevalent elements utilised by Russia in the dissemination of disinformation. This study is aimed at the synthesis and combination of methods of monitoring, content analysis, and comparative analysis.

The article selects publications that exhibit disinformation targeted at Ukrainian society. Disinformation propagated by Russia is subsequently refuted by either foreign or Ukrainian publications, including the “NotaEnota” organisation. The study reveals that Russian disinformation aims to propagate specific narratives and manipulate mass consciousness. Disinformation involves intentionally creating misleading and manipulative content, often in the form of artificially created fakes.

The information field of Ukraine has become the primary battleground for Russia's hybrid warfare tactics, which include disinformation, propaganda, and fakes. To effectively counter these tactics, society needs to develop critical thinking skills and media literacy to discern and evaluate information critically. Future research aims to delve deeper into the methods employed in creating disinformation, their objectives, and potential strategies to prevent or counteract their influence.

Keywords: disinformation, fake news, media literacy, information war, propaganda, manipulation

Streszczenie: Celem pracy jest identyfikacja i analiza metod dezinformacji wykorzystywanych przez Rosję do rozpowszechniania informacji w ukraińskim

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polu informacyjnym. Do głównych zadań należy zdefiniowanie pojęcia dezinformacji i wyjaśnienie jej społecznych zagrożeń, scharakteryzowanie Operacji Informacyjno-Psychologicznych (IPSO) jako elementu rosyjskiej kampanii dezinformacyjnej przeciwko Ukrainie oraz zbadanie najbardziej rozpowszechnionych elementów wykorzystywanych przez Rosję w rozpowszechnianiu dezinformacji. W artykule mamy syntezę i połączenie metod monitoringu, analizy treści i analizy porównawczej.

W artykule wybrano publikacje prezentujące dezinformację wymierzoną w społeczeństwo ukraińskie. Dezinformacje propagowane przez Rosję są następnie obalane przez zagraniczne lub ukraińskie publikacje, w tym organizację „NotaE-nota”. Z badania wynika, że rosyjska dezinformacja ma na celu propagowanie określonych narracji i manipulowanie masową świadomością. Dezinformacja polega na celowym tworzeniu wprowadzających w błąd i manipulacyjnych treści, często w postaci sztucznie stworzonych podróbek.

Pole informacyjne Ukrainy stało się głównym polem bitwy rosyjskiej taktyki wojny hybrydowej, która obejmuje dezinformację, propagandę, podróbki. Aby skutecznie przeciwdziałać tym taktykom, społeczeństwo musi rozwinąć umiejętności krytycznego myślenia i umiejętności korzystania z mediów, aby móc krytycznie oceniać i rozróżniać informacje. Przyszłe badania mają na celu głębsze zgłębienie metod wykorzystywanych do tworzenia dezinformacji, ich celów i potencjalnych strategii zapobiegania lub przeciwdziałania ich wpływowi.

Słowa kluczowe: dezinformacja, fake news, umiejętność korzystania z mediów, wojna informacyjna, propaganda, manipulacja

Introduction

Using propaganda, Russia wants to achieve the desired goals by promoting its narratives in Ukrainian society and the media environment. Until 24 February 2022, these channels of information transmission were not only social networks or online media but also digital television. After the full-scale invasion, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky signed a decree enacting the decision of the National Security and Defence Council to impose sanctions against MP Taras Kozak from the Opposition Platform – For Life faction, who is accused of promoting terrorism and cooperation with Russia, as well as eight legal entities: 112 Ukraine, NewsOne, Zik, and regional broadcasters of the 112 Ukraine channel¹. After the start of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine, disinformation has most often been spread through groups in Telegram or Viber messengers or social networks such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram².

1 O. Комарова, *Вимкнули «канали Медведчука»: перші пояснення та реакції соцмережах*, Радіо, 03 February 2021, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/kanal-medvedchuk-sankciy-zelenskiy-tv-112-zik-newsone-zaborona/31082909.html> [3.02.2021].

2 А. Романюк, *Інформаційні вкиди російсько-української війни*, РЦСП, НотаЄнота 2022.

In the article *Ukraine and the beginning of a non-linear war*, Michael Weiss and Peter Pomerantsev argue that “In Russia and eastern Ukraine, where Russian television is popular, Kremlin political technologists have managed to create a parallel reality in which ‘fascists’ have seized power in Kyiv, ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine are in mortal danger, and the CIA is at war with Moscow”³.

The relevance of the topic lies in the need to study the spread of Russian disinformation in the Ukrainian information field and the scientific understanding of the strategies, methods, and tools used by Russian propagandists to spread disinformation in Ukraine. As the researcher Alyona Romanyuk notes, “The goals of the Russian IPSO are aimed at providing their troops with optimal conditions for taking control of Ukrainian territories, that is, doing everything so that the Ukrainians stop resisting the Russian invaders”⁴. These operations are based on fakes, disinformation, propaganda narratives, etc. In the study, we will consider in detail the phenomena of IPSO and information injection, which carry great danger.

1. What is disinformation and why is it dangerous

● The information field is an evolving and dynamic ecosystem that is constantly developing. It is a collection of information that is continuously updated and used by individuals, media, organisations, governments, or institutions funded by a particular state. Some objects broadcast their messages on digital media platforms, social networks, messengers, websites, television, and other communication channels. This information is not always true and accurate. Often, these communication channels are intended to spread false or misleading information.

In the Ukrainian information field, Russian disinformation and propaganda campaigns are often aimed at exploiting weaknesses in human consciousness⁵ and social structures. They use certain tactics

3 П. Помаранцев, *Україна і початок «нелінійної війни»*, “Критика” 2015, vol. 1-2, no. 207-208, pp. 14-23.

4 А. Романюк, *Інформаційні вкиди російсько-української війни...*

5 І. Штогрін, *«Ядерна війна проти розуму»: як російська дезінформація і пропаганда діє проти України, НАТО і Заходу? Радіо Свобода*, 15 July 2021, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/protydiyarosyys'kiy-propahandi-dezinformatsiyi/31357962.html> [15.07.2021].

to create misleading narratives, manipulate emotions, spread fabricated pseudo “crimes” and strengthen existing⁶ divisions in society. These campaigns often use technical means such as the use of bots, trolls, artificial intelligence, group chats in messengers, and fake accounts to simulate⁷ support for a particular artificially created message. The purpose of such Russian disinformation attacks is hybrid warfare⁸. The information field is a certain dimension of the war that Russia has been waging against Ukraine for several decades⁹. Bellingcat investigators noted that “On February 23, on Russia’s military holiday and two days after Russian president Vladimir Putin recognized the independence of the self-proclaimed DNR and LNR, most key Ukrainian government institutions had their websites attacked in a presumed DDoS campaign. As of 16:30 Kyiv time, the websites of the Ukrainian parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Council of Ministers, (including all individual ministerial sites), and the Security Service of Ukraine, were all unreachable (the website of the Council of Ministers was brought back online at approximately 17:10 local time; most other sites came online within two hours of the attack). One website that was not affected by the attack as of this time was the site of the Office of the President of Ukraine”¹⁰. In this way, Russian hackers wanted to sow panic among the population of Ukraine, spread false information, including an A.I. generated video in which President Volodymyr Zelensky called for surrender, and also paralyze the work of state institutions¹¹. Another goal of such hacker attacks was to create a certain informational vacuum; “an informational vacuum is an artificially created state of total or partial lack of information in a certain

6 <https://www.state.gov/fact-vs-fiction-russian-disinformation-on-ukraine/>.

7 http://politicus.od.ua/5_2022/11.pdf.

8 В. Міський, *Плутанина, розбрат, маніпуляції. Як дезінформація впливає на війну в Україні та на інші регіони*, Детектор медіа, 08 March 2023, <https://detector.media/infospace/article/208708/2023-03-08-plutanyuna-rozbrat-manipulyatsii-yak-dezinformatsiya-vplyvaie-na-viynu-v-ukraini-ta-na-inshi-regiony/> [8.03.2023].

9 *Інформаційне поле – це вимір війни. Україні варто активніше битися на цьому полі бою*, – аналітик ISW, Texty.org.ua, 18 September 2022, <https://texty.org.ua/fragments/107269/informacijne-pole-ce-vymir-vijny-ukrayini-varto-aktyvnishe-bytysya-na-comu-poli-boyu-analytyk-isw/> [18.07.2022].

10 *Attack on Ukrainian government websites linked to GRU hackers – bellingcat*, b.d., bellingcat, <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/2022/02/23/attack-on-ukrainian-government-websites-linked-to-russian-gru-hackers/> [b.d.].

11 А. Романюк, *Інформаційні вкиди російсько-української війни...*

field, on a certain territory, or about certain events”¹². An information vacuum is very dangerous because the lack of official information as well as increased public interest in the topic, creates a need to search for information. At that time, Russians began to spread fake information. According to researcher Alyona Romaniuk, “To create informational chaos, the occupiers not only created new fakes using current news stories but also spread nonsense from several years ago. For example, a fake that a virus downloaded under the guise of updating instant messengers hacks the phone. This message was sent and resent by representatives of various departments and institutions since the beginning of this piece of news is disguised in official style”¹³.

The information field in Ukraine and in the world is characterised by its interconnected nature. Disinformation and propaganda spread rapidly across platforms and communities, most often through viral messages. Grigory Pocheptsov notes: “The information space is filled naturally and artificially. We will consider ‘natural’ to be the actions of individuals, artificial – the actions of organisations that, with stronger capabilities, can drown out any individual information interventions, while repeatedly strengthening their own. However, when organisations spread fakes, they model their actions as individuals”¹⁴.

However, Russia’s disinformation campaign and its propaganda still resonate online. According to a 2020 USAID-Internews survey on news consumption by recipients, social networks come first. They provide an overwhelming majority of 62% of respondents. In second place is television (52%), and in third place are news sites. Social networks were in the first place because information spreads very quickly. In general, through Facebook, YouTube, Viber, and Telegram, a large share of all fake news and propaganda is spread and, as a result, the population is manipulated¹⁵.

12 I. Підпригора, *Умови та чинники впливу на організацію інформаційно-пропагандистського забезпечення військово-моральних сил збройних сил України у 2014 році*, “Військово-науковий вісник” 2018, vol. 29, pp. 216-229, <https://doi.org/10.33577/2313-5603.29.2018.216-229>.

13 А. Романюк, *Інформаційні вкиди російсько-української війни...*

14 *Як інформація замінює нам мізки*, АУП, б.д., <https://www.aup.com.ua/yak-informaciya-zaminyuie-nam-mizki/> [б.д.].

15 <https://internews.in.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-Media-Consumption-Survey-FULL-FIN-Ukr-1.pdf>.

The concept of manipulative propaganda is considered by Vasyl Lyzanchuk in his textbook *Information security of Ukraine: Theory and practice*. The scientist notes that hostile manipulation is a type of spiritual, psychological impact that requires considerable skill and knowledge. The ideological machine uses the mental structures of the human personality and uses special formats of manipulative propaganda such as the “rotten herring” method, that is, the media pick up false accusations that are aimed at causing wide public discussion¹⁶. Such false accusations were spread by the Russian authorities stating that fascists seized power in Ukraine and the state was ruled by a junta^{17,18}.

2. IPSO as part of a disinformation campaign

One of the methods of spreading Russian disinformation is IPSO – information and psychological operation. These are certain planned actions to transmit specific information, the purpose of which is to influence emotions, actions, and critical thinking¹⁹. As a result – they impact each individual, and on certain organisations or even power structures. This is one type of military campaign. Such operations can be conducted at several levels at once such as tactical, strategic, and operational. IPSO usually precedes a full-scale military invasion or armed confrontation. Researcher of information security and Russian propaganda Ben Nimo identified 4 main components of disinformation campaigns – dismiss, distract, distort, dismay. First of all, Russian propagandists try to deny the truth and facts (dismiss). They also distract attention and accuse (distract), distort facts (distort), intimidate, and cause panic and anxiety (dismay)²⁰.

Most often, IPSO is launched in such a way that it can be further distributed through ordinary Internet users or television viewers to

16 В. Лизанчук, *Інформаційна безпека України: теорія і практика*, Львів 2017.

17 *Хунта, птахи з вірусами і Україна Леніна: спростовуємо міфи російської пропаганди, Християни для України*, б.д., <https://сду.org.ua/hunta-ptahy-z-virusamy-i-ukrayina-lenina-sprostovuyemo-mify-rosijskoji-propagandy/> [б.д.].

18 П. Помаранцев, *Україна і початок «нелінійної війни»*, “Критика” 2015, vol. 1-2, no. 207-208, pp. 14-23.

19 *Що таке ІПСО, чому важливо це знати і які операції зараз проводить Росія проти України*, Український тиждень, б.д., <https://tyzhden.ua/shcho-take-ipso-chomu-vazhlyvo-tse-znaty-i-yaki-operatsii-zaraz-provodyt-rosiia-proty-ukrainy/> [б.д.].

20 А. Романюк, *Інформаційні вкиди російсько-української війни...*

other people. Artificially launched information goes viral. That is, it represents certain information, data, facts, or details that are skilfully transformed into an emotional code which, in turn, causes a certain emotional reaction, message, or stimulus to appeal as well as motivation²¹.

An example of artificially launched information that caused strong emotions among the population can be seen in a video with Marina Ovsyannikova²², who appeared on Russian television on 14 March 2022, with a poster in support of Ukraine. This video was created specifically to distract attention from the shooting of a civilian resident of Zhytomyr region by a Russian tank, the introduction of another number of sanctions against Russia as well as intensive missile attacks on Ukraine's civilian infrastructure. The video with Ovsyannikova instantly spread on social networks and got into foreign media. This is exactly what Russian propagandists were counting on because the main attention was attracted to the English words "No war", written on the poster held by Ovsyannikova. Thus, a logical question arises – Who is the inscription on the poster designed for? In addition, it is very difficult to break into the studio where the news is recorded, because there is security at the entrance, and the doors are usually closed.

It is unfortunate that with the destruction of Ukrainian cities by Russian missiles, the killing of civilians, and the horrors perpetrated by the Russian army in Ukraine, this production is being discussed on social media²³. This manipulation had other implications. It is still actively used to promote the narrative of "good Russians", of Putin's exclusive guilt rather than the collective guilt of Russians, and of Russians as "the same" victims of Putin's regime as Ukrainians.

21 М. Кіца, *Фейкова інформація в українських соціальних медіа: поняття, види, вплив на аудиторію*, "Наукові записки. Українська академія друкарства. Соціальні комунікації" 2016, vol. 1, no. 52, pp. 281-287.

22 *Россія. Перший канал, Маріна Овсяннікова Нет войне! (2022)*, Odesa Film Studio. Новости України, Video, YouTube, 14 March 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2aW2lkk1mg> [14.03.2022].

23 *Аде ви були усі 8 років? Не всі українці повірили у щирість антивоєнного перформансу на росТВ реакція соцмереж*, Telegraf, б.д., <https://telegraf.com.ua/ukr/novosti-rossii/2022-03-14/5699400-a-gde-by-la-vse-8-let-ne-vse-ukraintsy-poverili-v-iskrennosti-antivoennogo-performansa-na-rostv-reaktsiya-sotssetey> [б.д.].

3. Social media as a source of disinformation spread

There are several markers that the Russian disinformation campaign uses in the information field of Ukraine to create propaganda narratives, spread panic, or destabilize the political situation in the country²⁴. One of these is the so-called anonymous authority²⁵. “The favourite propaganda method for misleading the audience is anonymous authority. It is actively used in both social and mass media. The authority is never named and pronouns are often used instead. In some cases, documents, expert assessments, reports, witnesses, or other materials can be quoted for greater persuasion”²⁶. This is a well-known propaganda technique that misleads the audience, used in social networks and media. In such cases, the name of the authority is not indicated or some pronoun or occupation is indicated in the messages. The report may include quotes from documents, reports, or even witness testimony. One such example was the spread of a message that the Security Service of Ukraine informed that at 4 am on 6 June 2022, an offensive in Ukraine would allegedly begin from the territory of Belarus. A similar report, however, was that enemy missile strikes on certain targets were expected within 24 hours. This was followed by a list of cities and even buildings²⁷.

Such information has two goals, firstly to provoke Ukraine to transfer a significant part of the army and, secondly, to sow panic among Ukrainian society. It is the spread of panic that is a large part of hostile information and psychological special operations²⁸. If the news is

24 *Як для російської пропаганди використовують західні ЗМІ – дослідження*, Радіо Свобода, Голос Америки, 07 September 2021, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/rosija-propahanda-zahid-zmi/31447851.html> [7.09.2021].

25 *Центр протидії дезінформації при РНБО пояснює, що таке «анонімний авторитет»*, Телеканал 1-UA.tv, б.д., <https://i-ua.tv/news/47034-tsentr-protydii-dezinformatsii-pri-rnbo-poiasniue-shcho-take-anonimnyi-avtorytet> [б.д.].

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ворог посилює інформаційний тероризм, Центр протидії дезінформації* | Головна сторінка, б.д., https://cpd.gov.ua/warnin/czpd_zasterigaye-vorog-aktyvuvav-sms-ro/ [б.д.].

28 *Ворог робить інформаційні вкиди про нібито плани атакувати Україну з півночі*, Інформаційне агентство *Informatsiine ahentstvo Armiialinform АрміяInform*, б.д., <http://armyinform.com.ua/2022/11/26/vorog-robyt-informacijni-vkydy-pro-niby-to-plany-atakuvaty-ukrayinu-z-pivnochi/> [б.д.].

structured in such a way that it evokes a strong emotion in the audience, this is a key sign of a disinformation fake²⁹.

4. Elements of Russian disinformation spread

• Photos “from the scene” are also part of a disinformation campaign. They need to be verified through the available resources because even their presence does not indicate authenticity or that these photos reflect the real picture. For example, during a blackout in Kyiv in the fall of 2022, users of various messenger and social networks distributed photos of a de-energized Kyiv by Vitaliy Rubtsov. As it turned out, the photo does not show power outages; it was made in May 2019, that is, three years before the full-scale war. Media literacy trainers from the project “Learn to discern: Infomedia literacy in education” explain that such photos can discredit Ukraine and lead to doubts about statements regarding the situation in the country. After all, although the published photo emotionally and vividly illustrates the unprecedented situation that has developed in the capital of Ukraine as a result of Russian aggression, this photo has nothing to do with the current situation. Information about photos can easily be found by using the reverse photo search on Google. Thus, it can be assumed that the outages are as fake as the photo that illustrates them.

There was a similar situation with the distribution of photos about the rescue of animals after the explosion at the Kakhovka hydroelectric station and the flooding of the surrounding territories. “For the second day, along with real videos and photos from Kherson region, dozens of fake ones are being distributed, which are then used by propagandists to say “it’s all invented”, “it’s all staged”. We made for you a selection of fake photos and videos posing as frames from the Kherson region. They have gained millions of reaches on various social networks. They are distributed both by bots masquerading as Ukrainians and by Ukrainians who do not verify the information and its source. Fake news was spread even by the official pages of the Verkhovna Rada of

29 Як розпізнати фейк: 5 практичних кроків, The Village Ukraine, б.д., https://www.the-village.com.ua/village/knowledge/mediahramotnist/338225-yak-rozpiznati-feyk-5-praktichnih-krokov?fbclid=IwARohCBGBIT8vaUN6T-IFkpmULopx46auzpa_44wkGhIj7XcnQtU0o3LV9U [б.д.].

Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as several Ukrainian and foreign media”³⁰. The Russian television propagandist, Vladimir Solovyov, had also taken advantage of this situation. He said that the Kakhovka hydroelectric station was blown up by Ukrainians, and the situation is not as critical as it is told³¹. In order to illustrate the events taking place in the Kherson region, old photos from other places in the world were used.

The Russians are trying to transfer the responsibility to someone else. It is not the first time that Russian propagandists have resorted to the so-called blurring of the information field. They used the same method during the events of the MH17 crash (the Malaysian Boeing that was shot down by a Russian BUK)³². As for the Kakhovka HPP, fake explanations can be summarised as follows: “It was the Armed Forces of Ukraine who fired at it”, “the dam is tired of the attacks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine”, “this is profitable for Kyiv”³³. These manipulative topics are voiced by some foreign so-called journalists, influencers, and so-called experts.

However, Mykola Kalinin, Chief Project Engineer (ISU) of the Ukhydroproject Institute, refutes these Russian fakes; “The Kakhovka HPP was designed and built to withstand a nuclear strike from the outside. Therefore, any talk that it could somehow collapse itself has no basis. This is excluded. It was supposed to be several explosions that were carried out simultaneously. Most likely, the dam itself was mined, just in those spans that were opened, and, perhaps, a little further. Plus, the hydroelectric building itself was mined, where hydraulic units were installed to generate electricity. Let’s pay attention – mined from the inside”³⁴. In addition to the above-mentioned methods of

30 <https://www.facebook.com/notaenota1/posts/pfbidoig6ghtDeReAwsKNISgS46aVh9XJRi3P6H-V9FpxJYbToWzCsiK6unXbkG9uaRnyrwl>.

31 *Тільки послушайте! СОЛОВІЙОВ відреагував на ПІДРИВ Каховської ГЕС*, 24 канал, Video YouTube, 07 June 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55iykpfaykk> [7.06.2023].

32 *Росія поширює ЧИСЛЕННІ «версії» про підриб Каховської ГЕС*, TCH, Video, YouTube, 07 June 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNqeqQ6Nhkxs> [7.06.2023].

33 *Ibid.*

34 А. Гарасим, *Каховська ГЕС була рознахована витримати ядерний удар. Ні про яку її саморуїнацію не може бути мови*, Texty.org.ua, 07 June 2023, <https://texty.org.ua/fragments/109840/kahovska-ges-bula-rozrahovana-vytrymaty-yadernyj-udar-ni-pro-yaku-yiyi-samorujnacyu-ne-mozhe-buty-j-movy/?fbclid=IwAR2PHu6AsD12Cjp6U3ou3gS26PdHlCmtaYrfMHzuG9iVPnuBwYQgpNrCAJg> [7.06.2023].

manipulation, Russian propagandists use such methods as references to the authorities and reflection³⁵.

Society always trusts more information disseminated by an authoritative source³⁶. Thus, the message becomes more important and widespread. That is why the propagandists resort to references to authority. It can be any politician, famous person, astrologer, or so-called “famous expert”, that is, promoted pseudo-experts (authors that manipulate large audiences by causing strong emotions with their publications or speeches are called pseudo-experts³⁷). Authorities can be false and genuine. False authorities are easier to identify because, when checking the information, you can find out that the person has nothing to do with the topic they are commenting on. The situation with real experts is more complicated.

The Russian TV channel Rossiya 24 spread information that the United States acknowledged the existence of its bio laboratories on the territory of Ukraine. The main argument was the speeches by Victoria Nuland, the US Deputy Secretary of State, who, when asked by US Senator Marco Rubio about bio laboratories in Ukraine, replied that there are laboratories in Ukraine whose materials can become dangerous in the hands of the Russian aggressor. Russian propagandists took her words out of context and presented the information as confirmation of the information.

For Russian propaganda, some tactics are used, in particular, to distract attention – to reflect³⁸. Propagandists make the same accusations against Ukraine or any other country as they make against Russia. That is, they reflect the actions of the opponent. At the same time, Russian

35 *Як російська пропаганда використовує тактику апелювання до авторитету #DisinfoChronicle. Кремлівська дезінформація щодо військового наступу на Україну, Детектор медіа, б.д., <https://disinfo.detector.media/post/yak-rosiiska-propahanda-vykorystovuie-taktyku-apelivannia-do-avtorytetu> [б.д.].*

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Слухайте. Думайте. Громадське радіо, б.д., <https://hromadske.radio/podcasts/myslennia-bazova-funktsiia/1061895> [б.д.].*

38 *Тактики: Як російська пропаганда застосовує тактики «відривання від контексту», #DisinfoChronicle. Кремлівська дезінформація щодо військового наступу на Україну, Детектор медіа, б.д., <https://disinfo.detector.media/post/yak-rosiiska-propahanda-zastosovuie-taktyku-vidryvannia-vid-kontekstu> [б.д.].*

media use both real and fictitious reasons for the accusations³⁹. Russian propagandists claim that the prosecutor has already committed exactly the offence of which Russia is now accused.

Conclusions

The purpose of Russian disinformation in the Ukrainian information field is mass propaganda and dissemination of the narratives they need. As G. Pocheptsov notes, “Propaganda works with mass consciousness, holding there one point of view, which is realised in a set of metanarratives. Metanarratives reside in the virtual space, and specific narratives are generated in the information space. This is all new and new detailing of the metanarrative, which reinforces its impact, as it is confirmed again and again, but by different material. The greater the repetition, the more its truth is confirmed for the mass consciousness”⁴⁰. Disinformation is intentionally created information with manipulative and often misleading content. In our research, we have demonstrated several artificially created fakes that manipulate reality and facts in order to cause harm.

Even before 24 February 2022, before the full-scale invasion of Russian troops into Ukraine, the Ukrainian information field had been regularly targeted with aggressive disinformation and propaganda campaigns by Russia. The Russians tried to plant misleading narratives within Ukrainian society, spread false information, and tried to manipulate the emotions of Ukrainians, all using social media and other means of communication. It was fairly common to observe such campaigns in social networks, where bots, trolls, artificial intelligence, fake accounts, and group chats were used to simulate the support of false messages.

It is the information field of Ukraine that has become the first springboard for Russia’s hybrid war against the Ukrainian people. Us-

39 *Новомова: Як Росія розмиває реальність за допомогою новомови: «силові дії» #DisinfoChronicle. Кремлівська дезінформація щодо військово наступу на Україну, Детектор медіа, б.д., <https://disinfo.detector.media/post/yak-rosiia-rozmyvaie-realist-za-dopomohoiu-novomovusylovi-dii> [б.д.].*

40 *Пропаганда як комунікативна війна із своїм власним народом, АУП, б.д., <https://www.aup.com.ua/propaganda-yak-komunikativna-viyna-iz/> [б.д.].*

ing a variety of methods such as disinformation, propaganda, fakes, sabotage, phishing, and cyberattacks, the enemy was able to prepare for a full-scale war.

To effectively confront this in the information world, in particular Russian fakes, manipulations, propaganda, and disinformation, society must learn to perceive information critically and have [greater] media literacy skills.

In future research, we plan to further demonstrate the methods that are used to create disinformation, what their purpose is, and how to prevent or counteract them.

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